

Commissioning Service Justin and Erin
McDonald Here Am I Ministries Isaiah 6:8

The thirteenth chapter of the Book of Acts records the Holy Spirit's call upon Barnabas and Saul for missionary service. The church in Antioch (where the disciples were first called Christians, Acts 11:26) fasted and prayed. Then they laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul (also called Paul, Acts 12:9) and sent them away. Two of the greatest missionaries of the early church were sent out by a local church body. In like manner, we send out this day two of our own to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28: 18-20).

Justin and Erin have chosen the prophet Isaiah's response to the Lord's question, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us," as the name of their ministry. They have responded to God's call as the prophet responded some 700 years before the time of Christ's life on this earth.

God's call upon Isaiah's life occurred in the midst of perilous times and troubles for God's nation Israel. The cruel warrior nation of Assyria had conquered the northern tribes of Israel. The southern kingdom of Judah and its' capital of Jerusalem were next in their sight. The powerful empire of Babylon lay to the east. But much like our own country today, the greatest threat was not enemies from without, but the abandonment of the one true God for idols of power, pleasure and gain. In the midst of such apostasy, God raised up prophets like Isaiah to call His people to repent.

The sixth chapter of Isaiah records the awesome and incredible vision of God in His throne room. Since God is Spirit (1 John 4:24) and invisible to the human eye, many commentators believe the Lord pictured here is Jesus Christ (John 1:18), God in the flesh. It is a picture of magnificent majesty, for the One on the throne is high and lifted up (Isa. 55:9)! The splendor of His adornment filled the entire temple. So great is His majesty that the angelic beings cover their faces and feet in humility. The holiness (literally to *set apart* in Hebrew and Greek) of God is emphasized in their cry, and the room shakes and fills with smoke. Isaiah is undone (*ruined*) by the spectacle. The Lord of armies has given him a vision to encourage his heart and prepare him for the task ahead. "Here am I! Send me," is his appropriate response.

Justin and Erin have been set apart for God's task. They have prepared and denied themselves, and chosen to follow their Lord (Matt. 19:16-30). We send them out in full confidence and much prayer. Amen.