

**YAHWEH SABAOTH**  
**WHAT'S YOUR NAME SERIES - Part 7**  
**Dan Burrell**

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Good morning Life Fellowship. It is very good to see you. You know I have had a very busy month but I have been looking forward to being back up here. I just feel so blessed. It is important that we have places where we feel at home, isn't it? Where we feel like we belong, where we feel like people care. And I don't know of any time I feel more like that than when I am at church with God's family, when I am with the people of Life Fellowship doing what God has called me to do. I just want to say as one of your pastors this morning how much we love you, how much I love you, how important it is that we gather like this and are reminded of God and eternity and truth and the things that are going to last. And how important the relationships are that we have because of what Christ has done for us.

This morning we are going to conclude this series that we have been doing now for several weeks on the names of God. And the name that we are going to be looking at today I think is an appropriate way to conclude this series, because it is an all-encompassing name. It is an authoritative name. It is a name that is broad and deep, and it is a name that in some way captures the majesty and authority of God.

So open your Bibles with me if you would to Isaiah Chapter 6. We are going to read a passage that is fairly familiar to many of us who have studied the Old Testament or the good book of Isaiah specifically over the years. It is a dramatic scene that Isaiah describes here. As you are looking for that in your Bibles I just want to say that I am struck with the number of people today that are in the midst of things going on in their lives. It has been a rough couple of years; I think we can all kind of agree on that.

It has been a long time of tumultuousness in our culture. I would suggest that we are in many ways in the midst of a cultural revolution. We have political division on an unprecedented scale. We have the pressures of social media and the divisions seem to be magnified through that. And people who should be friends, or who at least should be civil, in many cases have lost their capacity to disagree reasonably, or with any sense of agreement or a posture that says, *'Even if we disagree we can do so agreeably.'*

We have gone through this pandemic that seems to find new ways of stretching on, even longer and longer, and in the midst of the pandemic we see even deeper and deeper examples of the divisions that can come out of something like this, not just politically, but relationally. There is stress, there is pressure, some have lost jobs, inflation is here, housing is expensive, and we are stressed because our kids have not been able to go to school the way they did before. We have the fear of an illness that can be devastating and we have relationships that are stressed. There are a lot of people hurting, a lot of people struggling and there are a lot of people looking for relief.

Some are asking: *'Where is God in all of this? What is God doing in the midst of this?'* And these are questions that we hear. Someone said to me, *'It seems like the world is getting worse and worse,'* and I said, *'Have you read this book? It is supposed to get worse. It is just supposed to.'* If we believe the Bible, and if you have read the last

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book of the Bible you know it doesn't end until it get a whole lot worse, and then it gets better forever.

But until then we know the trajectory. And Christians are not immune from that. We are not of the world, but we are in the world. We have problems in our businesses, we have problems in our relationships, we have problems with our health, we have problems in our marriages, and we have problems with our children. We are not given an exemption from them simply because we know what lies ahead, or because we have a relationship with God. Those things are very real to us as well.

I will be honest with you; I think the last two weeks of my life have been among the hardest I have ever experienced. I am not going to give you the details why, but I have to tell you there have been times even a pastor has asked for a little relief from God. *'God, could I just get a break?'* And in those moments, in those minutes there is one solution and that is to go back to truth, to go back to the foundation, to remember what is really real because this is temporary, this is transitory. What is really real is what God's Word says, who God is, and what He has promised to fulfill, and on that we can stand.

So what is the purpose of suffering? What is the purpose of travail? What is the purpose of difficulty, of everything from illness to conflict? What is the purpose of all of these things? Sometimes we don't know. Sometimes we don't get it. Sometimes God in His wisdom and in His plan and in His authority and nature has said to us, *'You don't get to know this information yet.'* And to that extent we are like children. There have always been times in my children's lives when their lack of age, lack of maturity resulted in me having to hold back information from them, particularly when they were little.

I remember the story that Corrie tin Boom told years ago in one of her books. She said she was walking through a train station with her dad and he was carrying a couple of large suitcases. She was getting cross as is the nature of young kids as they don't have any way of judging whether something is appropriate or good timing or not, so as they were walking through the train station little Corrie ten Boom looked up at her dad and asked, *'Hey dad, what is sex?'* Those are the kind of questions that dads dread in general, but particularly so in the middle of a train station when you are getting ready to go somewhere, right?

Corrie was just a little tike and she said her dad stopped, he sat down the suitcases and he said to her, *'You carry the suitcases while I explain.'* She reaches over and grabs the suitcases but she couldn't get them off of the floor because she wasn't even tall enough to lift them. And she said, *'Daddy, I can't, I can't.'* Her dad takes a couple of steps and tells her to come on. And she says again, *'But I can't, they are too big, they are too heavy for me.'* So he picks up the suitcases again and he says to her, *'Yes honey, there are some things that are too big and too heavy for you right now because you are small. But someday you are going to grow up and you are going to be able to carry them'*

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*just fine. And the answer to your question is one of those things that is too big for you right now.'*

Now that was a whole lot better than what I would have said which was, 'Ask your mom.' (Laughter.) So in our wisdom we have to understand that there are times where we withhold information until the time is right, until our kids are big enough and until they can carry the load. And there are things that God is doing in this universe at this moment that we don't get to know everything about. And quite frankly, I am like the child who is petulant and wants to stamp his feet and say, 'I want to know now. I want to understand now.' And God in His wisdom says, 'There are some things you need to grow up in, some things you need to trust me in, some things you need to wait for before we get there.' And you know why God gets to do that? It is because He is God and we are not. He is in charge. He is Yahweh Sabaoth.

So we are going to look at this name in Isaiah Chapter 6 beginning in verse 1. Please follow along as I read aloud these eight verses. ***"In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory." And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of Him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"***

Now if we reading this in Hebrew we would say, 'I have seen Yahweh Sabaoth.' If we were reading this in Latin we would say, 'Yahweh Sabaóth, the Lord of hosts.' ***"Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for." And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."***

The name that we are looking at this morning is Yahweh Sabaoth if we were saying it in Hebrew and Yahweh Sabaóth if we were saying it in Latin. It is found in Scripture a total of over two hundred and sixty times, which makes it the name most commonly used for God in the Scriptures. Now again, we have studied every week a different name of God, and we in no way got to the end of that list. We have studied a variety of them, but this one, the one in which we conclude is the one that is most frequently found in the Scriptures.

And as we look at it we know that it is largely found in the Old Testament, two hundred and sixty one times it is found in the Old Testament. It is first found in I Samuel Chapter 1 in the days of the prophets. And the first time that we see it is when we

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remember Hannah who was barren and she was praying for a son. She wanted a son and she wanted to give him to God, so that he could glorify God in his life and in his presence and in his very existence. So she was praying and she called out to Yahweh Sabaoth, God, Lord of hosts, God of all authority, God who commands everything under His authority. And Hannah said: *'Please Lord, hear my prayer.'*

That is the first time we see it used, but we find it in a variety of other passages. I want to kind of just pause here and remind you about Yahweh. Often when we are reading the Scriptures Yahweh is the word that is translated into the English as 'Lord.' And it refers to the self-existent, eternal, almighty, redemptive God. So when you see the word 'Lord,' it is because we use English. Now if you are from a British background or even have an Anglo type background you know the word 'lord' is very frequently used as a term of respect. It is used to kind of show rank or to show deference to someone. You have probably heard the Brits say, *'Yes, my lord.'*

But when we see Lord in the Scriptures it is far more specific and it is not referring to just someone of a greater rank; it is referring to God Himself, the all-encompassing, overarching, authoritative, eternal, almighty, redemptive God. Now the word 'host' is the second word which makes it more unique and that is why we are looking at it this morning. It is spelled S-a-b-a-o-t-h, so when you look at it, it almost looks like the word Sabbath. And many people have just assumed when they see it that it is referring to the Sabbath, but it is not. I have literally seen guys mistakenly not do their homework, so they will be talking about this and they will say how God wants us to rest and that He is a God of rest.

And God is all of those things, but that is not because His name is Yahweh Sabaoth, because they are not even pronouncing it correctly. It is Yahweh Sabaóth if it is in Latin and it is Sabaoth if it is in Hebrew. So this word 'host' is translated and it means 'armies.' When you think of armies, you think of a general, a commander, someone who is over them. If you watched anything on the news over the last couple of weeks you know that many of the leading generals, the leading military leaders of our country were called before Congress. So we could watch these men of high rank sitting there before the Congressmen. And there was always this idea that they command the largest army in the world, that they command hosts of people. They command their weaponry, their ability to move, as well as the targets they hit. They have tons of authority, so they need to be held accountable.

So when we see this word we need to understand that when we are speaking of Yahweh who is above all, overarching, He is the Lord of hosts, and He is the Lord of all that is in heaven, all that is in earth, all that is underneath Him, all that He has created, all that has ever existed. He is that Lord. He is above question. His authority knows no end. His power has no reserve. It is always there, always usable, power always at His fingertips and He will use it as He pleases. We do not serve a God who is in any way

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diminished, in any way limited, in any way fractionalized, in any way not fully God of everything.

And so as we have read this about Isaiah I want to explain the context a little bit. The reason why it is used so many times in Scripture is we must never, ever lose sight of who God is, high and lifted up, and who we are in relation to Him. Now we may not always like that, we may not always agree with that, we may not always appreciate how God is working at any one moment in time. That is not the issue here. The issue is, is there a God and does He matter? Is there a God and what does that mean? Is there a God and what is He doing?

These are the questions that are sometimes referred to as the metaphysical questions, but they are the very essence of why we are here, where we are going, and how we know anything at all. If there is no God we are here because of some kind of weird mathematical and scientific fluke, everything is just random, and if it is random it has no purpose and no meaning. But everywhere we look it is confusing because we see purpose, we see order, we see design, we see meaning, we see structure, we see lines of authority. We see all these things; therefore we ought to search for them and when we search for where the origin is, we will come up with God every single time.

There has to be an originator. There has to be a foundation. There has to be a starting point. There has to be a center, and that is God. And sometimes in our reactionary nature or in our overwhelmed sense that this is too complicated or in our frustration with our circumstances, we forget that journey that all of us should be on in finding who God is, why He matters, and what is truth. That is why we are here this morning. We need to know who God is. So we see this name is used first in Judges, and we see it in other places such as a reference at Shiloh where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. Again, remember the Ark of the Covenant was a point that God gave the children of Israel to look to as a reminder of His presence and of His blessings on them. When He referred to Himself near that Ark at Shiloh He was reminding them that He was in charge, that He was the Lord of the hosts.

And then remember when David was trash talking Goliath, which is one of my very favorite passages of Scripture. David who was just a little twerp and he was standing there before the mighty Goliath and he kind of has a little swagger. He initially tried Saul's armor on and it was too big so he just clanked around. But then he goes out there to face Goliath and he is just giving it to him. He said, *'Let me just tell you that on this day I am going to take your head off of your shoulders and the birds are going to eat your eyeballs.'* David was just letting Goliath have it.

And it is interesting when we read what David is saying in all of his pregame trash talk because he keeps calling God 'Lord of the hosts.' Do you know why he did that? It was because David in all of his impetuosity and youth, even in his uber confidence in that moment, he understood that he was powerless apart from the almighty

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Lord of the hosts. It was just empty words if there was no almighty Lord of the hosts. It was going to be meaningless. It was going to be a sure defeat except he had the trump card and it was because he was there at the call and commission of the Lord of the hosts. So in that he could make his declaration and walk in confidence.

These are important uses and I wish I had time to go through each of them, but what I want you to understand is that you and I, even when we are confused, even when we are hurting, even when it looks like the world is falling apart around us, you and I serve Yahweh Sabaoth, the all-encompassing, eternal, authoritative God of all that exists. Now here is a list of quick things that we can learn just from this passage that we read that I think are going to be important, and then we are going to go into a kind of comprehensive list before we close.

So here are some things that we see just in this passage. The first thing is this – God is eternal. When we look at this it says, “*In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.*” We will go through this in just a moment, but Uzziah as an interesting guy. He was the Queen Elizabeth of his day in Israel. He actually was on the throne for fifty-two plus years, and by and large the whole of his reign was a good reign. I mean he was a good king. He worshipped the Lord and he served the Lord for the majority of his reign. It was toward the end of his reign that he started getting sloppy and things started falling apart. He started getting cocky, but we won't go into his whole history lesson.

But here is the thing that we need to understand from Isaiah's perspective, from our perspective, and from God's perspective. God was in place before Uzziah, God was in place during Uzziah's reign, and God is still in place today. He was not done with Israel, He was not done with Isaiah, He was not done with this world. God had not completed His plan because He is eternal and He has something bigger going on. Kings come and go, kingdoms come and go, people come and go, problems come and go, businesses come and go, governments come and go, but the one thing that does not come and go is God. He is eternal.

Sometimes, because we are self-centered, we think that the whole world revolves around us, that this moment in time is the most important time because we are in this moment of time. We think that our needs are the greatest needs because they are our needs. And we think in those terms and we don't see God for who He is, the Lord of hosts, the high and lifted up one who has a plan that He is putting out across His creation that is important and that is bigger than we are. It is bigger than our problems, and God has things that He is working on that are too heavy for us to carry, too big for us to understand. God loves us, and He is walking with us, but God still has a journey to go on. He will pat us on the head, He will comfort us, and He will take care of us, but He is the one carrying the suitcases because we are not God.

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So God is eternal. The second thing is this – He is sovereignly ruling. Look at the passage again in verse 6 where it says: ***“I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.”*** Remember that God is always on His throne, He is always working from a position of authority, and He is always working from a position of power. So when Isaiah was getting this divine revelation God was getting ready to do something. He was getting ready to do something big. He was getting ready to do something in Israel because they were straying from Him, and He was getting ready to do something with Isaiah because he was the appointed one that God had selected, called and commissioned. Isaiah was going to be His assistant, His spokesperson, the person to whom He delivers the news. So God was on His throne. He doesn't need to come off His throne, He is always on His throne, He is always in charge, He is always aware, and He is always in control. And when we understand this even when it seems like to us things are out of control, they are not because God is still on His throne.

Ben and I are doing a series that I hope you will listen to on Christian clichés and things that we say that are kind of stupid and meaningless. The one we did last week I think is up on our podcast Life Talks now and it is where we look at, *‘If God closes a door He opens a window.’* Ben and I are both kind of cynical by nature, and when you hear those kind of things if you understand what people are saying you are going, *‘Oh no, oh no, no, no, we can't let that go.’* That is particularly true of me because I am the king of cynicism, right? So we are addressing these clichés.

Here is one that is true, and sometimes we say it and it sounds really cliché and I hate clichés, but we will say, *‘Well, God is still on His throne.’* And yes He is. There are times when I don't understand that, but make no mistake, God is on His throne. He is in charge. God never has a moment where He says, *‘Man, I didn't see that one coming.’* He never has those moments. I have those moments all the time, but God does not. Has it ever occurred to you that nothing ever occurs to God? He knows what is happening and He has never lost control even for an instant. So when we understand that we see Him on His throne sovereignly. And sovereign means He is all-encompassing with all authority ruling.

The third thing is this – God knows what is going on. ***“And the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.”*** The seraphim are worshipping God by singing. And we need to understand that this is part of the nature of God that we don't fully understand because we are broken and we are marred, but God is to be worshipped. His very nature, His very essence is that His creation worships Him. We did it this morning as we sang the song, *‘Holy, holy, holy.’* This is where we get the threefold holy that is part of our worship to Him and it reminds us of who He is, it reminds us that He is Yahweh Sabaoth, He is the Lord of the hosts, He is above all, He is without limits.

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And then there is the reminder that God is holy and that He is righteous. And this is something that we are going to see that absolutely unravels. I like the way the King James says it a little differently than the ESV which we use. It says when Isaiah is standing there and he is getting a full picture of who God is as he is seeing God and he is seeing the seraphim's, the ESV says: "*Woe is me! For I am lost,*" and the King James says: "*For I am undone.*" He is unraveled, he is wasted, and he is turned to mush.

And this is the idea that when we see God for who He really is in His holiness in contrast to us, it is humiliating to us. Have you ever had one of those weird dreams? I have had them and one actually happened not too long ago on a Saturday night where I dreamed I opened my Bible and it was completely blank. Not too long ago I actually left my sermon notes on my desk and I didn't discover it until right before I got up here. I had to text someone quickly and ask them to get my notes and bring them to me. I don't know if anyone noticed it or not, but someone came up here and handed me my notes. And that is one of my living nightmares.

I also actually had that happen a few years ago on an Easter Sunday when I was speaking at a church in south Florida. It was like a forty-five minute drive to the church, and when I got to the church a few minutes early I looked down and realized I had forgotten my Bible. It was Easter Sunday which is like a super bowl Sunday, right? There wasn't time for me to go back to get my Bible, there was no way to access my notes, and I had to wing it three times through the three services that morning. I did have my Power Point notes, but by the time I finished I was ready for a shower and a nap. It was a hard Sunday morning trying not to demonstrate that I had messed up and forgotten my notes and Bible.

I used to teach speech when I was a high school teacher and the old joke was, '*I dreamed I got up to do a speech and I had forgotten to put on my pants.*' There are these moments when you know you have really messed up. Let me say this to you, when you stand before God in His holiness and see Him for who He is, you are going to feel naked, undone, lost, embarrassed. You are going to feel broken and see yourself that way because in His perfection our imperfections are magnified. In His faithfulness our lack of faith is evident. In His consistency our inconsistency is in full color. In His perfection our brokenness is on great display.

And Isaiah, the chosen prophet, the amazing spiritually dynamic leader that he was, got a glimpse of the Lord high and lifted up being declared holy by the seraphim and his first response was, '*I am undone. I am lost. I am broken. I am a mess.*' Our arrogance sometimes prevents us from seeing God for who He is and it also prevents us from seeing us for who we are. And Isaiah got a taste of it that day. He is holy.

And then – God is everywhere. He is both in one place and in all places. And God was with Isaiah that day, God was with Israel, God was on His throne, God was being worshipped, and God was in control in all places which is part of His very nature

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and we will talk about that in a moment. So what does this mean for us? Very quickly I want to give you some practical applications that I think we need to take away when we really see Yahweh Sabaoth, Lord of the hosts.

Number one – we need to work to avoid viewing God from our perspective and we must learn to view ourselves from God's perspective. Our perspective is always going to be limited. It is always going to be marred. It is always going to be incomplete. It is always going to be single faceted. We start with sinful eyes and we start with brokenness, but that is not how God views us. God views us from perfection in perfection and from every dimension. He sees our past, He sees our present and He sees our future. He sees our heart, He sees our appearance, He sees what we think and He hears what we say. There is no limitation to God in how He views us, but when we see God we see Him through cloudy lens, through cracked cataract vision.

The week before last my mom celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, and my sisters and I had planned a trip for her for months. My mom had never spent any time in Washington DC. She was there once briefly but had never been back. One of my sisters is married to a political consultant who was very familiar with Washington DC, and I had spent time there back in the 90s doing a lot of lobbying for Christian schools. So my sisters and I decided to take mom and to see as much of Washington DC as we could. Now because of the Covid everything wasn't open that we might normally have been able to see, but if you go to the Smithsonian Institute which is on the Mall they have the Museum of Natural History. They have a huge display of gems and geology which is quite fascinating and I am a geek so I enjoy that kind of stuff.

Now I knew this years ago, but I had forgotten that the Hope Diamond is in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC. I knew mom would like to see that so we went in to take a look at it. It had been years since I saw it, and usually because Washington DC is busy you had to get in a queue, a long line and then wait and wait just to be able to look at it for a moment. And because so many people want to see it they put it in a box with four clear sides and it has beautiful lights shining on it. The Hope Diamond is surrounded by other big diamonds which makes it quite spectacular. It is bright blue and it is I think fifty-two or fifty-four carats sitting on a pedestal that revolves around so you can have kind of a 360 viewing of it.

And because the lines weren't very long this time we didn't feel like we had to rush through it, so we all gathered around it and we watched it go around. It was so interesting to me because with each movement I saw something new about the diamond, the setting, the color, the clarity, the size, and the presentation. Every time I looked at it I got a fresh perspective, and as it continued to move I learned more, I saw more, and I appreciated it more because it was amazing. Now you may be thinking it is just a rock, but no, it is not just a rock; it really is incredible. And the beauty as you look into it with the different angles of light through it makes is spectacular.

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If a 'rock' can create that much interest, that much excitement, that much value, that much perspective, how much more – how much more should an examination of God yield in our lives. Because every tick of the clock, every change of circumstances, every different perspective, every unique moment in time allows us to see into the heart and nature, the character, the authority, the power, the mystery, the awesomeness of God. And no two angles, no two sections, no two locations are ever the same. When we see God high and lifted up, when we see Him for who He is, when we appreciate His majesty and His authority, when we see Him as Lord of the hosts, it ought to excite in us the curiosity and amazement and appreciation of wonder, of thirst to see God for who He really is.

And yet so many of us want to view God from our own perspective, which is as Chuck Swindoll said years ago is that He is the equivalent of a cosmic vending machine. We think there is my 'God box' right here and I am going to visit Him today because I am a little needy in an area. We need a Snickers bar, so we walk up for what we need today, God has it in His cosmic vending box, so we shuffle through here and get out a few prayers. And if the machine doesn't work fast enough what do we do? We curse the machine. *'Stupid machine. This always happens to me. I don't know what is wrong.'* And if we are really ambitious we will give it a good kick, or we slap it on the side, or we shake it. And then we walk away complaining about the machine and how it always happens to us, and where can we call and tell them the machine took our money and didn't deliver. How insulting that must be to God. As if He is to serve us, as if He is there for our convenience, as if He has to perform according to our expectations. And he is not that at all, yet we reduce Him to that because we are not viewing Him from the right perspective. And we must avoid using our limitations in search of God.

And there is a flip side to that. We need to view ourselves from God's perspective. And there are a lot of different ways from which God views us. It is not just one way; God views us as Lord of the hosts, the all-powerful one. His will shall be performed; we will obey. He is in charge. He created us in His image. These things are real. But that is just one perspective that He brings. He also views us as a Father. He is our heavenly Father who loves us and delights in us. He is excited for us and wants to withhold no good thing from us. And there is more than that; He is also the caring one who protects us like the mother hen who places her little chicks under her wings to keep them away from the rain, the wind and the storms that come. He mothers us, shelters us and protects like the mother hen.

And then God is also the righteous one. He is the one who is not going to tolerate our nonsense. He is holy and when we get out of line as a father loves his children He will correct us because He knows that our bent is toward destruction and damnation. He is also the cautious one who will not give us more information than we are ready for. He is not obligated to tell us everything that He is doing when He is doing it or why He is doing it. There are some times when He says, *'I am going to carry this suitcase, Dan.'*

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There are other times when He says, *'I have a plan for you and I am going to prepare you for that plan. And in order to prepare you for that plan, like the general that I am I am going to send you to boot camp. You are going to go through Special Forces training. You are going to find out what you have in you and what I have for you. In order to do this you are going to have to get up and run, you are going to have to wake up and pay attention because I am preparing you for the battle ahead. Get ready son, we are going to war.'*

Whatever perspective God brings, we need to understand that He does not bring it lackadaisically, He doesn't bring it to us without thought, He doesn't bring it to us without compassion and love. He brings it with His divine purpose which we see everywhere in the universe. Why? It is because He is Yahweh Sabaoth, Lord of the hosts, and Lord of everything.

The second thing – we must never lose sight of God's overarching plan which is far bigger and broader than our individual expectations and personal agendas. I have touched on this so I won't spend a lot of time on it other than to say that we are often like the toddler demanding their own way and pitching temper tantrums when things don't happen the way we want them to happen, or when we want them to happen. Like petulant children we sob and demand, threaten and cajole, and it is only when we submit to the authority of God that we can truly experience the security that comes within His sovereign economy.

How many times have we as parents had a test of wills when our kids were toddlers. It would dawn on us that it was one of those times when we just had to win this one. James Dobson used to say, *'Choose your battles, but when you choose them win them decisively.'* And every once in a while there was a battle that you just knew with your kids that we had to win because there was too much at stake. There are times when God in His patience with us, and because He loves us, waits until we submit, waits until we yield, waits until we obey, and He will keep the pressure on, He will keep the intensity there because for our good He is perfecting us. And in the perfection He puts on pressure and He puts on hard times and difficulties because He has a plan for us. And in our relationship with God it is very important that we see Him as having an overarching plan for our good and His glory.

Number three – Our relationship with God and His providential direction in our life journey begins and ends with our full surrender to Him. Now keep in mind in this passage that we read we see Isaiah's journey toward being used by God. King Uzziah had ruled for fifty-two years, but now he was dead and Israel was going to get judged because the last few years had not been good. For many years Uzziah had been a good devout king but toward the end of his life he got struck with leprosy, he died in ignominy, he died in pain and he died isolated.

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And all of this was part of God's plan for Israel to prepare them for the coming Messiah. God was getting ready to proclaim judgment on the nation, but before Isaiah could be His spokesman for judgment and the messenger for the woes that were going to be coming to Israel he had to experience the woes himself that were his own reality, his own condition.

By the way, just a little sub point here; it is often our tendency, it is often our nature to fixate on the sins of others without ever dealing with the sins of our own heart. And God knew that if Israel was going to be saved that the messenger Isaiah needed to be aware of his own sins so that he could be specific about the sins of Israel as well. And woe to us, all of us who get aggravated at everybody else's sins and we never deal with our own. There is a whole sermon there but I will let you preach it to yourself.

When Isaiah saw God his response was dramatic and brutally honest. He said, "*Woe is me.*" And that brings me to this principle; a real encounter with God results in an honest assessment of our own condition. A real encounter with God results in an honest assessment of our condition. Until we surrender to God's holiness and majesty and sovereignty and authority, we are unqualified to serve Him fully and with integrity. Submit is not a word we like to use in our culture today. We don't like to use the word submit, but it is part of God's plan.

Number four – we will never fully appreciate the fullness of Yahweh until we understand and appreciate His myriad attributes while getting to know God. That is one of the reasons why after we leave this series our next series that we start next week is about spiritual discipline. If we are not systematically, conscientiously and with awareness seeking to know God, to hear from God, and to learn about God, we are never going to become the power for God that He has designed us to be. We are never going to see Him correctly. We have to know His attributes and we have to hear from Him.

So beginning next Sunday we are changing gears and until we get to Advent and the Christmas season we are going to be talking about how to get to know God better. See many of us tend to dummy Him down. It drives me nuts when I hear this all the time, '*Oh I have to talk to the big man upstairs about that.*' They see Him as this old dude with a robe and a beard. I heard someone call Him '*the sky daddy*' one day. Another one was '*celestial homeboy.*' Wow! Those kinds of terms speak of our ignorance. It is sacrilegious and blasphemous to diminish God with curses and commonality. When Isaiah saw God he said he was undone, he was broken and he was wasted.

God is special. Let me tell you how special He is. He is infinity eternal. Colossians Chapter 1 and verse 17 says, "***He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.***" God is omniscient. Isaiah Chapter 46 says: ***Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the***

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*beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose."*

God is omnipresent. Psalms 139 says: *"Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol (which is a type of hell), you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me."*

God is omnipotent. Psalms 33:6 says: *"By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host."* God is immutable; He does not change. Malachi Chapter 3 and verse 6: *"For I the Lord do not change."* God is self-sufficient. John Chapter 5 and verse 26 says: *"For as the Father hath life in Himself so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself."*

God is wise. Romans Chapter 11 and verse 33 says: *"Oh, the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable are His ways."* God is faithful. II Timothy Chapter 2 and verse 13 says: *"If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."* God is good. Psalms 34:8 says: *"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good."* God is just. Deuteronomy Chapter 32 and verse 4 says: *"He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He."*

God is merciful. Romans Chapter 9 and verse 15 says: *"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy."* God is gracious. Psalms 145:8 says: *"The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love."* God is loving. I John Chapter 4 and verse 8 says: *"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."*

God is holy. Revelation Chapter 4 and verse 8 says: *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty."* He is glorious. Habakkuk Chapter 3 and verse 4 says: *"His radiance is like the sunlight, He has rays flashing from His hands and they are hiding in His power."* And I could go on and on and on this morning sharing with you the attributes of God. He is beyond description. He is the almighty one. He is the healer. He is the restorer. His banner is over us.

**He is the Lord of hosts. May we see Him that way!**

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*The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.*