

**FROM רָאָה (SEEING) TO שָׁמַע (HEARING) THE LORD IN IS 6:1-10:
An Investigation into Genuine Vocation and its Implication
in the Face of False Claim to Divine Mandate Today**

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Abstract

One of the major characteristics of an Old Testament prophet is that he had to be called by God. A physically describable experience of divine call, like in the case of Isaiah, Jeremiah etc had become a proof of genuine vocation in the Old Testament. But today, the religious scene is saturated by mere claims to divine mandate. There are many self-acclaimed messengers of God that it becomes very confusing, if not difficult, to identify and recognize the genuine ones. This problem, if not addressed, can further pollute the religious air and can lead many unperceiving religious astray. What, then, could be the proof of genuine vocation today? What experience could authenticate a claim to divine mandate? This research is an attempt to proffer solution from concrete OT experience. Using the historical-critical method, the research seeks to interpret the call of Isaiah in Is. 6:1-10 – paying particular attention to the possible import of the verbs רָאָה (SEEING) and שָׁמַע (HEARING). It will also use the analytical method to evaluate the findings. The aim is to study the call of Isaiah in this passage; examine the import of ‘seeing’ and ‘hearing’ the Lord; investigate into possible proof of genuine vocation; and appreciate findings as implications for true vocation in the face of today’s incessant false claim to divine mandate. The result, apart from benefiting scholarship by motivating further researches in this area, promises to engineer and enforce renewed appreciation of authentic claim to divine mandate.

Keywords: Isaiah, Vocation, Mandate, Prophetic Claim

Introduction

Religion in general, especially Christianity, is in constant research to establish the criteria for authentic claim to divine mandate. This has presently remained a task of great concern for disciplines like Comparative religion. In an attempt to determine whether all religions are worshipping the same God, it has been necessary to delve into determining what makes claim to divine mandate authentic. How can we confirm genuine vocations?

This is even more relevant now where many self-acclaimed prophets go about parading themselves as messengers of God. Where lies the determining factor and can this be verified? This puzzle forms the motivating background of this research. Taking a departure from the call of Isaiah in Is 6: 1-10, the ‘educated guess’ is that a study of the words רָאָה (seeing) and שָׁמַע (hearing) as found in that passage, could offer, at least some insight/starting point in the efforts to determine the proof of divine prophetic mandate. Using the Historical, Descriptive and Analytical methods, the aim of this research is to study the passage – paying attention to the contextual import of the verbs: seeing and hearing; x-ray the incessant claim to divine mandate

by people today; examine the possible application of the basis of Old Testament claim to prophecy as a paradigm towards determining an objective proof of divine mandate. The research will first of all do detailed exegesis of Is 6: 1-10. It will also expose the prevalent trend today before seeking, from one experience to another, to establish an objective proof of divine mandate based on genuine vocation. The relevance of this work is in the fact that this need has not received adequate attention in contemporary scholarship, yet the abuses of self-acclamation are on the increase. The findings are revealing and the conclusions are beneficial to scholarship and salvaging for Christian theology.

Explication of Terms

In order to situate this work contextually, there is need to explain a few words and phrases as they are used in the research. These would include: Genuine Vocation, Divine Mandate, False Claim.

Genuine Vocation

In this research, where vocation is still seen as a divine call to ministry, the phrase, 'genuine vocation' is used to refer not just to an authentic divine choice and call to ministry but also, a true claim to such election by the individual concerned. Genuine vocation is employed in this passage in opposition to the prevalent practice of false self-acclamation to divine choice. The contention is to confirm whether or not one who calls himself a prophet or a messenger of God in whatever capacity, is truly called by God Himself.

Divine Mandate

In this work, divine mandate is understood as an effect of genuine vocation. It is the commissioning to ministry that ordinarily comes with the authority to operate and minister in God's Name. Again, 'Divine mandate' is used here to juxtapose the non-commissioned mandate claimed by many false messengers of God today. If the vocation is not genuine, the mandate cannot be genuine and cannot be qualified as divine.

False Claim

By false claim, in this research, we mean the non-authentic declaration that one has a mandate from God to speak and minister in His Name. A claim is false when it lacks genuine vocation and divine mandate. A claim is adjudged true and authentic when it comes as a result of genuine vocation that guarantees Divine mandate.

Review of Related Literature

This research addresses two main sections which are to be joined together in application. The sections include: The import of the call of Isaiah as an example of true claim to Divine mandate following from genuine vocation; and, Today's false claim to Divine mandate in situations where there is even no genuine vocation. Seen separately, there are a few works by some scholars. There are works which have exposed the meaning of the call of Isaiah independent of any other situation or application. This is attested-to in works by scholars like Kaiser, Childs, Watts, Wildberger, Seitz, Young, Clements, Evans and Malcolm. There are fewer works on the fact and implication of false claim to divine mandate today. This may be due to the fact that authenticity in this regard has not been thought by many to be verifiable and so everybody tends to allow the situation be. Most of the works on divine mandate, like that of

Burges, refer to Kings and secular leaders who sometimes claim supernatural mandate. On the other hand, if/when taken together with the intention of analyzing the two sections towards establishing some objective criterion for authentic claim to Divine mandate, there is a big gap to be filled as there are no major works that directly address this need. This research, as an attempt to fill that gap, is an exploration of a quasi virgin area. Apart from the need to address the challenge of false claim in Christian theology, it is this paucity or near unavailability of scholarly material in this area that gives credibility and relevance to this research.

Exegesis of the Passage

This research will progress by analyzing and interpreting the study-passage Isa. 6: 1-6
 Passage in Hebrew

WTT Isaiah 6:1 והו וארצה את-אדני ישב על-כסא רם ונשא ושליו מלאים את-ההיכל: בשנת-מות המלך עז
 2 ליו ובשתים יעופף: תים יכסה רגשרפים עמדים ממעל לו יש כנפים יש כנפים לאחד בשתים יכסה פניו ובש
 3 וקרוא ואל-זה ואמר קדוש קדוש קדוש יהנה צבאות מלא כל-הארץ כבודו:
 4 ויגועו אמות הספים מקול הקורא והבית ימלא עשן:
 5 לך יהנה צבאות ראו כי-נדמיתי כי איש טמא-שפתים אנכי ובתוך עם-טמא שפתים אנכי יושב כי את-המלאמר אוי-לי עיני:
 6 מעל המזבח: גיעף אלי אחד מן-השרפים ובדו רצפה במלקחיים לקח
 7 ויגע על-פי ויאמר הנה נגע זה על-שפתיה וסר עוול וחסאתה תכפר:
 8 ואשמע את-קול אדני אמר את-מי אשלח ומי ילד-לנו ואמר הנני שלחני:
 9 אמר לך ואמרת לעם הנה שמעו שמעו ואל-תבינו וראו ראו ואל-תדעו: ו
 10 שוב ורפא לו: כו יבין והשמע לב-העם הנה ואני הכבד ועיניו השע פן-יראה בעיניו ובאניו ישמע ולב

Passage in Greek LXX

LXT Isaiah 6:1 και ἐγένετο τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ οὗ ἀπέθανεν Οζίας ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶδον τὸν κύριον καθήμενον ἐπὶ θρόνου ὑψηλοῦ καὶ ἐπηρμένον καὶ πλήρης ὁ οἶκος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
 2 καὶ Σεραφιν εἰστήκεισαν κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ ἐξ πτέρυγες τῷ ἐνὶ καὶ ἐξ πτέρυγες τῷ ἐνὶ καὶ ταῖς μὲν δυσὶν κατεκάλυπτον τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ ταῖς δυσὶν κατεκάλυπτον τοὺς πόδας καὶ ταῖς δυσὶν ἐπέταντο
 3 καὶ ἐκέκραγον ἕτερος πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον καὶ ἔλεγον ἅγιος ἅγιος ἅγιος κύριος σαβαωθ πλήρης πᾶσα ἡ γῆ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
 4 καὶ ἐπήρθη τὸ ὑπέρθυρον ἀπὸ τῆς φωνῆς ἧς ἐκέκραγον καὶ ὁ οἶκος ἐπλήσθη καπνοῦ
 5 καὶ εἶπα ὦ τάλας ἐγὼ ὅτι κατανένυγμαι ὅτι ἄνθρωπος ὢν καὶ ἀκάθαρτα χεῖλη ἔχων ἐν μέσῳ λαοῦ ἀκάθαρτα χεῖλη ἔχοντος ἐγὼ οἰκῶ καὶ τὸν βασιλέα κύριον σαβαωθ εἶδον τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς μου
 6 καὶ ἀπεστάλη πρὸς με ἐν τῶν σεραφιν καὶ ἐν τῇ χειρὶ εἶχεν ἄνθρακα ὃν τῇ λαβίδι ἔλαβεν ἀπὸ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου
 7 καὶ ἥψατο τοῦ στόματός μου καὶ εἶπεν ἰδοὺ ἥψατο τοῦτο τῶν χειλέων σου καὶ ἀφελεῖ τὰς ἀνομίας σου καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου περικαθαριεῖ
 8 καὶ ἤκουσα τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου λέγοντος τίνα ἀποστείλω καὶ τίς πορεύσεται πρὸς τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον καὶ εἶπα ἰδοὺ εἰμι ἐγὼ ἀπόστολόν με
 9 καὶ εἶπεν πορεύθητι καὶ εἰπὸν τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ ἀκοῇ ἀκούσετε καὶ οὐ μὴ συνῆτε καὶ βλέποντες βλέψετε καὶ οὐ μὴ ἴδητε
 10 ἐπαχύνθη γὰρ ἡ καρδιά τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν αὐτῶν βαρέως ἤκουσαν καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν ἐκάμυσαν μήποτε ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν ἀκούσωσιν καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ συνῶσιν καὶ ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἰάσομαι αὐτούς (Isa 6:1-10 LXT)

Passage in English – NRS

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple.

2 Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."

4 The pivots¹ on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke.

5 And I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

7 The seraph¹ touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out."

8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

9 And he said, "Go and say to this people: 'Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand.'

10 Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and comprehend with their minds, and turn and be healed." (Isa 6:1-10 NRS)

Analysis of the Text

Even though there are a lot of controversies among scholars as to the place, meaning and function of Is chapter 6, as a passage, it has little or no variants. In its textual criticism, most scholars agree to the 'authenticity' of this passage as a call narrative. The dating of this narrative to the time of Uzziah's death gives real credibility to it. This is therefore dated to about 740 BC. The remote background of this passage is the fact of vocation - the initiative of God to call and recruit His messengers even, sometimes, to the point of insisting against their apparent disposition. The remote background is Isaiah's proof of his authenticity as an authentic prophet, himself, called by God. It serves as a confirmation of the call of Isaiah to prophetic ministry.

In the midst of several proposals of structure for this passage, for the purpose of our analysis, this research prefers to look at this passage as a double structure. This inspiration comes from an attempt to answer the first of three important questions: what happened? How and Why did it happen? To this first question: 'what happened?' two verbs have provided the answer from the point of view of Isaiah. Isaiah saw and heard. Referenced by the import of the two verbs 'seeing' (הָאֵר) and 'hearing' (עָמַשׁ), this research is progressing with the double structure of two unequal sets of verses 1 – 7; and 8-10.

PART A = Is. 6: 1-7 (Defined by the verb 'seeing' (הָאֵר))

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they 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 pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the

house filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph¹ touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out."

PART B = Is. 6: 8-10 (Defined by the verb 'hearing' (עִמַּשׁ))

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" And he said, "Go and say to this people: 'Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand.' Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and comprehend with their minds, and turn and be healed."

It is the two verbs above: 'seeing' (הָאֵר) and 'hearing' (עִמַּשׁ), which define the experience of Isaiah in the passage. He saw the Lord in His attributes and also experienced the Lord in His sovereignty. It was after that experience that Isaiah also heard the Lord and was able to respond to His call to service.

Further analysis, seeking to answer the other questions 'How and Why' necessarily demands that this research do more detailed analysis in order to examine and bring to fore the hidden meaning of the passage. Formal analysis of the passage reveals a Temple setting which proposes that Isaiah was already in the Temple Ministry before the call or that he was destined for such ministry. In whichever case, Isaiah was associated with the Temple and by implication already prepared and disposed for ministry. This is important because genuine vocation comes through and is nurtured by an accumulated experience of and acquaintance with religious cult. However, it is the import of the 'anchoring' verbs 'seeing' (הָאֵר) and 'hearing' (עִמַּשׁ) that will be more helpful in this analysis.

Contextual Word Study (הָאֵר (SEEING) and (עִמַּשׁ) (GNIRAEH) שמע

The import of 'seeing' (הָאֵר) the Lord in this passage speaks volumes to the interpretation of its passage. The verb 'to see' can be used and has been used in different ways. There is always the ordinary sense of perceiving by the sense of sight. So it can be used to refer to physical sighting but it can also refer to spiritual or psychological insights. But in this context, it is about 'seeing the Lord.' In the Hebrew setting, it was believed that one would die if he saw God (Gen. 32: 30; Exod. 19: 21; 20: 19; 33: 20; Deut. 18: 16; Judg. 13: 22). Only designated individuals like Moses were 'permitted' to see the Lord. This type of seeing was not just physical but it also referred to ministerial insight. Since Is. 6: 1 is also talking of seeing the Lord and Is 6: 5 fears the consequence of death, it means that this type of seeing by Isaiah has something to do with physical seeing. But since Isaiah did not die (at least not reported in our passage), it could be that the seeing, like that of Moses went beyond physical sighting to include ministerial insights and experiences. This is consistent with the fact that some scholars think about this 'seeing' as a 'vision.' It also has to do with receiving visions. Further analysis of this first part of the passage shows that Isaiah's insight was more of an experience. He experienced the holiness of God in verses 1-4 and also experienced the cleansing of God in verses 6-7. This research draws reason from this arrangement to understand seeing here, more as an experience than just a sighting.

On the other hand, the verb 'hearing' (עִמַּשׁ) as used in this context has a deep import. Again, hearing could always refer to physical audition or spiritual disposition. The former does not necessarily guarantee the latter. In Is. 6: 8, the narrative is presented as if Isaiah merely

overheard the Lord or is hearing the voice of God for the first time. Or could it be that he heard it before but did not have the spiritual disposition to understand? This former position is preferred in this research because of the particle conjunction used here which could mean that the action of the verb ‘hearing’ (עִמַּשׁ) is a consequence of another action. That other action which necessitates ‘hearing’ (עִמַּשׁ) cannot but be the divine cleansing reported in verses 6 and 7. The import of ‘hearing’ (עִמַּשׁ) in this passage therefore strongly suggests ‘understanding’ and ‘comprehension’ which alone could facilitate the type of willing response of verse 8. It is a type of hearing that is made meaningful by understanding and consequent response in action.

Interpretation of the Passage

Following the analyses above, and considering the structural and syntactical appreciation of the passage, this research identifies in this passage, a definitive proof of the divine mandate that Isaiah had as a prophet. First of all, this is consistent with the practice by other major prophets of the Old Testament. Secondly, the import of the two verbs is very suggestive of genuine theophany experience. The idea of seeing connotes ‘experience’ and the idea of hearing connotes ‘comprehension.’ Isaiah experienced God and following from that ‘experience’ (seeing), he understood the mind of God and in verse 8 volunteered to minister to a difficult people. Thirdly, the sequence of action signals credibility. Isaiah did not claim to hear before seeing. He had to see before hearing and that order (seeing before hearing) alone guarantees a genuine response borne from understanding. True vocation must involve full understanding of the demands of discipleship. True vocation demands that the candidate, like Isaiah, ‘see and hear’ before he responds. The divine intervention in verses 6 and 7; and the eventual address of not just who to minister to but also how to minister in verses 9 and 10, all point to the genuineness of divine mandate. Besides, finally, another proof of the above interpretation is the type of ministry Isaiah is sent into. It does not sound like a simple nor a pleasant one. His consent is not forced but his response is absolute based on his experience. From such findings, this research has reasons to interpret this passage as a proof of the genuineness of Isaiah’s divine mandate given that he actually experienced the Lord, understood His mission, volunteered into His mission and accepted the nature of that mission. Every true vocation must reflect this progressions and this readiness to sacrifice for the cause of ministry, though difficult, without counting the cost.

Claim to Divine Mandate Today

Divine mandate has to do with the claim that one’s ministry is not only initiated and motivated by God, but that, it is also sustained by Him. Divine mandate implies the authenticity of a missionary enterprise because it has divine origin and approval. Today, there is incessant claim to such divine mandate. The question is how many of these claims are genuine and how many of those vocations are authentic. While the prophets of the Old Testament were marked by definite and verifiable characteristics like: being called by God; institution not being of family inheritance; non – remunerated ministry and; not acting like Diviners, the experience of some ministers of God today is almost opposite. Today, there are prophets who have not received any call at least not from God. There are many who have turned the ministry to a family business meant for money making. Some prophets today have turned themselves into Diviners. This has not only departed sharply from the ideal of divine mandate, but it has led many people astray because the ulterior motive of this type of prophet is anything but service.

Today, there is so much increase in deception. This is what the Christian world would call false prophets. They tend to present ‘humanly designed’ criteria for proof. Some people claim that their supernatural powers prove that they are from God. But experience has shown that signs and accuracy do not always equal authenticity. While some claims to divine mandate are true, there is serious concern over the fact that majority of others is not true. A claim is false and not authentic if it cannot fit into the borders of divine commission to service. The Divine commission of Isaiah started with the Divine search for ‘servers’: “whom shall I send, who will go on this errand of mine?” Isaiah’s response like those of many other genuine Old Testament messengers of God was “I am here, send me Lord.” A claim can only be considered authentic if one is called by God, sent by God, exhibits that character of service and does not lay claim to infinite powers.

Unfortunately, the trend today, in Nigeria and in many other nations witnesses a lot of false claims to divine mandate. Many jump into ministry for the wrong reasons. Rather than wait to be informed and to learn more of the demands of ministry (by ‘seeing and hearing’), they falsely claim divine approval and go ahead with inauthentic mandate by constant struggle to introduce and make themselves relevant. Many already exhibit signs of falsehood in their moral life and teaching. Many are in ministry for economic reasons. They claim they have a message from God but they seem to put the cart before the horse. Instead of moving from ‘seeing to hearing,’ these ‘false prophets,’ unknown to themselves, ignorantly reflect a wrong movement from ‘hearing to seeing.’

Evaluation

In the course of this research, Isaiah, more consistently than other major prophets, has presented a movement from ‘seeing to hearing’ (from experiencing to understanding the Lord) as the right basis for authentic claim to Divine mandate. In the course of this research, the interpretation of Is. 6: 1-10 has really exposed the ministerial authenticity of Prophet Isaiah. He saw God in the sense of experiencing Him. He understood God to the extent of volunteering into His service – though difficult. His was that of service. Isaiah’s proof of authenticity was evident from “seeing to hearing” the Lord. Either as a novice-minister or an ordinary faithful worshiper, Isaiah’s call narrative shows he was already conversant with Temple cult before his call. It was such experience that elicited the response: “send me.” It is interesting to see that the Lord actually sent him in Is. 6: 9-10.

On the other hand, we have also seen that, today, many self-acclaimed prophets have arisen with man-made reasons to claim authenticity of divine mandate. By their fruits, one can identify their falsehood. Prominent among their defaults and unlike Isaiah, these others move ‘anti-clockwise’ – from “hearing to seeing.” This research, from its findings, maintains that the progression from “seeing to hearing” is a more meaningful progression to prove authenticity than that from “hearing to seeing.” Where there is no experience of God and the understanding of such experience, any response to perceived vocation is most likely to be false.

Towards Authentic Claim to Divine Mandate: “From Seeing to Hearing”

Based on the findings of this research as evidenced by the experience of Prophet Isaiah, the scrutiny for authentic claim to divine mandate can only proceed from “seeing to hearing.” One must not only experience the Lord but needs to understand the demands of His ministry before volunteering. In this context, this phrase, “from seeing to hearing,” means an informed appreciation of the nature of the caller and of the call itself as a basis for voluntary acceptance of

selfless sacrifice in mission. A situation where one claims a mandate for mission without seeing before hearing; a situation where a minister claims divine understanding without divine experience must be seen as a red flag for the identification of falsehood in ministry. This wrongly revered experience manifests itself in those false prophets who claim an experience with God without actually 'knowing' Him nor 'experiencing' Him.

Having the vocation is different from responding to vocation. In most cases, God would always call whomever, whenever and wherever He desires to. Like in the case of Isaiah, the question was not addressed to him. It was a general question but the fact that Isaiah SAW before HEARING, gave him a better and more informed opportunity to respond positively and convincingly. If he had not experienced, he would not have understood. The two verbs 'seeing' (הָאָר) and 'hearing' (עָמַשׁ), and in that order, actually defined his authenticity in ministry.

The experience and example of Isaiah in Is. 6: 1-10 is very relevant for vocation today. He is seen as a model of authentic ministerial service. But more than just the prophetic call, it is the sequence of events leading up to Isaiah's ministerial mandate that is very important.

There had been the encounter with the presence of God, confession, a ritual of purification, overhearing the Lord addressing the heavenly council, and then acceptance of the commission.

The above sequence, again, can be defined in the contextual phrase: from 'seeing' (הָאָר) to 'hearing' (עָמַשׁ) as the main progression towards authentic claim to divine mandate. Any other progression, should, at best, be viewed with suspicion and subject to more scrutiny since they are most likely to be false and deceptive.

Recommendations

Drawing from the submissions above, and in an attempt to sustain true appreciation of divine mandate, this research comes up with the following recommendations:

More awareness has to be created even in theological institutes that genuine vocation must always be divinely initiated. Man's acceptance to serve can/must only be a response. Man cannot initiate vocation.

Prophets and today's ministers of God should be scrutinized not just by who they claim to be but more so by what they reflect of God

Any religious ministry that departs from the ideal standard of service reflected by Isaiah and the major prophets of the Old Testament should be rejected

Religious ministry must be appreciated as God's commission and not man's

Today's faithful must heed to God's warning to be vigilant to resist the evil of the time

Spiritual directors and Formators in religious institutions need to be more insistence on teaching the demand of sacrifice in ministry.

This progression from experience to declaration of consent can also be helpful and could be employed in man's approach even to non-religious professions and apostolates.

Conclusion

The entire experience of Prophet Isaiah especially his call narrative in Is. 6: 1-10, remains a reference point to any person or people in search of basis for genuine claim to divine mandate. Unfortunately, as it has also been noticed, most of today's claims to divine mandate are false and wrongly motivated. In the course of this research, it has been discovered that projecting the Isaiahic progression from 'seeing' (הָאָר) to 'hearing' (עָמַשׁ) can serve as a paradigm for appreciating authentic divine mandate. It is against this background that this research has had

reasons to conclude that the most meaningful way to profess and progress in divine ministry is to move from seeing to hearing, which means projecting an informed appreciation of the nature of the caller and of the call itself as a basis for voluntary acceptance of selfless sacrifice in mission. All ministers of God who reflect this attitude and in this progressive order have an important proof of authenticity which other fruits will help to confirm. It is also the position of this research that those ministers who either do not reflect this progression or reflect it in a wrong order, must be subjected to further tests as having projected a major sign of inauthenticity. On the whole, the movement from seeing to hearing should precede genuine consent to ministerial commission. Guided by the above conclusion, this research believes that both religion and scholarship can regain the needed credibility in today's prophetic cult.

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