

## Review

The prophet Isaiah has been speaking to the Jews in Judah regarding the fact that they have forsaken God, while maintaining the appearance of worship. God has warned them through Isaiah that if they do not repent, they will be removed from the land.

Tonight, we pick up in chapter six as we are told of a vision that Isaiah saw...

### 6:1 King Uzziah's Death

The year of King Uzziah's death, Isaiah saw the Lord. Uzziah was an interesting character in history. He was 16 years old when he became king (2Chr. 26:1). He had a good beginning of seeking the Lord, and the Scripture says,

**2Chr. 26:5 ...as long as he sought the LORD, God prospered him.**

He defeated Judah's enemies, and built strong defenses. He became very strong and rich, and his fame spread as far as Egypt.

**2Chr. 26:16 But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.**

When the priests rebuked Uzziah for this action, he became enraged (2Chr. 26:19). Leprosy broke out on his forehead. He was a leper until the day of his death (2Chr. 26:21).

It was in the year that King Uzziah died that Isaiah saw the Lord.

### The Lord Sitting On A Throne

There are several times that the prophets describe seeing God seated on His throne. We recently heard Ezekiel's descriptions in Ezekiel 1 and 10. Daniel 7 describes it, and so does John throughout the book of Revelation, especially in chapters four and five.

One vision not often remembered is Stephen...

**Acts 7:55-56 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus stand-**

**ing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."**

This of course got him killed. But it is fascinating to do a comparison of all the accounts.

Isaiah's description of the Lord is that He was "lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple." "Lofty and exalted" basically means "high and lifted up."

### **The Train Of His Robe**

The train of His robe filled the temple. The "train" of a robe (Heb: "shool") is basically the hem, or the fringe. Remember that this was what demonstrated authority, rank, and position. Today, we look at the shoulder and collar of a military uniform to determine rank and authority. Then, the robe was like a man's uniform, and its hem, fringe, or train was his rank.

Understanding this leads to an interesting study through Scripture. The high priest had a blue robe, with the fringe being pomegranates and bells. Their purpose was to make a tinkling noise when he entered the holy place, proving his authority and right to be there - if there was no noise, God would strike him dead.

**Ex. 28:35 "It shall be on Aaron when he ministers; and its tinkling shall be heard when he enters and leaves the holy place before the LORD, so that he will not die."**

When Saul accidentally tore the edge of Samuel's robe,

**1Sam. 15:28 ...Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today..."**

This demonstrated that in rejecting Samuel's authority as prophet, Saul lost his authority as king.

Later, Saul was relieving himself in a cave, but didn't realize that David and his mighty men were hiding inside.

**1Sam. 24:4 The men of David said to him, "Behold, this is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to**

**him as it seems good to you.’” Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul’s robe secretly.**

David's conscience really bothered him for doing this, because what he had done was the equivalent of pulling the crown off of Saul's head.

You may also recall the story of the woman who'd been hemorrhaging for 12 years, having suffered much at the hands of many physicians, pursued Jesus. She...

**Luke 8:44 came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.**

In doing this, she was submitting herself to the authority of Christ, and she was instantly made well. This simple act worked for others as well.

**Mark 6:56 Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.**

And so here in Isaiah, the fact that the train of God's robe fills the temple demonstrates His absolute authority. It is almost as if He was wearing a general's uniform with not three stars or five stars, but a billion stars.

## **6:2 Seraphim**

This section of Isaiah is the only place in the Bible that we read of the Seraphim around the throne. As a result, many believe that it is simply another name for the Cherubim. If you compare their descriptions in the Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation accounts, you most likely will come to that conclusion as well.

## **6:3 Holy Is The Lord**

The Seraphim call out to one another, saying, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.” John told us in Revelation that...

**Rev. 4:8 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day**

**and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."**

When it comes down to it, God's holiness is all-encompassing. We can think of God as being the manifestation of love, or grace, or mercy, or justice, or power, etc., but what He is most of all is holy. That is the attribute of God by which the creatures are most overwhelmed.

### **6:4-7 I Am Ruined**

Isaiah also saw God's holiness. And his reaction was to realize his own unholiness. After a five-chapter-long ministry of telling people "Woe is you," Isaiah said, "Woe is me."

Although Isaiah was probably the most righteous guy in Judah at the time, when he caught a glimpse of God's holiness, he knew that he was sinful sludge.

Simon Peter also had a similar reaction. He...

**Luke 5:8 ...fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"**

Job said,

**Job 42:5-6 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; Therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes."**

And when John saw Jesus in Revelation, he wrote,

**Rev. 1:17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man...**

When you are truly confronted with God's holiness, there is no possibility of pride. There is only a complete poverty of spirit, a realization that even what we thought was righteousness is just filthy rags. Fortunately, that's the best place to be. Jesus said,

**Matt. 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

That is exactly the place that God wants us to be, for when we cry out to Him about our unrighteousness, it is then that He is able to cleanse us.

## **Your Sin Is Forgiven**

Isaiah cried out because of his unclean lips. Now, it's very possible that Isaiah realized that he had a problem with gossip, or lying, or profanity. But it's also possible that Isaiah was realizing that God's Holy Word had been communicated through his own unclean mouth. When he finally saw God Himself, Isaiah must have been horrified to think of his own sinful mouth as the conduit for the Words of such a holy God.

But then his lips were touched by a burning coal of the altar. His iniquity was taken away, and his sin was forgiven. There was nothing that Isaiah could do to cleanse himself. All he could do was confess his sin. The same is true for us. All we can do with our unclean lips is confess our sin. Fortunately,

**1John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

The cleansing, the forgiveness, is not because of what we have done, but because of what was done for us.

## **6:8 Here Am I, Send Me!**

Isaiah has seen God's holiness, realized his own sinfulness, and received gracious forgiveness. And so when he hears that God is looking for someone to send, Isaiah eagerly volunteers: "Here am I. Send me!"

Are you someone who has realized God's holiness and your sinfulness? Have you received God's gracious forgiveness? Most of us here no doubt would say yes. I wonder, then, why so few here have responded by saying, "Here am I. Send me!"

Very few missionaries. Very few answering the call to full-time ministry. Very few even volunteering to do part-time ministry. It's not like there's a lack of ministry to be done.

Jesus told the disciples,

**Luke 10:2-3 ...“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.”**

Jesus basically told them, "There are very few workers to do the ministry. So I want you to pray that the Lord will send workers. And when you pray, you'll realize that it's you He's calling, so go." If only we would all pray and then go work in the field of ministry.

### **6:9-10 Dull Ears And Dim Eyes**

God commissioned Isaiah to go preach to the Jews. But He also told Isaiah that they wouldn't receive it. Jesus quoted these verses when the disciples asked Him why He had begun to speak in parables.

**Matt. 13:13-14 "... I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE'"**

Jesus was teaching in parables. Basically telling stories of comparison - placing two things next to each other. Using a simple truth to illustrate a more complex one. When asked why, He said that some people can't or won't understand the parables. Not because He was trying to disguise the truth, but because He had made it so plainly obvious that those who were dull of hearing and dim of seeing became blatantly obvious.

I remember a recording class I took in college. Having been in loud rock bands for years, there are certain frequencies that had long since been blasted out of my ability to hear. But nobody in the class would possibly have any way of knowing that. But one day, the teacher was using a frequency generator to illustrate different tones. He happened to hit upon a frequency that I could not hear. I kept asking him to turn it up. I was convinced that if it was just a little louder, if I could just know what sound I was listening for, I was sure that then I could hear it. Pretty soon, everyone in the class had their hands over their ears, some even doubling up in pain, and I'm asking, "can you just turn it up a little more so I can hear it?"

When the truth of the Word is preached, those who are dull of hear-

ing and dim of seeing became blatantly obvious.

**1Cor. 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

**1Cor. 2:14 ...a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.**

### **6:11-13 How Long?**

Then Isaiah asks the Lord, "How long?" In other words, "How long are people going to deafly reject your Word? How long will they turn a blind eye to Your Truth?" God answers that they will not repent until they have been removed from the land. Of course with hindsight, we are well aware of the fact that the Babylonian Captivity will take place. The people will not repent until they have been in Babylon for seventy years.