

Sermon 11 – A Vision of God’s Glory Study Notes

Day 1: The Sovereign on the Throne

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 6:1 (NKJV)

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple."

Devotional Teaching

Isaiah’s call is given deep historical roots. We are told that this vision occurred in the year King Uzziah died. Uzziah had reigned over Judah for fifty-two years, bringing incredible stability, prosperity, and strength to the nation. But now he was dead, and the uncertainty about the next administration was heavy upon the people. Furthermore, there were ominous threats arising on the horizon, specifically the dangerous power of Assyria. The people of God themselves were in a state of spiritual declension and rebellion. It was a time of national anxiety and cultural decline. In that very year of uncertainty, God granted His prophet a vision that would anchor his ministry for the rest of his life.

Isaiah says, "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne." Notice the specific name for God used here. It is not the divine name Yahweh, but Adonai, which means Master, Owner, or Sovereign Ruler. Isaiah saw the absolute monarch of heaven and earth. The throne is the seat of honor and authority, the place from which a king issues his decrees and passes his judgments. The earthly king of Judah had just died, and his throne passed to another, but the throne Isaiah saw never ends. It is high and lifted up, entirely above any earthly power or authority. His train filled the temple, displaying His supreme rank and majesty.

When the world about us seems to be out of control and the wicked appear to reign, we must remember what Isaiah saw. The Lord is still on His throne. History is not in the hands of men; it is the work of God. He is working out His purposes in and through the events of this world. If we are going to faithfully serve God in our own generation, we must have our eyes lifted above the changing circumstances of society. We must see the Sovereign One ruling over all things with absolute authority.

Theological Reflection Question

How does recognizing God as the absolute, unchanging Sovereign over all history bring comfort when you face seasons of personal or national uncertainty?

Questions for Children

Parents, discuss these questions with your children: When King Uzziah died, the people were probably very scared. Why did seeing God on a throne help Isaiah not to be afraid? Who is really in charge of the world?

Family Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we confess that we often look at the circumstances of our lives and become fearful. We easily forget who is truly in charge. Please give us a renewed vision of Your sovereignty. Help us to remember that You sit upon a throne that is high and lifted up, and that nothing happens outside of Your divine control. Give us the courage to trust You in difficult times. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

Psalm 47:8 (NKJV)

"God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne."

Day 2: The Transcendent Holiness of God

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 6:2–3 (NKJV)

"Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!'"

Devotional Teaching

Whenever you visit a mighty king, you expect to see his attendants, and their glory usually reflects the glory of the monarch they serve. The attendants surrounding this King are the seraphim, angelic beings created by God for His specific service. The name literally means "burning ones," pointing both to their brilliant appearance and their burning zeal for the praise of God. Yet, even these exalted, sinless creatures could not gaze directly upon the glory of this King. They used two wings to cover their faces in reverence and two to cover their feet in humility.

As they flew around the throne, they cried to one another, "Holy, holy, holy." This is the Hebrew superlative. To say something is holy is significant, but to repeat it three times is to declare that it exists in the absolute, highest degree. What do we mean by this? The holiness of God refers to His absolute separation from His creation. He is entirely transcendent. The ancient world believed gods and men shared the same basic nature, just at different levels. But the Bible teaches there is no continuous chain of being between God

and man. God is the Creator; we are creatures. He is completely perfect, separate, and exalted above all that He has made.

This is the God we serve. He is the Holy One of Israel. We must never become casually familiar with God in a way the Bible does not allow. We cannot treat Him as we would treat a man, even the most powerful man on earth. He requires our utmost reverence, fear, and worship. We must remember that our God is perfectly holy, and everything we do is measured against His flawless standard of righteousness.

Theological Reflection Question

In what ways does modern culture try to bring God down to the level of man, and how does the biblical doctrine of God's transcendent holiness correct this error?

Questions for Children

Parents, discuss these questions with your children: Why did the angels cover their faces when they were near God? What does the word "holy" tell us about how special and different God is from us?

Family Prayer

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts, we bow before Your majesty today. We acknowledge that You are completely separate from sin and perfectly pure in all Your ways. Forgive us for the times we have treated You lightly or spoken of You without the reverence You deserve. Teach our family to worship You with true awe and respect. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

Psalms 99:9 (NKJV)

"Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His holy hill; For the LORD our God is holy."

Day 3: The Earth Full of His Glory

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 6:3–4 (NKJV)

"And one cried to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!' And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke."

Devotional Teaching

The seraphim declare that the whole earth is full of God's glory. We do not believe in a deistic God. We do not believe God is like a watchmaker who created the universe, wound it up with natural laws, and then stepped back to let it run on its own. The God of the Bible is present and actively governing His creation. If God were not actively holding all things together by the word of His power, we would cease to exist instantly. His glory is displayed in the natural world, but it is also demonstrated in human history as He raises up kingdoms and brings down tyrants according to His perfect justice.

As the seraphim shouted these truths, the physical structure of the temple reacted. The posts of the door moved at the voice of him who cried, and the house was filled with smoke. This is a theophany, a visible manifestation of God's presence given to men, similar to the lightning and thunder on Mount Sinai. God was overwhelming Isaiah's senses to impress upon him the weight of divine sovereignty. The shaking doors and the thick smoke communicated a glory that is terrifying to sinful flesh.

Later in the New Testament, the Apostle John reflects on this exact moment. In John 12:41, John writes that Isaiah said these things "when he saw His glory and spoke of Him." Who was John talking about? He was talking about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The glorious Sovereign sitting on the throne in Isaiah 6 is the pre-incarnate Christ. Jesus is no mere man. He is the eternal God, the Lord of hosts, whose glory fills the earth. We must fix this vision in our minds so that we fully grasp the majesty of the Savior we worship.

Theological Reflection Question

How does understanding that Jesus Christ is the holy Sovereign on the throne in Isaiah 6 change the way you read the Gospel accounts of His earthly life?

Questions for Children

Parents, discuss these questions with your children: When the angels shouted, the doors shook and smoke filled the room. What do you think Isaiah felt when that happened? How does nature show us God's power today?

Family Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise You as the eternal Son of God. We thank You that Your glory fills the earth and that You actively uphold all things by Your power. Open our eyes to see Your handiwork in creation and Your justice in history. Help us to stand in awe of Your mighty presence. In Your holy name, amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

Psalms 19:1 (NKJV)

"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork."

Day 4: The Proper Response to Holiness

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 6:5 (NKJV)

"So I said: 'Woe is me, for I am undone! Because 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.'"

Devotional Teaching

When Isaiah saw the glory of God, he did not casually join the chorus of the seraphim. He did not ask for a blessing. Instead, he cursed himself. The word "woe" is a declaration of doom and judgment. Isaiah looked at the absolute perfection of God, and the immediate result was a devastating awareness of his own corruption. He said, "I am undone!" Literally, he felt as though he were disintegrating or ceasing to exist. In the presence of the Holy One, every high opinion he had of himself evaporated.

Isaiah specifically identifies his sin by saying he is a man of unclean lips. He was called to be a prophet, a man whose ministry relied on his mouth, yet he realized his lips were completely defiled by sin. Jesus taught that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. The unclean lips were merely a barometer of a corrupt heart. Isaiah knew that even his most righteous deeds were tainted by selfish motives and fell completely short of God's perfect standard. He recognized that he had absolutely no meritorious works to offer God. He deserved to be destroyed.

This is the necessary starting point for every true believer. Until we see the holiness of God, we will continually excuse our own sin. We will compare ourselves to other people and think we are doing quite well. But when we truly behold the King, the Lord of hosts, all self-righteousness is shattered. We must come to the place where we agree with God about our sin. We must recognize that we deserve His righteous judgment. Only those who have pronounced a woe upon themselves are in a position to receive the cleansing grace of God.

Theological Reflection Question

Why is a deep, personal conviction of our own sinfulness and inability to save ourselves entirely necessary before we can truly appreciate the gospel?

Questions for Children

Parents, discuss these questions with your children: When Isaiah saw how perfect God was, how did it make him feel about his own behavior? Why do we sometimes try to hide our sins instead of admitting them to God?

Family Prayer

Righteous God, when we consider Your holiness, we must confess that we are a people of unclean lips. We have spoken words of anger, pride, and deceit. We have no good works that can earn Your favor. We agree with Your judgment against our sin. Please grant us genuine repentance, that we would stop making excuses and humbly seek Your mercy. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

1 John 1:8 (NKJV)

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Day 5: The Fire of Cleansing Grace

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 6:6–7 (NKJV)

"Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: 'Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged.'"

Devotional Teaching

Isaiah stood before the throne pronouncing judgment upon himself. He expected to be consumed by the holiness of God. But instead of wrath, God moved in sudden, breathtaking mercy. A seraph flew to the prophet with a live coal taken directly from the altar of burnt offering. In the Old Testament system, this altar was the place where innocent animals were sacrificed to pay for the sins of the guilty. The coal represented the completed sacrifice. The seraph pressed the burning coal to Isaiah's unclean lips and declared, "Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged."

This is the center of the gospel message. The cleansing of Isaiah's sin did not come from his own apologies, his future promises to do better, or his religious efforts. It came exclusively from the altar of sacrifice. The one who was high and lifted up on the throne left that throne, took on human flesh, and walked among a people of unclean lips. Jesus Christ became the ultimate sacrifice on the cross. He took the just condemnation of God upon Himself, paying the penalty we owed so that our iniquities could be entirely taken away.

Imagine the profound relief that flooded Isaiah's soul. One moment he was doomed to hell, and the next, he was declared clean by the decree of God. We who trust in Christ have experienced this same miracle. Because of the shed blood of Jesus, God pronounces us forgiven. We do not have to stand before the judgment seat in terror. We can stand before our holy God clothed in the righteousness of Christ. From this foundation of total forgiveness, we are then empowered to go out and serve our glorious King.

Theological Reflection Question

How does the symbol of the coal taken from the altar point directly to the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross?

Questions for Children

Parents, discuss these questions with your children: How did God take away Isaiah's sin? Because we cannot take away our own sins, what did Jesus do on the cross to make us clean?

Family Prayer

Father, we thank You for the incredible mercy You have shown us in Jesus Christ. We were undone and deserving of Your wrath, but You provided a sacrifice to purge our sins. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for dying on the cross to take away our iniquity. Help us to live today with the joy and gratitude of those who have been completely forgiven. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

1 John 1:9 (NKJV)

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."