

What Isaiah Saw

Sunday, March 24, 1985

Isaiah 6:1-3

“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Here is my subject for today: **“WHAT ISAIAH SAW.”** Here is my text: **Isaiah Chapter 6:1.** The Scripture says, *“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up and His train (glory) filled the temple... the whole earth is full of His glory.”*

We don't know a great deal about this man Isaiah, except to say that he was a prophet of God. We do know that. He was a prophet of God who prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, who were each kings of Judah.

He lived almost 120 years and he prophesied 85 of those 120 years. He lived approximately 700 years before the Lord Jesus Christ visited our earth and came in the flesh.

Did you know that the writings of the prophet Isaiah are quoted in the New Testament more than all 39 of the Old Testament books except the book of Psalms. The book of Psalms is quoted more in New Testament than any other book in the Bible. Isaiah is quoted more than any book except the Psalms.

John, the forerunner of Christ, began his ministry quoting Isaiah; he said, *“The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord.”*

Our Lord Jesus Christ went down to Nazareth where He was brought up and as His custom was, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day and He stood up to read. Our Master, the Lord Himself, selected a passage of Scripture from **Isaiah chapter 61**, and read it and preached from it.

Our Lord quoted that passage from **Isaiah 61**. *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent*

me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

It was Isaiah that the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading when he was journeying from Jerusalem to Ethiopia in the chariot. He was sitting there reading the Scriptures and God sent Phillip (the preacher), down to preach to him. He was reading **Isaiah Chapter 53**. Isaiah is fitly called, “The Gospel of the Old Testament.”

What I want you to look at today is this; Isaiah had a revelation of the Lord. God revealed Himself to Isaiah as He is pleased to reveal Himself to all that He saves.

The apostle Paul says, “*God hath separated me from my mother’s womb and called me by His grace and He was pleased to reveal himself to me.*” God was pleased to reveal Himself to this man Isaiah.

Over in the New Testament, our Lord said to the apostle Peter one day; “*Whom do you say that I am?*” Peter said, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*” Our Master said, “*Flesh and blood didn’t reveal that to you but my Father revealed it to you, my Father which is in heaven.*”

In **Matthew 11:25**, our Lord said; “*I thank Thee Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and thou has revealed them unto babes.*” In **1 Corinthians 2: 8-10**, the Scripture says; “*Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of the men, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him, but He has revealed them unto us by His Spirit.*”

The thing that I want to talk about today is not just the fact that Isaiah was a great writer, a great prophet and a prophet who prophesied for a great number of years. He was a prophet who was often quoted in the New Testament.

He was a prophet who saw the Lord. God revealed Himself to Isaiah. This is what it says here in **Isaiah Chapter 6**; “*Isaiah saw the Lord.*” He said, “*In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord.*”

What does that mean? What did Isaiah mean? He did not see God essentially considered. You have to learn this first; “*No man hath seen God at any time.*” Isn’t this what the Bible says; “*No man hath seen God at any time?*”

God is a Spirit. The Bible talks about our God being invisible. God said to Moses, *“No man, can look on me and live.”* Even Moses was not permitted, essentially considered, to look on God. *“No man can look on God and live.”*

God is a Spirit. His essence is not to be seen. You might say, “Well preacher, what did Isaiah see? Whom did Isaiah see?” He said, *“I saw the Lord.”* Is this not what he said? Isaiah saw the Lord Jesus Christ. That is exactly who he saw; he saw the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah *“Saw the Lord”* 700 years before Christ came into this world. The Lord was manifested in human flesh. He walked on this earth; lived in the flesh, and died on the cross. He was buried and rose again. It was 700 years before Christ came to this earth that Isaiah the prophet had a pre-incarnation view of the Son of God. He said, *“I saw the Lord.”*

It has to be the Lord Jesus Christ because Christ said, *“No man hath seen the Father.”* Christ said this some 700 years later; *“No man hath seen the Father; the only Begotten hath declared Him,”* or manifested Him, or revealed Him.

When Isaiah said, *“I saw the Lord,”* he saw the Lord Jesus Christ; that is who he saw. He saw Christ on a throne. Will you see this? The Scripture says in **Hebrews 1:8**; the Father declared to the Son; *“Thy throne O God is forever.”*

Christ is called our *“Merciful, High Priest.”* We are invited to come to His throne of Grace. Our merciful High Priest is on a throne which is called *“A throne of Grace that we may find mercy and grace to help in time of need.”*

It says in **Hebrews 10:12**; *“Christ having offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down on a throne, on the right hand of God.”* He is Lord; He is Sovereign, Omnipotent Lord, by decree. *“God hath made this same Jesus whom you crucified to be Lord and Christ.”*

He is not only Lord by decree but He is Lord by death. *“He died that He might be Lord of the dead and the living.”*

Don't get the wrong conception of Christ; He came as the Lamb. He came as a sinner's friend. He came as the Redeemer. He came in the flesh and died. Our Lord Jesus Christ is seated on a throne, high and lifted up. This is what Isaiah said; *“I saw Him on a throne and I saw him high and lifted up.”*

The throne wasn't necessarily high and lifted up, Christ was high and lifted up. He became the Son of man and the Son of man was lifted up to save. Now, the Son of man is lifted up to reign. He is no longer on a cross. He is not in a tomb in Jerusalem; He is on a throne and He reigns.

Christ said to His disciples; *"I have all authority in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and preach the Gospel."* **Philippians 2** says, *"God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name."*

This name is above Abraham, above the name of Moses, David, and above the names of angels. He is greater than the angels. *"God hath given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus Christ, every knee shall bow in heaven, earth, and under the earth, and every tongue shall proclaim that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father."*

"I saw the Lord," he said. *"I saw him on a throne. I saw him high and lifted up."* This is a little different view from what I hear people talking about seeing Jesus at the foot of the bed or seeing Him out there wandering around in a field or seeing Him with visions.

Isaiah saw Him on a throne, *"High and lifted up."* His glory literally filled the temple. *"The whole earth was full of His glory."*

Isaiah also saw His holiness and righteousness. The Scripture says, *"The seraphims around the throne, (which many think are His prophets, His preachers, His evangelists), had six wings. With two of them, they covered their faces."* They were ashamed of themselves in His presence.

Even the seraphim cover their faces in the presence of His immaculate holiness, His awesome holiness. They covered their faces.

"With two wings, they covered their feet." They were ashamed of their walk. They were ashamed of their conduct and conversation, they covered their feet in humility.

"With two they did fly" about the throne of our Lord. *"They flew, someone said, in haste to proclaim the good news, that Christ is enthroned."*

But chiefly, Isaiah saw the Lord Jesus Christ and he saw Him on a throne. This is not the "Sweet, little Jesus boy; this is the *"King of Kings and the Lord of Lords."*

They saw Him lifted up and they saw His glory fill the temple. They saw even the Seraphim cover their faces in His awesome, holy, and righteous presence. They saw the

whole earth full of His glory. Now, *“The heavens declare His glory. All things that were made were made by Him.”*

Every believer has seen His glory and is filled with His glory. His body, the church, knows something about His glory. Someday, the whole earth will be full of His glory as the waters that cover the sea. There won't be a place that He doesn't rein. There won't be a heart over which He doesn't rein. There won't be a bird in the sky, an animal on the shore, or a man walking on legs that will not love Him with all of his heart, mind, soul, and strength. The glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ; *“I saw the Lord.”*

I listen to the religionists of this day and I listen with a broken heart. I listen with a tear in my eye and a sob in my throat. This “jesus” that they are talking about is not the Jesus Christ that Isaiah saw. Paul said, *“It is another Jesus; it is another Gospel; it is another Spirit.”* It is a Spirit of anti-Christ; it is an imposter, the counterfeit.

“Isaiah saw the Lord.” I know that he saw the Lord. I don't know that you have seen Him but I know that Isaiah saw Him; God said that he saw Him. God said that He revealed Himself to him. Isaiah said, *“In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord.”*

I saw Him on a throne. I didn't see Him begging anyone for anything. God said, *“If I were hungry, I wouldn't tell you. The cattle on a thousand hills are mine. If I needed anything I wouldn't call on you.”*

I hear people say, “God needs you. He needs your tithe; He needs your money; He needs your support, this, that, and the other.” God doesn't need anything that you have or anyone out there, not the God of the Bible; He is on a throne.

His throne is lifted up above all the earth and *“His glory fills the temple.”* His glory fills the earth as the waters that cover the sea. He is Holy.

What did Isaiah see? He saw the Lord. Then, what did He see? He saw himself. When he saw the glory and the holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ, he saw himself. He said, *“I saw the Lord high and lifted up and His train filled the temple. The seraphim's cried; Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Hosts.”*

Isaiah cried, *“Woe is me; I am a man of unclean lips. I'm undone; I'm cut off. Woe is me.”*

Let me tell you another reason why I doubt that this generation has not seen the Lord; it is their attitude toward themselves and toward sin. A sinner is hard to find; did you know that? If a man has seen the Lord, he knows he is a sinner; he can see his sin.

I will tell you this; if we look at the worst of men, we are prone to say, *“I thank God that I am not like other men.”* If we look at the Law, we are prone to say with Saul of Tarsus; *“I am blameless.”* If we look at the Ten Commandments, we are prone to say with the rich, young, ruler, *“All these have I kept from my youth up.”*

When a man gets a look at the Lord, if he ever sees the Lord in His holiness, in His majesty, in His awesome, greatness, in His glory, he can only say with Isaiah; *“I am undone. Woe is me; God be merciful to me a sinner. I am a man of unclean lips. I dwell among a people of unclean lips.”*

Isaiah said, *“I’m undone; I’m cut off; (I’m reduced to silence); I am a man of unclean lips.”* He is talking about his heart also; the lips are the outlet of the heart. *“As a man thinketh in his heart so is he. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”*

What is wrong with this man Isaiah? What makes him so low in the dust? What causes his tears, grief, mourning, and his great exclamation over sin? He has seen the Lord.

God’s perfect love reveals our hatred. God’s perfect obedience in Christ reveals our rebellion. His perfect faith reveals our unbelief. His perfect wisdom reveals our foolishness.

What caused feelings of sin and guilt? He said, *“Mine eyes have seen the King; (I will never be the same); I have seen the King.”* It is not that he had seen some imposter going by the name of “jesus.”

It was not that it was some imposter being presented by a covetous, greedy, pulpit. *“I have seen the Lord.”* The Holy Ghost has opened my eyes and removed the scales; *“I have seen the Lord; I have seen Him high and lifted up”* on a throne in His awesome majesty, glory, and holiness. All that I can say is this; *“Woe is me.”*

I question, (yes I do), and I sincerely question this; there is too much flippancy, too much carnality, too much flesh, and too much familiarity with a man called “Jesus.”

There is no familiarity here. Job saw the Lord and said, *“I put my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once; I have spoken twice; I will never speak again; I have been talking about things too wonderful for me.”*

Daniel saw the Lord and said; *“My comeliness melted into corruption.”*

The only way that a man can get a glimpse of God in the person of Christ, in His true character, is a revelation of Christ through His Word by the Spirit of God, not by another spirit, but by the true Spirit of God.

The true Spirit of God gives a man a true revelation of Christ. That man is awe-struck by two unchangeable truths, the greatness of God, and the emptiness of himself, the holiness of God and the sinfulness of himself.

He will come to know the great power of God and the weakness of himself, the righteousness of God’s justice and holiness, and the fact that he deserves God’s wrath and condemnation.

Thank God that Isaiah did not stop there. *“Isaiah saw the Lord.”* When he did, he saw himself and said; *“I am cut off, I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips.”* “There is no communion between me and that God.”

In **verses 6 and 7 of Isaiah**, he saw pardon and mercy; *“Then flew one of those seraphim’s unto me.”* He flew to me; I did not fly to Him. I didn’t go to Him; I didn’t rush into His presence. I backed off. I held my hands up before that awesome light and I cried; *“Woe is me; I am cut off.”*

The Seraphim, from orders of the throne which was sent by God, flew to me. He came to me. I am telling you this; when God saves a man God comes to the man. God seeks him, God calls him, and God finds him and regenerates him.

God quickens him and makes him a new creature. *“Salvation is of the Lord.”* He flew to me. *“Having a live coal, (a burning, live coal), in His hand which He had taken from the altar, and He laid it on my mouth, and He said to me; Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquity is taken away; thy uncleanness is taken away and your sin is purged.”*

Now then, the seraphim represent those who take the Gospel, those who preach the Gospel, those who fly in haste. They are conscience of their own sinfulness and guilt to bring the good news. If the seraphim represent those messengers of God who bring that Gospel, that good news, then what is the live coal?

The live coal is nothing other than the Gospel which they bring. It is the Gospel of Christ, that burning coal, that live coal, the Gospel of God's grace which is the "*power of God unto salvation.*"

It is the cleansing, quickening, regenerating, saving power of God, that enables God to be a holy God and a just God and Saviour, a merciful God, and a forgiving God.

That Gospel is taken from where? That Gospel is taken from the altar. Where is that altar? It is a live coal taken from Golgotha's Hill, from Calvary's Mountain where our Lamb was slain.

It is a live coal taken from the very altar of Calvary and God Almighty sends it in haste and lays it on the sin that I confess. It is laid on that sin and that sin is purged and forgiven.

Isaiah saw pardon. When the Seraphim came with the live coal in his hand taken from off the altar, He laid it upon Isaiah's mouth and he said, "*This hath touched thy lips, thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is purged.*" Only by the grace of God and the obedience of Christ and through the blood of the Son of God, iniquity is put away, sin is purged and sinners are forgiven.

Isaiah saw something special! That beats walking down an aisle and shaking a preacher's hand and acting silly. That beats joining someone's religious movement or someone's church and swearing on a stack of Bibles that you are saved when you know that you aren't.

When a man by divine revelation sees the Lord Jesus Christ as He is revealed in His Word, he sees Him in His glory, in His holiness, in His position, to which the Father hath placed Him, to which a man will see where the Father exalted Him and He is high and lifted up.

When a man sees himself in his sin and he is broken at the feet of God, he will cry like the publican; "*God be merciful to me.*" He cries like the Canaanite woman; "*God be merciful to me.*" He cries like Bartimaeus of old; "*Lord, have mercy on me.*" He will cry like the thief of old; "*Lord, remember me.*"

God sends a messenger with good news, with a live coal, right off the altar and touches the sinner's mouth and he is made whole.

Isaiah saw something else; he saw human nature in its blindness, in its darkness; yes he did. God said, *“Whom shall I send?”* Isaiah had something to say; he had seen something. God said, *“Whom shall I send; who will go for us?”*

Isaiah said, *“Here am I; send me.”* God said, *“Go and tell the people.”* What shall I tell them? *“Tell them all flesh is grass and behold your God.”* What shall I tell them? When Isaiah saw His glory, he spoke about Christ. This is what John said; *“When Isaiah saw His glory he spake of Christ.”*

Tell them about Christ. Tell them about the glory of God. Tell them about the sinfulness of human nature. Tell them about the only Mediator, Jesus Christ. Tell them about the reigning High Priest. Tell them about the perfect sacrifice.

How will they respond? That is a good question isn't it? God tells him; *“They will hear you but they will not understand.”* He said, *“They will see but they will not comprehend; having eyes they see not, and ears they hear not. Having hearts, they do not understand.”*

“Master, why do you speak to the people in parables?” He speaks to them in parables because *“They have eyes and they do not see.”* They do not want to see. They will not see.

“They have ears but they do not hear.” They stop up their ears and they will not listen. They say, *“We have our traditions; we have our customs; we will not be changed.”* They have hearts but they do not understand.

“Blessed are your eyes; they see and your ears, they hear.” The Lord can enable a man to both see and hear; did you know that? Only God can do it.

I pray that God will give you a vision of His glory. Don't settle for anything less. This thing of salvation is not a mechanical religion; it is a revelation of Christ and the glory of God in Christ.