

Preached on 10/29/23 at GBC

"Seeing God's Glory"

Isaiah 6:1-8

Like everything recorded in God's Word, this vision Isaiah had was recorded for our instruction as children of God - "*Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*" (I Cor.10:11-13) Isaiah's vision teaches us the reality of salvation for all those chosen by God the Father, redeemed by Christ the Son, and regenerated and converted by God the Holy Spirit in each successive generations. It gives us some insight into **WHAT SALVATION IS AS SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURE: IT IS TO SEE THE LORD!** I'm not talking about something mystical, emotional, or physical. I'm simply bearing witness to what the Scriptures tell us concerning salvation. **Here's a question that demands an answer:** Can a person really KNOW they've seen the Lord? **I CAN TELL YOU THIS MUCH:** If you have seen the Lord, you know something of what Isaiah experienced and wrote of in these verses we are looking at this morning. **Let me state this as simply as I can:** Only those who have seen the Lord as both "*a just God and a Savior*" are in reality at this present time regenerated and converted. Turn over to **I Cor.2:7-16; also II Cor.4:3-7.**

Now look at **Vs.1** - The way this chapter begins lets us know that Isaiah had this vision concerning God's glory "*in the year that King Uzziah died*". Isaiah was a prophet in the southern kingdom of Judea during Uzziah's reign. In **II Chron.26:22**, it tells us: "*Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.*" If you go back and read **II Chron.26**, you'll see that Uzziah was a godly king who served God and Judea in many great ways. He did many great and noble things as king of Judea, but Uzziah's pride caused him to commit a great sin. He entered into the temple to burn incense before the Lord by his own hand, as opposed to offering it through the hands of God's priests, the sons of Aaron, WHO TYPIFIED CHRIST. By his action, Uzziah basically denied the holiness of God and the mediatorial work of Messiah. Messiah or Christ alone is God's High Priest, and not even a godly King can come to God but through or by Him - "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" For his transgression, God judged Uzziah and smote him with leprosy. This great and godly king spent the remainder of his days as a leper in what the Scriptures call a "*several house*". The word "*several*" meaning "separation". When Uzziah died, Isaiah had this vision of God's glory that we are going to look at today. I think we can safely assume Isaiah was well aware of all the circumstances of Uzziah's transgression and the awesome display of God's wrath against any who would seek to circumvent God's way of salvation through God's appointed Substitute and Mediator. There are several lessons this vision of the Prophet Isaiah teaches us concerning what every elect sinner experiences when by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of God's Gospel they are brought to true faith and true repentance.

The **FIRST TRUTH** we learn is that all God's elect are brought to **SEE THE LORD.** Notice Isaiah's vision - "*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.*" I know religious people like to make some kind

of differentiation between Old Testament saints and New Testament saints. But if we let the Scripture be its own interpreter, in **John 12:41** the Apostle John declared this vision of Isaiah's to be none other than a vision of the true Christ, the Mediator and Head of His people, the church - "*These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.*" So what Isaiah saw was Christ's mediatorial glory. Understanding this truth makes it possible for us to understand many Scriptures which seemingly contradict one another. The Scriptures clearly tell us no man can look on God absolutely considered and live - "*And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.*" (**Exo.33:20**); "*Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*" (**I Tim.6:16**). **Yet of Moses it was written** - "*And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.*" (**Exo.33:11**) Turn over to **Exo.24:9,10**. **HOW CAN WE RECONCILE THESE VERSES?** The Apostle John does it for us in a single verse - "*No man hath seen GOD at any time: the only begotten SON, which is in the bosom of the FATHER, he hath declared him.*" (**Jn.1:18**) Nothing can be more plain from these teachings than that **EVERY** physical manifestation God has graciously been pleased to make of Himself to His church **HAS BEEN IN THE PERSON OF HIS SON**. We have to always keep in mind what our Lord said to His Apostles when they asked Him to show them the Father - "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.* Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **HE THAT HATH SEEN ME HATH SEEN THE FATHER**; and how sayest thou [then], *Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I [am] in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.*" (**Jn.14:6-11**) In the person of Christ, we see a reconciled God. Outside of the person and work of Christ, Paul tells us: "*Our God is a consuming fire.*" **What comfort this truth brings to the heart of all God's children. "that God was in Christ reconciling the world. NOT IMPUTING their trespasses unto them."**

Notice Isaiah's next words: "*I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high an lifted up, and His train filled the temple*". This "**LORD**", (**JEHOVAH**) which Isaiah saw was the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at what Isaiah wrote in **Vs.2**. Above this throne in that temple filled with the glory of the Lord, Isaiah saw these seraphims. There are a variety of explanations as to who or what these seraphims represent. The word "**seraphim**" means fiery serpent, and is the same word used when God sent "**fiery serpents**" among the people in **Num.21:6**. Most commentators are of the opinion this is figurative language concerning God's true ministers of His Gospel. **If these seraphims represent God's true ministers**, notice how they are described by Isaiah - with "**two wings they covered their faces**" in modesty, seeing God's preachers are less than the least of all sinners, unworthy to be ministers, considering themselves like Paul, "*the chief of sinners*". With "**two wings they covered their feet**". God's ministers should always be conscious of their own walk, conduct, and ways, constantly crying out "**O wretched man that I am**". And with "**two wings they flew**" in haste to declare the message concerning Christ's glorious person and work to all who will hear. **WHAT DID THEY CRY?** "**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**". These seraphims declared the true and **LIVING GOD** to be **THRICE HOLY**. **This is SO IMPORTANT**: The true and living God's chief attribute is holiness, which permeates every other attribute of God. While it's true that God is love,

it is also true that God is **JUST**. King David declared of this same God - "**Holy and Reverend HIS NAME**." **All that God does is in agreement with His holiness.** Nowhere in the Scriptures is **God's holiness** more clearly seen and displayed than at Calvary when God's Holiness and Justice demanded and carried out the death of the God sent Messiah to redeem His people from their sin - "*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, [I say], at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* (Rom.3:24-26)

That brings us to the **SECOND TRUTH** Isaiah's vision teaches us - **Vs.5. Listen to me carefully:** Every sinner who by God's grace has been brought to see the Lord's glory in the person of Christ, see themselves as they are in light of His holiness. Isaiah saw himself and cried out: "*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 mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.*" A man may look at others and say, '*I thank thee, I am not like other men.*' He may look at the written law and say, '*I am blameless.*' But when a man is exposed to the absolute holiness and righteousness of God **in the person of Christ**, he is forced to cry out, '*Woe is me.*' In his cry Isaiah declared that every part of his nature was unclean, from the top of his head to the sole of his feet. **But more than that, he saw and declared the total ruin of the entire human race** - "*I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.*" Isn't this the same thing Paul declared in his Gospel message after He saw the Lord on the road to Damascus - Turn over to **Rom.3:10-19. I don't know who wrote it, but what he wrote concerning these verses is true:** "Isaiah declares for us the two-fold cry of the word, of the gospel, and of all those who have seen the Lord - "*The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh [is] grass, and all the goodness thereof [is] as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people [is] grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift [it] up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!*"(Isa.40:6-9) The sinfulness of sin, the inability of the flesh, and the need of sovereign mercy **ARE ONLY DISCOVERED IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S HOLINESS.** Job experienced this as well: "*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*"**Job 42:5-6.** It is the same for all those the Lord is pleased to bring to a saving knowledge of Christ Jesus." Have you seen yourself as a person of unclean lips dwelling among an unclean people?

Here's the **THIRD TRUTH** we learn from Isaiah's vision. All those God to whom is pleased to reveal Himself in the person of His Son, those He brings to see their depravity and hopelessness, God reveals to those alone His mercy and grace - **Vss.6,7.** Grace is only for the **GUILTY**. Christ died **FOR THE UNGODLY**. It's important you keep all this language in perspective. Isaiah didn't go to the seraphim seeking forgiveness. What we see here is that God's fiery serpents, which typify God's ministers, **GO** to those to whom God has sent them. Phillip was **SENT** of God to the Eunuch. **THIS IS SO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND:** God's servants don't come with their own ideas or with their corrupt human reasoning. The "**seraphim**" took a live coal off the altar of fire. The altar of fire from which the live coal was taken is the sacrifice of Christ, the one of whom the Passover Lamb typified. Christ alone endured the guilt, penalty, and condemnation of the sins

of all He represented. The fires of God's just and holy wrath fell on our Substitute, which enabled God to be both a "*just God and a Savior*" to all the objects of His love. Isaiah said the seraphim took the live coal off the altar and laid it on his mouth telling him - "*Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.*" Think what this meant to Isaiah, as well what it means to all God's elect in every generation. Your sins are completely atoned for and forgiven. God said, "*I will remember their sins no more.*" **How can this be?** Only in Christ, our substitute! God can only be holy, just, and righteous and justify us "*in Christ*". Christ obeyed the law as our Surety and Substitute, establishing for us a perfect righteousness-"*For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*" (Rom. 5:19) Christ died (**the just for the unjust**) to bring us to God - "*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*" (**1 Pet.3:18**). David stated it best in **Ps.85:10** - "*Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*" Folks, this **IS** eternal life - "*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*"(**Jn.17:3**)

Here's the **LAST TRUTH** we learn from Isaiah's message - **Vs.8**. Only those whose lips have been touched with the live coal from the altar of God can and will go forth with the Gospel message, literally, the good news of an accomplished redemption at Calvary. **YOU CAN'T AND YOU WON'T TELL OTHERS ABOUT A CHRIST YOU DO NOT KNOW.** But all those who have been "*taught by God*" by the Holy Spirit the Gospel message of Substitution and satisfaction through the person and work of Christ will go forth with that message to every sinner who is willing to hear - **Rom.10:10-17**.

In closing, I encourage you to examine your own heart and your own confession in light of this glorious vision the Prophet Isaiah saw. If you realize you have not "*seen the Lord*" in His redemptive glory, I encourage you to flee to Him as your **ONLY HOPE** and **CAUSE** of salvation.