

The Divine Presence
Isaiah 6

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he 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!” Isa 6.1-3*

The Point: An encounter with God changes one forever.

The Question: Where does one encounter God?

A vision of God (1-4)

Confession (5)

Cleansing (6-7)

Commission (8-13)

We encounter God

Creation

Word

Baptism

In the year an earthly king stricken with leprosy dies, the Eternal King displays his glory to Isaiah. What will your encounter with the everlasting Father be like when you meet him face to face. I hope you have met him already. We will get back to that at the end of the message.

Isaiah does not have a conversion experience; he is already a believer. In 739 BC, believers are a minority in Judah. In the 21st Century, many wear the title, Christian, but are not born again. Isaiah experiences a spiritual change. He stands before God in a heavenly temple, the earthly temple cannot contain him (1 Kings 8.27), and he hears the seraphim repeating God’s glory. His state of sin overcomes his spirit. He knows he is a man of unclean lips, and he lives in a land surrounded by an unholy people. The king is taken down by his pride.

The prophet has seen the LORD, and he needs cleansing. He needs grace and receives it from a lump of live coal from the altar. “Your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.” A chunk of burning coal cleanses him. Atonement is only granted through the death of an innocent—this is grace: underserved and unearned forgiveness.

A mission is offered and accepted, and Isaiah receives his commission. Not an easy commission and no different to the commission every Christian accepts: preach to the unhearing and the unwilling. Perhaps they will hear! By the Spirit’s prodding, they might repent. If a sinner rejects God’s proffer of salvation, he turns them over to live in hardness of heart. We still pray that they will hear the Spirit’s call and turn.

Let us go back to encountering God—the Self-existent God and creator of the universe. The first way we experience God is by observing the universe and asking the questions how and why. How did this all get here, and why was it made? This begs a third question; “what is my purpose in this created world?” We encounter God in his word from Genesis 1.1 to Revelation 22.21. Seek God, kneel in his presence, feel the shame of your sin and confess it, allow him to cleanse you in the waters of baptism and with the Spirit, fulfill the great commission.