

03-11-18

Series: The Book of Isaiah

THE PROPHECIES OF REBUKE AND HOPE GIVEN TO JUDAH AND JERUSALEM: AN OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

(4)

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

[Isaiah 1:1-12:6](#)

(Continuation from 03/04/18)

The Call of God's Prophet Isaiah: Three Elements Necessary to Serve God, [Isaiah 6:1-13](#)

The prophet's ministry was launched in the year that King Uzziah died, the very period in which the utter disintegration of the nation began. Of course, the LORD knew the significance of the historical change that was taking place. He knew the desperate need of the people for a prophet who would courageously stand before them and proclaim the Word of the living LORD. To this end, Isaiah was being called. He was to minister to a nation that was declining, marching ever so rapidly down the spiral of utter disintegration and ruin. The people were given over to greed and covetousness, indulgence and drunkenness, lies and deception, pride and arrogance, and the mockery and persecution of the righteous. In fact, throughout Isaiah's entire ministry he faced a people with perverted values, a people who called evil good and good evil.

Sadly, the society of his day turned away from the LORD and to false gods and false worship. The people were given over to sin and wickedness. Facing the death of King Uzziah and the resulting shift in government, Isaiah felt a desperate need to seek the face of the LORD. As always, when any genuine believer seeks the LORD, the LORD meets the believer's need. In Isaiah's case, the LORD gave him a very special vision of Himself. Isaiah actually saw the LORD sitting on the throne of God, high and exalted in the heavenly temple. Through this encounter with the LORD, Isaiah was set apart for the very special ministry to which he was being called. **This is, *The Call of God's Prophet, Isaiah: Three Elements Necessary to Serve God*, [Isaiah 6:1-13](#).**

1. **A vision of the LORD ([vv.1-4](#)).**
2. **A conviction of unworthiness: all are sinners and need cleansing ([vv.5-7](#)).**
3. **A surrender to the LORD, to His call and commission ([vv.8-13](#)).**

2. ([Isaiah 6:5-7](#)) Conviction, of Sin—Unworthiness, Conviction of—Cleansing, Need for, Example—Sin, Universal—Confession, of Sin, Example—Isaiah, Confession of, Sin—Man, Nature of, a Sinner—Guilt, of Sin, All Men—Man, State of – Present State, a Sinner: a deep conviction of unworthiness is necessary to serve the LORD.

03-11-18

Series: The Book of Isaiah

Isaiah 6:5-7 (NASB)

⁵“Then I said, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs.

⁷He touched my mouth *with it* and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven.”

Confronted with the vision of the LORD in all His majesty and holiness, Isaiah was stricken with a profound sense of unworthiness. He suddenly realized the horrible nature of sin when contrasted with the majestic light of God’s glory and holiness. How filthy, polluted, defiled, dishonorable, and corrupt sin is.

Because the LORD is so high and exalted, so pure and righteous, sin stinks within His nostrils. Thus, when Isaiah saw the holiness of God, he realized just how impure and unclean he was.

Although he had placed his trust in the LORD years before, in this renewed call to the ministry Isaiah saw how utterly undeserving he was to serve the LORD. Feeling deep anguish within his soul, he cried out, “*Woe*” (v.5).

Isaiah 6:5 (NASB)

⁵“Then I said, “**Woe** is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

This is a cry of alarm, a sense that some terrible calamity is about to happen. Obviously he sensed that God’s brilliant holiness was about to strike him dead. He cried out in distress, “**I am undone**” (*nidmeyti*). This word *means* “**to be ruined, cut off, destroyed, doomed to die.**” If God dealt with Isaiah in strict justice, he was a doomed man.

Flooding Isaiah’s spirit was a deep consciousness of how far short of the glory of God he was. The LORD sat in all His glory and majesty high above the earth, ruling over the entire universe. All sorts of memories no doubt flashed through Isaiah’s mind. He thought about his *sins of omission*—the times he had failed to do what he should or to be as diligent as he should—as well as his *sins of commission*—the times he had disobeyed the LORD’s Word, His holy commandments.

Sensing a desperate need to confess his failures, he cried out that he was a sinful man, a man of “**unclean lips.**” Why did Isaiah refer to his “**unclean lips**” instead of simply saying that he was a *man of sin*? Probably because he was deeply aware of some recent sin he had committed with his tongue and knew that the root of sin went much deeper. Perhaps he had failed to speak a kind word when it was needed or perhaps he had been silent when he had been given an opportunity to witness for the LORD.

Or perhaps Isaiah had recently spoken words that were...

03-11-18

Series: The Book of Isaiah

1. harsh
2. combative,
3. argumentative
4. rude
5. rash
6. divisive
7. degrading

Whatever the case, Isaiah knew that his lips were guilty of failing the LORD, guilty of serious sin. An overpowering conviction of sin burned within his soul. And he felt the heavy weight, the total mass of sin that was exposed before the pure holiness and power of God. Having seen the **King, the LORD of hosts (God Almighty)**, Isaiah knew that the LORD could strike out at any moment and destroy the human race.

Thus, he confessed the sins of the whole world, crying out that he lived among a people of “unclean lips” who constantly used language that was...

1. foul or filthy
2. profane
3. irreverent
4. scornful toward God or other people
5. threatening, full of malice and hate
6. bitter or contemptuous
7. off-colored or immoral

Obviously, Isaiah was very aware that the sins of the lips or tongue actually flowed from a sinful heart. Later in history, Christ was to express the truth as well as it could be stated.

Matthew 12:35-37 (NASB)

³⁵“The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.

³⁶But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.

³⁷For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Matthew 15:18-19 (NASB)

¹⁸“But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man.

¹⁹For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.”

Mark 7:20-23 (NASB)

²⁰“And He was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.

²¹For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries,

²²deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy,

03-11-18

Series: The Book of Isaiah

slander, pride and foolishness.

²³ **All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”**

Having fallen prostrate upon the ground in utter anguish of soul, Isaiah was crushed with a deep conviction of his sin. **But the wonderful truth is this fact:** the LORD never leaves His people bearing the weight of guilt and sin, not when they confess and turn away from their sins.

Knowing the genuineness of Isaiah’s heart, the LORD met his need. Isaiah was cleansed from his sins. One of the seraphim performed the function of a priest. Flying over to the altar, he picked up a burning coal with a pair of tongs. Then flying over to Isaiah, he touched the lips of the prophet with a hot coal and pronounced that he was cleansed from sin. The hot, burning coal symbolized the burning away of sin, the purifying and cleansing of sin. The fact that the hot coal was taken from the altar was a reminder that sin was forgiven through the blood of the sacrifice, the sacrifice that was always offered upon the altar. The seraphim actually pronounced that Isaiah’s sin had been atoned for.

This act definitely symbolized God’s atonement for sin. Sometime in the future, Christ was going to die to provide atonement for the sins of every human being. But for now, because Isaiah had confessed his sins, the LORD had the seraphim symbolize the cleansing of Isaiah’s sin. Remember that a sensor full of burning coals had always been taken into the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement. It was taken before the LORD by the High Priest when the substitute sacrifice was offered to God on behalf of His people (see [Leviticus 16:11-14](#) for more discussion).

Thought 1. A deep conviction of unworthiness is necessary for us to serve the LORD. We must not measure ourselves against one another, for we are all of the same flesh and blood. We are all guilty of giving in to temptation, sinning through acts of *commission* or *omission*.

Therefore, when we measure ourselves against one another, we are as *good* as everyone else. But to learn the truth about ourselves, we must measure ourselves against the LORD. When we see the LORD high and exalted, dwelling in the blazing holiness of His being, then we see the truth. We see just how far short of God’s glory we are, how terrible our sin is when contrasted with His perfection and glory ([Romans 3:23](#)).

[Romans 3:23 \(NASB\)](#)

²³ **“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”**

The result of this comparison is just what we need: a deep conviction of sin and of unworthiness. Hence, we are driven—or *should be driven*—to seek forgiveness from the LORD, the only source of true forgiveness. And when the LORD pardons us, we are truly freed. Guilt is erased, and our spirits are set free from **depression, discouragement, self-accusation,** and the **sense of failure.** We are set free from the heavy weight of guilt that causes so many emotional problems, problems that far too often **crush us** and **make us helpless, unable to function.** Jesus Christ—He and He alone—can and will set us free if we will confess and repent of our sins. In addition, confession and repentance are

03-11-18

Series: The Book of Isaiah

absolutely essential before we can genuinely serve the Lord. Listen to what God's Holy Word says:

Matthew 5:4 (NASB)

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

Luke 13:3 (NASB)

³“I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

Acts 2:37-38 (NASB)

³⁷“Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 3:19 (NASB)

¹⁹“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

Acts 24:25 (NASB)

²⁵“But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, “Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you.”

Ephesians 1:7 (NASB)

⁷“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.”

1 John 1:9 (NASB)

⁹“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Psalms 38:4 (NASB)

⁴“For my iniquities are gone over my head; As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me.”

Psalms 51:3 (NASB)

³“For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.”

Proverbs 28:13 (NASB)

¹³“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.”

Isaiah 55:7 (NASB)

⁷“Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.”

Hosea 14:2 (NASB)

²“Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, “Take away all iniquity And receive *us* graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips.”