

The God Who Is

Leader's Guide

Holy, Holy, Holy

Isaiah 6:1-8

Background

The book of Isaiah is named after its author, Isaiah, a prophet to the Jewish people, in the time before and after 700 BC. During this period, Israel was in a time of great political struggle and spiritual decline. Isaiah's book has more prophetic references to the coming Savior, Jesus, than any other Old Testament book, and he is the prophet most quoted by Jesus in the New Testament. Fittingly, his name means, "Yahweh is salvation". We are not sure how Isaiah died, but tradition has it that he was sawed in two inside a hollow log for his faith. Chapter six tells of an experience

Read Isaiah 6:1-8

Now go back and see what we learn about God in each of the following verses:

v.1 -called "Lord" (what is a "lord"?)

-seated on a throne

-He is high and exalted

-the train of His robe fills the temple

Ask: "What kind of picture is this? If you had to pick one word to describe God from this verse, what would it be?"

Answer: a king!

v.2 -seraphs flying around above Him

***seraphs are a type of angel—their name literally means "burning ones"

v.3-4 -seraphs sing to each other about Him

-He is holy! (the repetition of the word 3 times denotes the supremacy & completeness of His holiness)

-He is Almighty (Hebrew "El Shaddai"—the mightiest God)

-the whole earth is full of His glory

WORD STUDY: Holy (or "qados" in the original Hebrew language):

The word "holy" means "separated", and is used here (and in many other places in Scripture) to signify the complete "separateness" or "otherness" of God—there is no one like Him. He is absolute in His purity, majesty, and glory. Webster's Dictionary defines holy as, "exalted or worthy of complete devotion as one perfect in goodness and righteousness".

Being in the presence of God made Isaiah very aware of his own sinfulness, as well as the sins of his country. How does God make us aware of our sin today?

It is the same process: by revealing Himself, we automatically see how we come up short! He reveals Himself through the Holy Spirit, who lives inside each believer, through the Bible, through His holy presence in other Godly believers, and through prayer.

What kinds of things dull our spiritual senses and harden our hearts so that we become comfortable with or complacent about sin?

Lack of time in the Word; too much time "taking in the world" through TV, music, reading; not being around other godly Christians who challenge us; comparing ourselves to others instead of to God; pride, etc.

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Isaiah 6:1-8

Notice that Isaiah doesn't make any excuses for his sin—he just confesses it. What Does God do in response (v.5-7)?

He cleanses his sin by having a seraph put a coal on his lips. A burning coal was a part of the Old Testament temple sacrifices. Isaiah would have recognized this as a symbol of the full ritual of cleansing from sin.

How does God “take our guilt away” and “atone” for our sin today?

****Have them recall last week's study, where we discussed that Jesus was the “atoning sacrifice” who cleansed us once and for all. We are cleansed from our sins when we trust that Jesus has paid for them.*

What is the next thing God does after He cleanses Isaiah's sin?

He asks for volunteers to “go”. What He was looking for exactly is explained further in chapter 6.

What was Isaiah's response (v.8)?

He is so excited! He wants to go!

Notice again that there are no excuses or delays in Isaiah's response. What aspect of God do you think Isaiah had seen that caused him to respond so quickly and absolutely to God call?

The complete rule, majesty, and authority of God the King—and the total honor it is to serve Him

****End by asking, “How many of you want to be used by God?” Assuming that most or all of them want to, point out what we've learned from this passage that will make them prepared to be used. First we have to know God—to see Him as He really is: holy, holy, holy. Next we have to be cleansed from all sin. Then we have to be willing to go wherever God sends us, right when He calls us. That's how we can experience the incredible fulfillment of being used by God!*

Questions for personal reflection

1. How does God's holiness affect your life?
2. What can you do this week to become more aware of God's holiness?
3. Where, or to whom, is God asking you to go to now? Is there a friend or family member you need to tell about Jesus? What ministry is He calling you to this semester? This summer? After you graduate? Are you willing to say, “Here am I, send me!”?

“There is a God we want, and there is a God who is—and they are not the same God.

The turning point of our lives is when we stop seeking the God we want and start seeking the God who is.”

Passages For Further Study:

Ezekiel 1-2
Psalm 40
Psalm 99
Revelation 4-5