

The Worship Of God & Personal Transformation

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[0 : 0 0] Turn back now to the prophecy of Isaiah and to chapter number six and we can read at verse four. Isaiah six at verse four.

The foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called and the house was filled with smoke and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the king the Lord of hosts and so on down through the following verses.

It's all interesting to reflect on the way in which as individuals we affect what our community looks like and as individuals we reflect and we are part of what our nation looks like and we reflect on our own nation during this time of change and of political change especially and we think of the needs of our nation both spiritually and morally and politically and economically we reflect on all of these things and we all have a part to play in that and when we read the Bible we see that as somebody has said no man is an island we see the way in which we all contribute to what's happening around us and we have the personal individual we have the community the communal and we have the nation and the national and these three are so linked and when we read the prophecy of Isaiah and the history of the people of God we see that nationally as we read the beginning of the prophecy we see that the people of God the community of faith the nation of Israel we see that they have rebelled against God God is saying I have I have reared and brought up children but they have rebelled against me there's a national problem and the people are turning away from the great God and the great King sliced and it's personalized in the experience of King Uzziah in the year that King Uzziah died why is that reference important it is important because of the personal way in which what is happening in the nation is actually reflected in King Uzziah because King Uzziah was somebody who sought God somebody who prospered because he sought God but towards the end of the life when he grew strong he grew proud and when he grew proud he became unfaithful to God he began so well he was a great King and the nation prospered because of him but then he turned his back upon God and the nation started to fall and their enemies started to triumph over them the personal reflects what's happening generally and when we read through the following chapters the other thing that we see is that the key thing that had gone wrong or where they had gone wrong was the worship of God that's where it all happens that's where the change takes place and that's where the rebellion takes place when we err and go wrong in the worship of God and we read later on in the prophecy in chapter 29 that God is addressing this people through the prophet Isaiah and he's saying to them this people draw near to me with their mouth the fear of me is what is commanded by men and not by God worship is at the very center of their relationship with God it's where they come near to God and it's where they have gone wrong and we come into this chapter and we have another individual and the individual is a prophet Isaiah and he is here as a person reflecting what must happen in the community and in the nation if things are going to change so what needs to happen in this time of worship what's the need needs to happen this evening for ourselves in this time of worship we want to think about that question and to do so under the title the worship of God and our personal transformation and the first thing I want to see in the worship of God is that we have a revelation that's how the chapter begins in the year that King Uzziah died

I saw the Lord it was as if we hadn't seen this before and in this moment of revelation his eyes were opened to what he saw in front of him and we are not saying that Isaiah hadn't known the Lord before now but there's a certainly the time at which he was called and sent out by God he saw the Lord and for ourselves this evening at the beginning of this worship were we able to say that I see the Lord once or is it the case together this evening that the first thing that must happen is that our eyes are opened that our minds are unblocked that the veil is taken away and that we see perhaps for the first time that we come face to face with the reality of God that's what happened to Isaiah I saw the Lord sitting upon the throne and when I say I saw the Lord it wasn't the Lord as the covenant savior of Israel that he saw that's who he was but the name that he gives to him is the Lord in the sense of the one who has control over the whole of creation in other words you're God the children of Israel you're God is the God of the universe he reigns in the whole world in his sovereign power he directs everything that happens in the realm of men and in this world I saw the Lord it's a word that speaks of his authority and his ability to carry out what he wants and what he has purpose to do and when he saw this Lord he saw him sitting upon a throne and this his robe filled the temple and the house was filled with smoke he was sitting upon a throne and here this evening we have this this elevated platform and the picture of the throne we have in in God's temple here is the seat of the throne out of our sight in the sense that it is the throne the edge of the robe of this king that fills the temple and I fortress Isaiah to to think of this God who is elevated who is highly exalted and in many ways cannot be seen but it is glorious seen because his robe fills the temple there is that sense of of elevation and there is that sense of of the real presence of God the house is filled with smoke and if we read the story of God coming down to to his people in ex in Exodus chapter 19 that's what we see at Mount Sinai that the mountain was was wrapped in smoke because God came down Isaiah came face to face with the glory of the God of Israel the God of creation the God who is the Savior and his glory was towering over the temple we are not here to to worship a God that that that sits beside us that's at our own level we are coming in to worship

God and as we come face to face with him we are encouraged and commanded to lift up our hearts and to reckon with the glory that this exalted high God possesses and it's interesting that that when Jesus is speaking in John chapter 12 when he saw the glory of Jesus who has I say a sin he has seen the glory of the Son of God who has come into this world and to us come into this world to be our Savior and in our worship together this evening as much as we need to emphasize the fact that Jesus came to be one of us and be like us we don't emphasize that at the expense of losing sight of the glory of the fact that he is God of himself and that's who we come to worship the glorious Son of God who is the eternal Son of God who is highly exalted the world cannot contain him in the sense of his glory and of his greatness he came down to earth but he sits on the throne of his glory and as the one who sits there I see are not only sees the glory of God but he senses that here is a real dynamic motion picture it's not the stillness that that that we capture in some kind of movie scene or picture it's the dynamic of of a verb instead of the seraphim there are these supernatural beings who are who are the agents of God's judgment and who are also the guardians of God's throne and around this throne we learn so much from them in the description given to us and we learn that in the dynamic picture that I see a presence for us here that the first thing these seraphim do is they show respect and reverence and awe and they are afraid to look upon the God who is so perfectly glorious and holy he speaks of the way in which each had six wings with two he covered his face it was the sense of the fear of being overwhelmed by by the glory of the king's stood on the throne they didn't put their hands over their ears they put their hands over their faces to show their respect and to bring before us the sense of the fearful thing that it is to see the glory of God face to face we see also that they were covering their feet that they were standing in the presence of God but they sense their unworthiness to be there we see that they're ready to to start moving and to start serving this God we see that with two wings they also flew you see the picture respect and reverence and awe a sense of king will see and to go in obedience and to carry out the king's order there is that sense of the readiness of the messenger and for you and I tonight what do we see in the presence of God are our minds still blocked from from seek who he is

[12:14] or do we do we sense that we cannot look at his glory without without some kind of lens through which we can see him to protect a whole being we need we need the lens of of Jesus himself as the person through whom we see the glory of God do we sense that we need that protective lens so that we can gaze at the glory of God do we sense that that we're so unworthy that we have no right to be here in the presence of this king and indeed we have we do have no right and are we ready to hear what he has to say and ready to go and carry out his commands and his order the revelation the dynamic around God's throne the example for us as to how we are to see the glory of God in in the worship of the name and along with that they take the psalmist says delight yourself in God and he will give you your heart's desire the set of him they're delighting in God they are calling out to one another as if we had two choirs around around the throne of God and they're calling out to each other summoning one another to to reflect the glory of God and to show a proper response in the presence of God holy holy holy is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of its glory there's a sense of separateness as well as a sense of perfection that belongs to this God that makes him separate and other from the even from the self in themselves he stands apart because of his perfection and that inner perfection that belongs to this king shines in the way in which the whole earth was full of his glory there is his inner perfection that radiates in the in the glory which the servants see and which I say I see is around this throne it is his external splendor and majesty and the seraphim are singing harmoniously around the throne of God holy holy holy is the Lord of hosts that calling out to each other and here is the other lesson that we that we learned from from the the seraphim from the revelation of of God's glory that that that they are partaking in as as I say observes reckoning with the nature and the character and the being of the God who is holy and I speak for myself when I say that that's so often we are here and we have no sense of the glory of the king who sits on the throne so often we worship him with his word in our mouths and we have no sense of what that word means or who that word is addressed to and who it describes and as we do think of revelation and to move on we ask ourselves what is our sense of God in this time of worship in any time of worship what is our sense of the life

of the awe of the reverence of the unworthiness and of the readiness to serve this great God the revelation how we we pray that each time that we do worship God that we sense this is where we are and in a real way there will be no restoration we will carry on as we were before we engaged in worship and we'll continue our lives as we did in the rest of our time here in this world the revelation secondly I want to see the reaction here is Isaiah in his own relationship with God here is Isaiah representing the people to whom God is sending him as the prophet here he is how does he react to the revelation of the glory of God his reaction is one of despair his reaction is one of a sense of lostness his reaction is one of having no hope of everything being taken away from him look at what he says in verse number five and I said woe is me for I am lost when you read woe in the bible it's a word of summons and it comes with with a warning and when it comes here woe is me for I am lost it's it's the warning it's the expression of despair here is God's servant and his immediate reaction is to sense that this is the end for him that what he has seen is going to cause him to cease to exit from the scene of time and the removal of the existence because of the glory of God my eyes have seen the king the lord of hosts he saw the lord sitting upon a throne and now he's recognizing that he's seeing the king the one who is the lord of hosts I am undone and this first step that the the stepping stone to bring us to to the place where we have a restored relationship with God is to come face to face with a sense of our sonship in the presence of our God who is holy and I can say tonight that I know I'm my sinner I can say tonight that I know Jesus is a savior I can say these things and they feel less if they are meaning but the question tonight is do they really mean anything to us and for us in this presence of God in the worship of God sensing that we are seeing the glory of the eternal

God what is our reaction to that what does it show you in this picture the glory of God is a piercing light that that comes of being a sinner and to leave him condemned before God that's why God said to Moses in Exodus 33 no one you cannot see my face and live it's a sense of destruction that the writing to the Hebrews captured in chapter number 12 what he says our God is a consuming fire once we recognize who God is in his character and in his being then we recognize who we are ourselves what we are ourselves and what we are worldly off and that sense of him being undone comes from his sense of sinnership from his confession and interestingly it's a confession that that speaks about his lips and the words that he uses this we saw in Isaiah 29 God is saying this people draw near to me with their lips but their hearts are far from me they come to worship me after the commandments of man and I see him purged in his conscience to have a sense of his lostness and his sinnership and that comes right into the context of his relationship with God and his worship of God and the words that he uses to address

God as we move to come to a right relationship with God that here is what we need to discover why do I need to know the Lord Jesus not because he's a great life coach or he's going to change me in the sense of giving me new habits that's not the first thing that I'm looking for I need to know the Lord Jesus because when I come to God I sense that I'm a sinner in the words that I use to speak to God that they are sinful a man of unclean lips and I say I know it's fine that that when he uses these words being uncleanness got nothing to do with the status that he has it does everything to do with the condition of his person it's emotional it's intellectual it's it's full of feeling that I sense our sinnership and when he comes face to face with that as the individual in the presence of God so he recognizes that this is something that affects the whole of the community

I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips it's not an experience that that's unique to him it's not something that's confined to his relationship with God it's something that refers and describes concerning him God has said I have I've reared and brought up children but they have turned their back upon me all of them here they are in this same category he has the penetrating awareness and the persuasion that that he is a lost sinner because of the kind of person he is in the whole of his own being and he recognizes that so is everyone else around him in the community and that begs the question about your own reaction to the glory of this holy God your own reaction to to the glory of the

[24 : 02] Holy Son of God and how much you understand the kind of person you are in the presence of God and how much you appreciate that your sinful condition is not unique to you it's not unique to you that it is something that describes the whole of humankind and what a wonderful solemn step forward it would be for all of us together here tonight if we are at this moment in the presence of God recognizing our personal sin and our sinnership and recognizing that we are all in this together no matter who we are and when we look across our nation as we said at the very beginning that's where we all are and what we need is the the channel of communication and light that has been closed up with so many different things that is cleared by God and that we come back to reckoning who God is the kind of King he is and even reckoning that Jesus himself as much as he is human that he is in the first place divine and that the glory of God is revealed to us in him what is our reaction are we still comfortable with what we say and what we do and who we are or do we realize that this God in the the words of of Habakkuk is of purerized and to look upon sin are we sharing the experience of I say himself later on in this book when he asks the question who can dwell with everlasting burnings is it a sense of lostness or are we still comfortable with a revelation of the glory of God a reaction to that revelation the revelation which created that reaction brings about a restoration this is what he needed this is what the community needed what is the path to restoration that is the command to the seraphim they're standing ready with two wings they're ready to fly to do whatever God commands them to do and as soon as God commands they're away and they're doing that and we see in verse 6 then one of the seraphim flew to me I say I am so deeply conscious of of the distance between himself and this God not not really a horizontal distance but the vertical distance in which this God is so elevated above him in glory and he is in the very pit of a sinnership and nothing can be seen he is in despair because he sees no way of of that girth being bridged but God has a way and God's messenger is sent and he flew having in his hand a burning coal they are taken with tongues from the from the altar

the tools that were used in the tabernacle he takes a burning coal from the altar and if we can for a minute just just picture the scene in the temple we have the altar of burnt offering where the offering is offered as a substitute for sin here is the substitutionary sacrifice if God accepts the sacrifice then sin is taken away and there is peace with God it's the central thing in the tabernacle it's through this that God is with his people and from there there is carried from that altar of burnt offering a coal of fire onto the altar of incense here is the the altar that speaks of of peace it speaks of a God reconciled it speaks of an angry God at peace with those who are sinners and so that the seraphim takes the burning coal from that altar of incense where God is at peace with his people that's the connection we come into the the new testament and we know that the altar is the cross of Jesus and the resurrection of Jesus and the exaltation of Jesus we know that the altar is the finished work of Jesus who came to die for our sins that the righteous for the unrighteous we know that on the cross of just of Jesus

God redeemed us from the curse of the law because Jesus became a curse for us or Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law having become a curse for us there's the means of reconciliation there's the means of restoration there's the means of removing the problem and that's who we need to come to together this evening as individuals as a community as a nation to come to to see where God is reconciled to to a lost world rebelling against him living despite his law and against his law removing his law from our everyday lives doing the things that show a rebellion against God coming to the place where God in his love has poured out his wrath on Jesus in no place dying in our stead that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself and with that call he touched my mouth and said there's a stuch your lips your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for

I can touch something really roughly or I can touch something gently and the sense here is that and in his mercy to the brokenness of Isaiah and with the gentleness of his touch bringing the redeeming love and grace of Jesus to touch the lips of Isaiah where the problem of the of his sin was where he wasn't able to communicate with God in the way that he should that God comes and he touches him there your guilt is taken away with the touch the guilt is removed with with the touch the sin is atoned for all that Jesus did comes to be ours all that Jesus was going to do came to be I see us your guilt is taken away your sin atoned for and we come into the New Testament and we read the words of Jesus and the story of Jesus is if you are willing you you you can make me clean Jesus said I will be clean and he touched him and he was healed Jesus touched so many people takes a gentleness and that's where the reconciliation takes place we have the the horror of the of the holiness of God and the judgment of God and the justice of God demanding that that we are punished eternally because of our sin and right into the to the middle of that comes the the gentle touch of God that removes that obliterates that takes away forever any sense of guilt and any sense of condemnation and so that in the gentle touch of

Jesus Paul in the New Testament can see there is therefore no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus and that's tonight where where you and I are reconciled reconciled in the midst of of a reaction of horror and despair in the face of her sin in the light of the glory and holiness of God that God will send the spirit with the grace of Jesus to touch her mouth to touch your hearts to touch your lives and take away your sin to know the peace of God that we are reconciled to God by the death of a son and if we if we know that tonight and if we have experienced that tonight then it is life that will restore the children of Israel the covenant community it will restore them to our right relationship but only what Jesus did can do it and what Jesus did can only do it when God who sits upon his throne in his sovereignty and in his rule when he says give us a command to touch their hearts and their lives and we we come right back to the to the sovereign grace of God that if we are saved tonight there's only because of what God did in

[35 : 10] Jesus Christ it is only because of what God did in our lives in coming with the spirit to make us new people and the restoration is complete when God says in verse number eight when I heard the voice of the Lord saying whom shall I send and who will go for us here is the person who who was in despair and by the very touch of God he hears the command of God the the question of God whom shall I send and who will go for us without hesitation I see I says here I am sent me what a transformation what a restoration what a change in this man here I am of the worship of God that you and I tonight are ready to serve God to make disciples to be witnesses to be lights for God to be the salt of the earth not to put out a lamp under under a bushel under a shade or under a hidden in any kind of way but to be the light of the world as Jesus has commanded us to do and ultimately this seraphim's willingness and obedience and proper reaction to the glory of God was to be ready to serve and here they are serving I see I hear ultimately for us this is the great proof of the change that God has made in our lives that we are ready to serve him persuaded the love of Jesus constrained me says Paul we love him because he first loved us and so we go and serve my god bless his word tonight tonight and may help us to see a glimpse of the glory of God a glimpse of the kind of people that we are and see the glory of of the revelation of his grace and mercy in the person of Jesus to know peace and to know what it is to practice our faith and to to go into life living the kind of life that demonstrates our love for

Jesus as our savior my god bless his word to us with bow heads in prayer