

Sinful Man Before a Holy God

Promise: God provides the cleansing from his sacrifice on the altar

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 14:12b-20; Luke 5:1-11
(5th Sunday after the Epiphany, 2/6/22)

And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"— v. 5

Lead In – Many of you will remember that terrifying scene in the film 'The Wizard of Oz' when Dorothy and Toto, along with Scarecrow, Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion first come into the presence of the Great Oz. There was smoke and fire, a thunderous voice, and there was the sense that the threshold was shaking. Dorothy and her friends were surely shaking. It is only much later that they find out the Great Oz was only a ruse. I think of that scene when I encounter our First Lesson for this morning...

I. The Prophet Isaiah's Magnificent Vision of the Lord

- A. The point about the incredible train on a robe...
- B. What's with all the covering up by the color guard?
- C. Talk about one who can shake things up!

II. Sinful Man Stands Before a Holy God

- A. "Woe...I am lost." That is, I am a goner...
- B. This is what Peter experienced in the Gospel L...
- C. Why such an emphasis on unclean lips?

III. God's Remedy Is Unexpected

- A. You can't make up this stuff! Bizarre!
- B. The interpretive key to all the Bible is Jesus...
- C. The atonement continues to cleanse touched lips...

Parting Shot – We started out with the ruse involved in the Wizard of Oz. The real wizard behind the image was timid, bumbling, and very approachable. But the only ruse involved in Isaiah's vision, is that behind that image is something even more terrifying! The only way to come face to face with the Lord is through the forgiveness won on the Cross. This cleansing was first effected by the waters of baptism. And it is renewed in the gift of Holy Communion as the elements from off the altar that touch our lips. And our grateful response is exemplified by Isaiah: "Here I am, send me."

Re 17:14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.

Ge 3:7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Ex 19:18 Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.

Ex 33:20 "But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live."

Lk 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Isaiah 6:1-13 ESV

Isaiah's Vision of the Lord

¹ 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!"

⁴ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

⁸ And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." ⁹ And he said, "Go, and say to this people: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive." ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." ¹¹ Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, ¹² and the Lord removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. ¹³ And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy seed is its stump.

Js 3:5-6 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.

Re 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."

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