

## The Holiness of God

### Isaiah 6:1-8

When was the last time your heart bowed in awe and wonder before God? In Isaiah 6:1-8, we encounter the Holy God and how the Holy God relates to us.

*The Holy God.* God is majestic in his holiness (v. 1). His majesty is seen in his title, the Lord. 'Lord' means 'Sovereign One'. He is seated upon a throne above all rulers, powers, and authorities. The posture of the seraphim reflect his majesty (v. 2). The Apostle John tells us that Isaiah saw the pre-incarnate Christ upon the throne (John 12:41).

The seraphim cry (v. 3): "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" The root of 'holy' is 'to cut or separate'. When we say that God is holy, we at the very least saying that God is separate from us. We are speaking of His God-ness. R.C. Sproul writes, that holiness "signifies everything about God that sets Him apart from us and makes him an object of awe, adoration, and dread to us." Not only is God holy, but 'the whole earth is full of his glory.' God's glory is his holiness made visible. God's creation displays his glory. All of history is moving toward a time when the earth will be full of his glory.

An aspect of God's holiness is his moral perfection (Hab. 1:13). When Isaiah is confronted with the holiness of God, he is confronted with his own sinfulness (v. 5). Isaiah's conviction doesn't merely come because he has compared himself to a holy God, but because he realizes that he has failed to desire and live for the glory of God (as the seraphim are doing). His unclean lips reflect an unclean heart.

*How the Holy God relates to us.* God initiates (v. 6) and atones for our sin (v. 7). Our sin both endangers us (Woe is me!) and pollutes us making us unfit for God's presence (I am a man of unclean lips). Jay Sklar writes, atonement is "...that which rescues the sinful and impure from the wrath of the Lord (ransom), and cleanses their sin and impurity (purification)."

Further, God brings near (v. 8). Isaiah is now near enough to hear the voice of the Lord. [\[1\]](#) Regardless, if Isaiah is physically closer to the Lord, his dread has turned to delight. There is awe and wonder before the Holy God who graciously draws near.

God initiates, atones, and brings near in Jesus. The altar in the passage, points us to the cross. At the cross, God maintained his holiness and atoned for our sin. In Jesus, the Holy God draws near to sinners.

"For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite." (Isaiah 57:15 ESV)

## Questions for Individuals, Families, and Community Groups

1) How, since you became a Christian, has the Lord revealed his holiness, your sinfulness, and his mercy to you?

2) In what ways do you desire greater awe and wonder before the Lord? How can we pray for greater awe, wonder, and worship?

*Parents with young children, below is a song produced by Seeds Family Worship that may be a helpful resource to help your child(ren) engage with Isaiah 6:1-3.*

[\[1\]](#) Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 78.