

Isaiah's Call to Service

(Isaiah 6:1-8)

Introduction

How do you think you would act if you actually found yourself standing before God's throne in Heaven? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

The Bible teaches that God is perfectly pure and sinless in every way and that His glory is magnificent. Listen to this description of God's throne from the book of Revelation:

Revelation 4:1-3

Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and [a] . . . voice . . . spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this." (2) And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. (3) The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow.

Today we're going to learn about a man who had an awesome experience one day that transformed his life—he found himself in the very presence of God!

Opening Prayer

Father, we can't imagine how grand and beautiful heaven is. We know it's going to be awesome, but our minds can't even think of how spectacular it is. We look forward to that day that we will be standing face-to-face with you. Until then, we want our lives to bring Your name glory. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. (Isaiah 1:18)

Lesson

We have been studying about the Prophets. What's a prophet? (A messenger of God.) Today we will learn about Isaiah. Isaiah is the

most important of all the prophets because he had some of the most important messages to tell people. For example, Isaiah is the one who told people that Jesus would be born of a virgin and that Jesus would be killed by crucifixion.

Isaiah was born into a wealthy family. He lived during the time of the Kings. In fact, he was related to royalty and received the finest education available. He spent his early years as an official of King Uzziah of Judah.

King Uzziah was a great king who had brought much honor to the nation. The children of Israel prospered greatly during Uzziah's 52-year reign (2 Chronicles 26:1-15), yet the people went away from God into idol worship (2 Kings 15:4) and other sins. And, because of the people's prideful disobedience, Uzziah himself was struck with leprosy and banished as unclean until the day of his death (2 Chronicles 26:16-20).

In the year that King Uzziah died Isaiah received his calling to be God's prophet. He had an incredible vision of God in the heavenly temple.

[Teacher, read the following passage from the Living Bible:]

Isaiah 6:1-4

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. (2) Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. (3) They were calling out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!" (4) Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.

Let's look at this passage now, verse by verse.

Isaiah 6:1

It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple.

Isaiah had this marvelous vision of God sitting on his throne in the year that King Uzziah died. An earthly king had died, but Isaiah now saw the everlasting King on His throne in Heaven. This was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ revealing Himself as the true King of Israel.

[Teacher, this is a theophany—a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.]

Isaiah actually experienced a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. A vision is like a dream, only it's while you are awake. God gives you a supernatural experience of seeing into the heavenly realm. Isaiah was actually seeing Jesus sitting on His throne in heaven. Now keep in mind that Isaiah lived many years before Jesus came to earth as a baby. How could Isaiah actually be seeing Jesus? (The Lord Jesus is God the Son. He has always existed in heaven.) There are several times in Old Testament times when Jesus appears to certain people for special reasons.

Years after Isaiah had this vision, the Lord Jesus came to earth to be born. He grew to be a Man who lived a perfect life; then He was put to death on a cross because of your sin and mine. He is in heaven now, preparing a place for those who believe in Him as their Savior. Jesus is the true King, as Isaiah saw Him on His throne in this special vision from God.

Isaiah 6:2

Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

Seraphim are heavenly angels. This must have been amazing to see!

Isaiah 6:3-4

They were calling out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!" (4) Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.

These beautiful angels were flying around proclaiming God's holiness and glory. As they cried out, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts" there was a great earth quake and the temple was filled with smoke – this just showed the glory and power of God. (The smoke was probably the cloud of glory surrounding His presence.)

As Isaiah saw the angels cover their faces in reverence and humility, he must have been deeply moved with a sense of God's holiness. He

must have felt humbled to think that he would be permitted to observe such a vision. If you were Isaiah and had seen this vision, what would you be thinking? [Teacher, let the children share.]

Perhaps you would think about how unworthy you are to be in God's presence. That's what Isaiah thought!

Isaiah 6:5

Then I said, "It's all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD of Heaven's Armies."

When Isaiah looked upon the Lord of heaven, Isaiah said, "My doom is sealed, for I am a foul-mouthed sinner, a member of a sinful, foul-mouthed race..." Though Isaiah knew God, he realized, perhaps in a new way, how holy God is and how very sinful he was. Seeing his sinfulness, he confessed it to God.

When we compare ourselves with other people, we become proud. We have a tendency to think more highly of ourselves. You might think, "I'm not as bad as that other person." But when we honestly compare ourselves with God we are humbled.

When Isaiah saw the Lord he said "Woe is me," not "Woe is my neighbor," not "Woe is somebody else," but "Woe is me!" When he compared himself with the Lord, he realized his own inadequacy. Isaiah knew he was a sinful man. God was pleased when Isaiah humbled himself and confessed his sin.

Why do you think that Isaiah might have said, "I'm a man of unclean lips"? What sort of sins do you and I commit with our lips? (Cursing, telling dirty jokes, lying, gossiping, complaining, criticizing, backbiting, singing wrong music, etc.)

When he confessed his sin to God, an amazing thing happened...

Isaiah 6:6-7

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. (7) He touched my lips with it and said, "See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven."

Only God could make Isaiah's life clean for service. In the temple, they kept fires going all the time. God sent one of His angels down who picked up a live, burning coal and touched Isaiah's lips with it. The angel said, "Now you are pronounced 'Not guilty' because this coal has touched your lips. Your sins are all forgiven." Now he was ready for service. God cleansed his lips.

Notice that Isaiah first saw the Lord, then he humbled himself before God, confessed his sin and then God cleansed him and he was now ready to serve.

Isaiah 6:8

Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me."

Isaiah heard the Lord asking, "Who will go for Us?"

God wants us to go and do His will, to serve Him and tell others of Him. What he seeks is one who is willing and ready to go. Now that he was made clean, Isaiah waved his hand and said "here! Why not use me?"

Isaiah didn't even know where God would send him! He just knew that he wanted to serve God with his whole life. God is looking for servants with clean hearts who willingly offer themselves to Him—without having to know what He has planned for them.

When Isaiah saw in an unforgettable way how holy God is, he confessed his sin and God cleansed his life for serve. When you have confessed your sin to God and have allowed Him to cleanse you, you will be ready to serve Him in whatever way He desires.

Isaiah saw a wonderful vision of God! It had not been like any dream which a person has when he is sleeping. The vision which Isaiah saw was truly Jesus. The voice he heard speaking was really Jesus' voice. When Isaiah confessed his sin, he was truly talking with Jesus.

After Isaiah was cleansed from his sin, he had a job to do for Jesus. You and I have not been able to see Jesus with our own eyes like Isaiah did. Someday we will. Until we see Him, however, we can talk to Him. Just as Isaiah talked with Jesus, so we can talk with Him, too.

We can tell Jesus about our sins and get forgiveness for them, just as Isaiah did.

Then what do you think Jesus wants us to do? Just as He told Isaiah to go with His message, so Jesus wants us to go with His message. What do you think Jesus' message is? Jesus' message is there is forgiveness with Him; you can trust in what He did on the cross.

God wants you to be a prophet, just like Isaiah was. Go out and tell people about what Jesus came to earth to do for you and for me.

Closing Prayer

Father, we want to be acceptable in Your eyes. Forgive us of our sins and purify our hearts. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

White as Snow

This experiment teaches us how completely God forgives our sin through Jesus' death on the cross.

Materials:

- Red and white construction paper
- Clear glass of water
- Chlorine bleach
- Food coloring
- Pencils

Preparation:

Using spray adhesive, laminate a piece of red construction paper to a piece of white construction paper. Cut out large cross shapes, one for each child that are red on one side and white on the other. (Make them large enough for them to write on.)

Procedure:

[Give each student a cross shape and a pencil.] The Bible talks a lot about sin. Sin is doing something wrong – something that hurts someone or is against God's rules. How many of you have ever committed a sin? The Bible says that every person on earth has sinned. (Romans 3:23) Sin makes our lives dirty and unholy. Sin keeps us from knowing God because He cannot be near sin. He is holy and pure, just like this glass of clear water.

This glass is like our lives. Look what happens when we sin. [Put one drop of food coloring into the water. Let it naturally swirl around.] This drop of color represents a sin, such as telling a lie. One lie doesn't seem too bad when we tell it, but see how it makes our lives look. [Hold up the food coloring bottle.]

Now as you name a sin, you write that sin on the red side of your cross and I'll put another drop of food coloring in the glass. What sin shall we call the next drop of color? (Stealing, swearing, disobeying parents, hitting someone, being grouchy, and cheating.) Let's say that our next drop represents cheating. [Add another drop to the water. Repeat the question adding drops of different colored food coloring to the water for each sin.]

Look how dirty the water is now. That's a lot of sin in our lives. It looks like this water will never be clean and clear again!

But God has the answer to sin. He sent Jesus to the earth to be born as a baby. As Jesus grew up, he didn't ever sin. He didn't cheat or lie or steal or get grouchy. He is the only person who ever lived who never committed a sin!

Then He died on the cross to pay for our sins. We can't pay for our sins because we are already sinners. Only Jesus could pay for our sins because He didn't have any sins of His own to pay for. After Jesus died and was in a grave for three days, He rose again. Now He is living in Heaven. That's why Jesus has power over sin. (1 Corinthians 15:57).

When we ask God to forgive our sins because we believe that Jesus paid for them on the cross, God forgives our sins completely.

He makes our lives clean and pure again. He lets us become one of His children.

Jesus has power to take away our sins. That is like this special solution. [Pour the bleach into the colored water.]

Now let's see what happens to the color in the glass. This is like when you ask Jesus into your heart. When you ask Jesus to forgive you for breaking God's rules He makes your heart clean on the inside.

Look at our glass of water. It's clear and clean again. That's what God sees when He looks at a Christian's life. He doesn't see any sin. The sin has been washed away by the blood of Jesus. Just like the white side of your cross. There's no sin on that side, is there?

If you have never asked Jesus to be your Savior and to forgive your sins, please see me after class. I'd like to show you how your life can be as clean as this water.

Game Center

Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. How would you act if you actually found yourself standing before God's throne in Heaven?
2. What incredible thing happened to Isaiah the year that King Uzziah died? (He had a vision of God in the heavenly temple.)
3. How is it that Isaiah saw Jesus sitting on the throne in Heaven, if he hadn't been born yet? (He is God and has always existed.)
4. What did the angels do with their wings? Look in verse 2. (With 2 he covered his face, with 2 he covered his feet, and with 2 he flew.)
5. What did the angels cry out as they flew around? (Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts.)
6. What did the door posts do? Look at verse 4. (They shook.)

7. What was the house filled with? And what did that represent? (Smoke; the Shekinah glory of God.)
8. What did Isaiah say to God when he saw this vision? See verse 5. (Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips...)
9. Why do you think that Isaiah might have said, "I'm a man of unclean lips"?
10. What sort of sins do you and I commit with our lips? (Cursing, telling dirty jokes, lying, gossiping, complaining, criticizing, backbiting, singing wrong music, etc.)
11. What did the angel do to Isaiah's lips? (He took a live burning coal and touched Isaiah's lips with it to purge him of his sin.)
12. First Isaiah saw the Lord, then he humbled himself before God, confessed his sin and then God cleansed him and he was now ready to serve God. What must you do to be a servant of God? (Confess your sins and allow Him to cleanse you. Then be willing and ready to go and do whatever He asks you to do.)
13. God wants you to be a messenger, just like Isaiah. What message does He want you to tell people? (That there is forgiveness with Him.)

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