

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-10

Hymn: There is a Fountain

*There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath the flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.*

Conviction and Relief

During the past few weeks in church, we have been going through the Ten Commandments. We are learning the thorough meaning behind each statement of the Decalogue, and boy, does it bring conviction to my soul! (Truly, “through the law comes the knowledge of sin” Romans 3:20.) Being more inclined this way (guilt-laden, that is), I became so stricken with guilt that I could not find relief. I cried out to the Lord in my heart in prayer during the service, later that same evening. And it was when I was listening to Isaiah 6 being read that the Lord brought help and relief. This is how it unfolded...

“I saw the Lord” (verses 1-4)

I liken this revelation of God to Isaiah to my experience in hearing God’s Word. In the preaching about the first commandment, the holiness of God was magnified as His requirements of His people to give Him our full worship was described. I got a glimpse of His perfection. Even for a few moments, I “saw” Him in His “otherness”. It overwhelmed my soul, to behold God in this way.

“Woe is me, for I am ruined!” (verse 5)

What perfect words to describe Isaiah’s response: “Woe is me, for I am ruined!” Whenever I see even a glimpse of the holiness of God, I can relate- I always, all at once, see my own great lack. This time, I also felt utter guilt, helplessness to change myself and even dread. Such feelings cause me to feel unworthy and far from God. But thankfully, my discomfort was so great that I turned to the Lord for help and relief.

His willingness to cleanse: “then one of the seraphim flew to me” (verse 6)

This is where the mercy of God began to minister to my soul- I could see how willing the Lord is to help a soul mortified by sin. Just even thinking of the image of seraphim flying to Isaiah made me see the quickness of the Lord’s willingness to give mercy and grace to the pleading soul. Truly, “a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Psalm 51:17).

“Behold...your iniquity is taken away” (verse 7)

Here is where the Lord provided effective, tangible relief to my soul- I really felt better! I understood then that the Lord does not bring us to conviction of sin just to leave us there in our guilt. He does not want us to “pay” by feeling utterly miserable, and remaining there. No- just as a servant of the Lord applied a means of cleansing to Isaiah’s specific sin, so He does for us- so He did for me: “Your iniquity is taken away and your sin is atoned for”. Yes, our holy God is the only One who can

cleanse us, for He is the only Righteous One. And He is the only One so willing and able to remove our sin, for He has already atoned- or paid- for them. Praise His wonderful Name!!

“Here am I. Send me!’...He said, ‘Go, and tell this people...’” (verses 8-9)

These verses brought the fullness of healing for my soul. It is my answer- our answer- when we have a need after receiving such abundant goodness from the Lord. It is a need to please Him; a need to ask for help so that I don't do it [offend Him] again. It is a need that can only be answered by the Lord because I know without any doubt that I cannot do it [live righteously] on my own. It is a prayer for His power to “go and sin no more”. For Isaiah, he saw his “unclean lips”, he confessed his sin to the Lord and received forgiveness, and then he asked the Lord to send him. The Lord literally used his formerly unclean lips to speak His very own words- He sanctified those lips for His own use. This way of God provides me with such comfort, because it's like the Lord is replacing my utter weakness with Himself. And it can't get any better than that!

In Sum

“Otherwise they might see...hear...understand...and return to Me and be healed.” (verse 10)

I think this commission of God to Isaiah explains it so perfectly! It is the means to a healed soul. First, I must see, hear and understand God's righteous way(s). Then the conviction I feel causes me to turn toward (or return) to the Lord. And once that happens, I am healed. It's a given. The sincere soul seeking the Lord will find Him. I must remember not to let any woeful feelings of guilt to keep me from Him. Rather, His will is that I run to Him. And He promises to receive me. AMEN!

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