



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

## Isaiah 6:1-8 English Standard Version July 9, 2017

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, July 9, 2017**, is from **Isaiah 6:1-8**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Isaiah 6:1) 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.**

Some scholars believe that Isaiah was a member of the royal family; therefore, he had access to the royal family that recognized he was a true prophet of God and some of the kings called upon him in time of trouble. Isaiah dated his call to serve God as a prophet the year King Uzziah

died (perhaps between 742-740 B.C.). Isaiah met God while worshiping in the temple. He saw that God is so majestic that the hem of His robe (or “train” in KJV) filled the temple. God is far greater than any manmade temple on earth can contain.

**(Isaiah 6:2) 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.**

Isaiah’s vision extended beyond the temple to the throne room of God, which far exceeded the dimensions of the temple (which the hem of His robe filled). Isaiah saw angels who continuously served God. Two of their wings covered their faces, because even though they were holy angels they were unworthy to look upon God face-to-face, even as sinful human beings are unworthy to see the face of God. Perhaps they covered their feet because they knew they were unworthy to serve God. They flew because they wanted to always and immediately obey and serve God when He called upon them.

**(Isaiah 6:3) And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”**

These holy angels called out to one another in the hearing of Isaiah and all with ears to hear and minds to understand the ultimate moral and spiritual fact about God: God is holy. As Christians, we know that God the

Father is holy; the Son of God is holy, and the Holy Spirit is holy. They also declared the ultimate authority of God: God is the LORD of hosts (a number of beings too large for us to count or understand). God rules in holiness over the hosts, over all rational beings, over all of creation. God is the Lord over all, and the angels declared that His name is LORD (which translates God's Hebrew name as Jehovah or Yahweh in the English language). The whole earth reveals the glory of God, because God created the whole earth. Those with spiritual discernment see the work of our Creator and learn some truths about God when they look at His creation. Because creation is fallen and no longer as God created it, God has spoken in the Bible to give us truths we could never learn by observation alone.

**(Isaiah 6:4) And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.**

Perhaps no other building in Jerusalem rivaled the size, construction, and importance of the temple (though King Solomon's palace may have come close). Still, when the angels declared the holy character and majesty of God, their powerful voices shook the very temple in which Isaiah worshiped. In his vision, smoke filled the temple as a possible result of the holy fire of God on the holy altar or the incense used in temple worship. Where there is smoke, there is usually fire, and fire is used for cleansing, especially for the purification of precious metals such as silver and gold. For God to appear and speak to Isaiah,

God's temple first needed cleansing.

**(Isaiah 6:5) 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!”**

When we consider the immensity of Isaiah's experience, no wonder he felt unworthy to see what he saw. He saw how horrible his sins were and the sins of God's people in the context of God's holiness, power, and absolute authority as King of kings. Our holy God is worthy to be served and worshiped in complete holiness and with unimpeachable moral purity. But even God's highest and holiest angels know they are not worthy to serve God apart from God's love and grace. As believers, we only become worthy to serve God after we entrust our lives to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and He cleanses us from all sin and sends the Holy Spirit to live within us.

**(Isaiah 6:6) Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar.**

Isaiah confessed and declared that he was sinful and totally unworthy of seeing God the King in all of His holiness and glory. Then, God sent an angel to cleanse the lips of Isaiah, using a coal from God's holy altar. Because this was a true experience in a vision, Isaiah did not report any pain, but he did experience a moral and spiritual

cleansing and renewal. God cleansed Isaiah's lips, and Isaiah would use his lips in the service of God.

**(Isaiah 6:7) And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”**

The angel explained to Isaiah the meaning of his actions. With Isaiah's guilt removed and his sins blotted out so no one would ever see again or remember those behaviors of Isaiah that demonstrated his past rebellion against God the Lord, Isaiah could now hear the words of God and reply to the words of God with all feelings of guilt and shame removed. His sinful past would no longer make him unworthy to serve God, for God had made him worthy by His cleansing.

**(Isaiah 6:8) 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.”**

Before Isaiah even knew the tasks that God wanted him to perform, he told God that He could send him, that he was willing to do whatever God wanted done. In this sense, Isaiah became as the holy angels that worshiped God day and night: he was ready to do immediately whatever God asked of Him and he was eager to tell others the truth about the true God, the LORD of hosts. Isaiah's love for God and thankfulness that God had forgiven and cleansed him motivated him and made him willing to serve God.

## Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Where was Isaiah when he received his call and vision from God? What might this reveal to us about the importance of regular worship in God's house?
2. Are you as ready as the angels were in Isaiah's vision to serve the Lord? Are you as willing to serve God as Isaiah became after the angel cleansed his lips?
3. If you are not eager, ready, and willing to serve God in whatever God asks of you, what do you need to make you ready and willing?
4. How can your sins be removed and blotted out today? Do you really want to live free from the practice of any sins?
5. Read Isaiah 6:8 again, why do you think God used the plural "us," in "who will go for us"?

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Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly  
*International Bible Lesson.*

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Contact: P.O. Box 1052, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73083  
and [lgp@theiblf.com](mailto:lgp@theiblf.com).