

## ISAIAH 6:1-13

**1** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. **2** Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they 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** The pivots <sup>E11</sup> on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke.

**5** And I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" **6** Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. **7** The seraph <sup>E12</sup> touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." **8** Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

**9** And he said, "Go and say to this people: 'Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand.' **10** Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and comprehend with their minds, 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 utterly desolate; **12** until the Lord sends everyone far away, and vast is the emptiness in the midst of the land. **13** Even if a tenth part remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains standing when it is felled." <sup>E13</sup> The holy seed is its stump.

**At first glance, I am captured by the wonder. Can you imagine seeing the Lord sitting on His throne? Can you imagine setting your eyes on the glory of the His robe. That just the hem of it fills the temple is amazing. Creatures with three pairs of wings flying in attendance to God anticipating His next command testifying to how holy God is to one another. I am struck with awe trying to see in my mind what Isaiah saw. What a privilege and honor to be given such a moment, gift, vision; at least at first glance.**

**Instead of honor and privilege, self reflection, self loathing, recognition and an overwhelming feeling of self degradation was invoked in the mind, heart and deep recesses of Isaiah's soul. Being in the presence of God and His holiness required of Isaiah a posture of unworthiness because he was unclean. Isaiah understood that he did not belong there.**

**But it is just like God to look beyond Isaiah's faults and provide a cleansing. At first glance, you could think that God cleansed him to make him feel at home. However, this too was not an honor as much as it was a necessity to send Isaiah back to do His will. Israel was unclean and in fact no longer worthy to be called God's people. Did God disown them or did Israel disown God? What is true, God was not pleased and His answer to their condition was to devastate them and render their land desolate.**

**But, if we give a closer look there is still hope. Isaiah sees it too. Isaiah cannot believe that this judgment on Israel is eternal and asks, “How long will this last?” God gives him hope that there is a remnant and that answer is in the holy seed.**

**I see from this story that salvation while a gift is not an honor that I deserve but a necessity to gain access to God. I also see that it is impossible to do God’s will without it. His will is to tell a dying world that it is dying but there is hope.**

**At first glance the advent season is one of wonder. The bright lights illuminate trees, houses and cities. The glory of the season is amazing. How do we forget that the reason Christ came was because we were unclean, dead, and in need of a savior to come and die for us?**

**We do not need to open our eye very wide to see the devastation and desolation today. God says, “Who will go for us?” Who will tell the world that Advent is still about Jesus and not the lights of the trees but the Light of the World? I will go! Will you? I bet if more of us go we could expect the unexpected! I bet we would see the world light up with Jesus. I bet we would see hope grow from a stump to a forest. Ah and when we all get to heaven...! Faith says expect the unexpected! Go with me because faith also says you haven’t seen anything yet.**

**Prayer:**

**Lord God Almighty, help us, to enter into your courts with thanksgiving and praise because your Son has made us clean. Strengthen our faith that we may light up the world. Help us to value our salvation so much that we respond to advent with the expectation that the world around us will turn to you! Grant us all visions of your glory and hope for your Kingdom in Jesus, holy and righteous name! Amen.**