

December 7, 2016

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Scripture

Isaiah 6:1-13

¹In 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. ²Seraphs 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. ³And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵And 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!" ⁶Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." ⁸Then 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!" ⁹And he said, "Go and say to this people:

'Keep listening, but do not comprehend;
keep looking, but do not understand.'

¹⁰Make 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."

¹¹Then 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;

¹²until the LORD sends everyone far away,
and vast is the emptiness in the midst of the land.

¹³Even 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."

The holy seed is its stump.

Devotional

Isaiah tells us in verse 5 that he sees the King, the Lord of hosts, *before* he is clean. That is grace, isn't it? The revelation of the love of God for us is not dependent upon our cleanliness, our goodness, our worth; it is dependent upon the King, the Lord of hosts alone. We prepare in this time of Advent for the coming of the Christ child, but we cannot adequately prepare ourselves. We certainly try. And we certainly fail. God, through the love of Jesus Christ, is the only one who can prepare us. So in this time of preparation,

take time to depend upon the God who gives us grace. Not because of what we do or who we are, but because it is God's power at work in our lives. Let us give thanks to our gracious and good God. Praise the Lord of hosts!

Prayer

Lord of hosts, we give thanks this day for your grace, which amazes, astounds and humbles us. We give thanks for your great and abundant power. We give thanks for your understanding that is beyond measure. Amen.