

Pursued and Encountered – Part 2
Jeff Lyle – AM and PM Notes – 7/1/2018

AM Message “Isaiah’s Eye-Opening Encounter” Isaiah 6:1-8

I. He Beheld the Glory of God (1-4)

- A. His vision of God’s supremacy (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.”

As Isaiah loses Uzzah to death, a temporary & earthly king, He is graciously given an encounter with the eternal, heavenly King. This vision reveals to Isaiah the very personhood of the God whom he had been proclaiming in the first five chapters. It is one thing to proclaim God. It is an entirely different thing to encounter Him.

- B. His revelation of God’s holiness (2- 3) - “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. 3 And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”

The heavenly messenger’s job is to reveal the nature of God to Isaiah. We must not diminish the significance that the specifics of the revelation are that God is holy, holy, and holy. The only other component of this revelation is that the glory of this thrice-holy God is the reality over all the earth and its inhabitants.

- C. His undoing from God’s presence (4) - “And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.”

The manifestation of God’s presence was discerned through Isaiah’s physical senses. He felt the shaking of the temple’s foundations in his body. Simultaneously, a cloud of glory became visible to Isaiah’s eyes. Similar encounters are seen throughout Scripture wherein the individuals involved have a sensory perception of the presence and power of God. Without fail, when God’s fullness and glory manifests, people drop to the ground in awe, astonishment or the loss of their physical ability to stand. Today, we can grow in our own expectation that, when God’s presence fills a place, there will be visible, physical effects.

II. He Became Convinced That God Is Holy (5-7)

- A. Self-awareness arose (5a) - “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...””

In the first five chapters, Isaiah pronounced no fewer than 8 fiery woes on other people or people groups. He clearly saw how far short they fell of God’s holy standard. He declared the righteous warning of Heaven upon them. Yet here in chapter six, after getting a personal glimpse of God’s glory in the temple, Isaiah got an in-depth view of himself, his own falling short and his sinfulness. His response? He pronounced woe upon himself.

- B. Kingdom perspective grew (5b) - “...for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

Everything changes, and I mean EVERYTHING, when an individual begins to experience personal encounter with God. The revelation of His supremacy serves as a catalyst to gaining Heaven’s perspective on all matters pertaining to life and faith. Everyone needs this life-altering encounter with God.

- C. Supernatural contact was initiated (6-7a) – “Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth...”

Apparently, the specific conviction which fell upon Isaiah had much to do with what came out of his mouth. Was he convicted about his harsh words of judgment? Was he convicted of lying or complaining or using vulgar language? We do not know. What we do know is that the seraphim came and touched the place where he was convicted.

- D. Transformational grace was communicated (7b) – “...and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

Isaiah experienced specific grace for a specific sin. The message over this supernatural encounter was that Isaiah did not need to fear being consumed in judgment by the holiness of God. His sin was atoned for. When we see God’s holiness, we may be tempted to despair of how we can ever be sustained in His presence. Isaiah’s encounter shows

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that the thrice-holy God is also the gracious, merciful and compassionate God who forgives sin and removes guilt.

III. He Bowed To God And His Mission (8)

A. Isaiah's discernment (8a) - "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying..."

Isaiah 30:21- "And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left."

John 10:27 – "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

After the vision of God and the ministry to Isaiah from God, then Isaiah begins to hear from himself the very clear voice of the Lord. Encounters with God will sharpen our discernment to hear Him and our confidence that, indeed, we have heard Him. God begins a conversation here with Isaiah.

B. God's recruitment (8b) - "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

Isaiah hears God seeking to recruit someone for Heaven's mission. The question is still active today, asking who it is that is willing to partner with Father, Son & Spirit in Heaven's assignment for each generation.

C. Isaiah's commitment (8c) - "Then I said, Here I am! Send me."

So, the encounter of Isaiah moves from a vision of God, to being stricken by the supremacy and glory of God, to fearing God in His holiness, to being forgiven by God, to hearing God's voice and then to presenting himself to God for consecrated worship and service. Isaiah went on to record some of the most prophetic writings that speak of God's heart, the Messiah and the coming Kingdom. All of this flowed forth from the encounter that occurred one day when Isaiah was visiting the place of worship.

PM Message “Encountering The Orphan-Spirit” Genesis 21:8-21

What is an orphan-spirit?

- When we speak of an orphan-spirit we are speaking of a person who lives with unhealed, sensitive wounds from a previous loss.
- The orphan-spirit describes a person who lives with a self-concept of worthlessness or inferiority.
- The orphan-spirit is usually birthed in a person during their childhood and it's often connected with some trauma stemming from rejection, betrayal, abandonment, abuse or constant intense criticism.
- This person has not yet found or believed a proper biblical validation of identity and consequently lacks a sense of worth, so that they are living even as an adult with a sense of shame, fear, self-loathing or hatred.
- The person with an orphan-spirit typically lives with hypersensitivity, overt insecurity, self-defensiveness, anger, self-centeredness, a lack of trust, or regular pessimistic defeatism.
- The person with an orphan-spirit has not yet discovered who they truly are in God's eyes, and they continually look to wrong sources to give them what was not instilled in them during formative years. Most of those with an orphan-spirit spend their lives in ceaseless striving or defeated retreat. This message points all of those who are living with the orphan-spirit to a Father who sent a Son to pay it all so that they might have the ability to be adopted as His own children and, consequently, orphans no more.
- In the simplest form, the orphan-spirit describes a person who is deeply hurting and has not found the remedy for their longstanding pain. God does not want any of us to live feeling that we have been orphaned, cast off, rejected, abandoned or discounted in any way. He becomes a Father to the orphan.

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I. What Powerlessness Looks Like (8-11)

- A. Unforeseen change (8) - “And the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.”

Ishmael was the firstborn son to Abraham, but not the son of promise. Now a teenager, Ishmael would have been aware of the prophetic destiny spoken over his younger half-brother, Isaac. The celebration of Isaac’s weaning would have been a clear signal to Ishmael that he was not to be viewed as the primary heir to Abraham.

- B. Irreversible moments (9) - “But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing.”

The Apostle Paul adds details to this account when he writes of it in Galatians 4:29. The laughter referenced here in Genesis was actually a mocking laughter, driven by a spirit of persecution in Ishmael’s heart toward Isaac. In essence, Sarah saw teenaged Ishmael bullying toddler Isaac. Her maternal instinct fueled what would come next.

- C. Unmerciful declarations (10-11) - “So she said to Abraham, “Cast out this slave woman with her son, for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.” And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son.”

Sarah took her matriarchal authority and demanded that her husband, Abraham, dismiss Hagar, the mother of Ishmael from the household. Hagar would be evicted along with her son. This decision was irreversible and would negatively impact both Hagar and Ishmael. They were instantly widowed and orphaned due to Sarah’s vengeful decision. Abraham was grieved at the prospect of losing his firstborn son. The next verse seems to indicate that Abraham pondered what to do with the dilemma.

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II. What Rejection Looks Like (12-14a)

- A. There were forces they could not stop (12) - “But God said to Abraham, “Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”

God cleared up the matter with specific instructions to Abraham about what he was to do. There were two trajectories of destiny in play: Isaac’s and Ishmael’s. God would use Sarah’s fleshly decision to accomplish His own purposes for both boys and their descendants. This is a vital principle for us to remember: the harmful actions of others cannot steal our divine destiny. If we choose to press in to God and receive wisdom and protection, God will accomplish His purposes, even through the sinful actions of others.

- B. There was a big picture they could not see (13) - “And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring.”

Ishmael’s painful rejection and abandonment by his father would lead to his exaltation as the father of a massive people group.

- C. There was pain they could not have anticipated (14) - “So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.”

Completely rejected, Hagar is given the minimal resources of survival: bread and water. With zero display of love, remorse or sorrow, Abraham terminates his relationship with Hagar and Ishmael. The activity associated with this rejected mother and son is: sent away > departing > wandering. This is the reality of many orphan-spirited people who are still relationally imprisoned from the wounds put upon them by others.

- D. There was a despair they could not shake (15-16) - “When the water in the skin was gone, she put the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, “Let me not look on the death of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept.”

Orphan-spirited people live in the pain of their rejection, abandonment or abuse. It is tormenting for them to face a future which they fear. They often sense only doom and death coming their way. They spend their lives emotionally (and sometimes physically) isolated. As Hagar

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lifted up her voice and wept through the bitterness of her rejection, God begins to move toward her.

III. What Rescue & Welcome Look Like (17-21)

- A. God did not abandon them (17) - “And God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is.”

God moves toward the situation in the form of the angel of the Lord (a theophany). God reassures her that she need not fear her future. He also declares that He is responding to the cries of the orphaned son, Ishmael. We are reminded that God is near to those whose hearts and spirits are broken. He moves at our cries.

- B. God’s plans for them had not been thwarted (18) - “Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”

The sovereign God of Heaven decrees destiny over the rejected son, Ishmael. The failures of Abraham would not thwart God’s designs for Ishmael. The loveless acts of Sarah would not prevent Ishmael from receiving what God decreed. There were only a handful of men of whom it was said that they would become the foundation of great nations. Ishmael, the rejected and abandoned son, was one of those few whom God exalted and favored. We are reminded that, in Christ, we are overcomers of our pasts, our parents and our pains.

- C. God’s resources for them had not dried up (19) - “Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.”

God supernaturally provided for these two cast-offs what they could not provide for themselves. King David would write in Psalm 27:10, “When my mother and father forsake me, the Lord will take me in.” He provided them water to sustain them which enabled them to begin to move into their eventual destiny together. We must remember that there is often a process of reversal when God seeks to undo what has been done to us by others. It is not always an instant flip-of-the-switch. One component of faith and trust in God is that we continue to believe in His goodness toward us, even though things have not been fully corrected. Had they not received the water in the wilderness, they never would have received their destiny which God decreed.

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- D. God became both Father & Husband to them (20-21) - “And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.”

Ishmael, the rejected one, the abandoned one, the un-loved one, the fatherless one went on in life. He became a skilled hunter. He obtained favor from God and was granted a wife from the Lord (Proverbs 18:22). Though he would never see his father again, he lived out the destiny given to him by God. This is the call upon everyone who identifies with the elements of an orphan-spirit. Will there be trust in the Heavenly Father, the never-forsaking Shepherd, the wise Counselor and the compassionate Savior to bring the victory to the reality of their hurt and loss? Human parents, spouses and loved ones can do us good... or they can leave us hurting. Above and beyond all of that is an available welcome from Father God to bring us through the pain and into His divine destiny for each of our lives.