

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE
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SERIES: Isaiah, Part 1 (Judgment – But Hope)

TITLE: Program 13 – The Holiness Of God

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

Have you ever looked around you and looked at the way others live and say, “Hey, I’m not so bad. As a matter of fact, I’m relatively good. I must be doing all right. I’m not as bad as others. O Beloved, with whom are you comparing yourself? What you need is, a glimpse of the holiness of God, so you can see yourself as you really are and then live accordingly.

PART ONE

Isaiah is about to bring his message to a close, and he really doesn’t understand at that point what is awaiting him. It’s one of the most incredible passages that you can read. It’s Isaiah chapter 6, that can transform your life. Remember, Precious One, our theme for this week is, “learning to live in the manifest presence of God.” Our admonition is: what sin is there that is worth it? What decision, what desire, what action is worth losing the presence of God? Don’t you want to know His presence? Don’t you want to know His power? Don’t you want to know His glory? Don’t you want that sweet,

sweet confidence that you are right with God? Not that arrogant, looking at others, saying, “Look at them, I’m better than they are. Look at them, I don’t do that. Look at them, I don’t talk that way. Look at them, I don’t dress that way.” But you’re looking at them and you’re comparing yourself with them. Well we’re going to move into Isaiah 6, when all of a sudden, Isaiah doesn’t look at them. He looks at Him. And when he looks at Him, he’ll never be the same. We need to see how he brings his message to a close. Remember that message starts in Isaiah chapter 2. It goes through chapter 4 and then goes into chapter 5, which is the song of his “Well-beloved,” the song of God that is sung about God in His vineyard, or else that song is included in that message that begins in chapter 2. A message that talks about Judah, a message that talks about Jerusalem, a message that points him to the future when someday Zion will be the center of the earth and all the nations will come up to be taught of the Lord and to **“...beat their swords into plowshares....” (Joel 3:10)** and they will have peace, but the message of Isaiah chapter 5 does not end on that note of hope. Listen to what he says. Let’s open our Bibles to Isaiah chapter 5 and let’s look at it. He says in Isaiah chapter 5 in verse 24, **“Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble [as] dry grass collapses into...flame, so their root will become like rot and their blossom [will] blow away as dust....”** In other words, “You are going to be demolished.” Why? **“...For they have rejected the law of the Lord of hosts and [they have] despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 5:24)** You want to know what that looks like? Look at the way society lives. Look at the immorality. Look at the abortions. Look at the language. Look at the dress. Look at the lifestyle. Look at the lascivious living. Look at the way money is squandered while there are people that are in dire need in this world. Do you realize that we work in 149 countries? And we’re in 69 languages? And do you know that we have people all over the world begging us for books? Begging us for books. When I think, “O Lord, if those that are being taught in radio and television and

Precept courses, if they would just come along and give us the price of one book; three dollars, four dollars, think of the multitudes of the thousands that we could reach so that they would stop clamoring for these books.” But they’re so hungry not for the things of this world. They’re hungry for the Bread of Life. And I do want to stop and I do want to thank those of you that support this ministry and I want to thank you for supporting radio and television because you know, it’s Biblical. Where you get fed is where you support: first the church, first the church. But there’s plenty. We have such plenty. Well here are these people and they are living at this point in the midst of plenty and yet they’re empty. And God is saying [“They have rejected the word of the Lord. They have despised the word of the Lord.”] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 5:24) It says, **“On this account the anger of the Lord has burned against His people....”** God is hot. God is fuming. **“...He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them down. And the mountains quaked, and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of the streets....”** There’s dead bodies all around, **“For all [of] this His anger is not spent, but His hand is still stretched out....”** (Isaiah 5:25) Stretched out in judgment. Remember at the beginning of this week we saw that God said, [“If you don’t keep my commandments and you don’t answer me, then you will pay seven times for your sin.”] (PARAPHRASE, Leviticus 26:18) And so His hand is stretched out because He’s righteous. And in His righteousness He has to bring forth His judgment. Now one of the key words that we tell you to mark is the word “anger” so that you can see that there is a righteous anger. It says, **“[And] He will...lift up a standard to the distant nation....”** He’s going to put up a flag. He’s going to put up a flagpole that is going to draw this distant nation down against them. He’s gonna whistle for this nation from the ends of the earth. Now what you want to do is, you want to mark every “it” that relates to this nation, or to these nations that He’s going to bring, and “it” is plural in the Hebrew. The nations that He’s going to bring are the Assyrians against the

northern kingdom and then the Babylonians against the southern kingdom. And so it says **“...And behold, it will come with speed swiftly. No one in it...,”** in this nation **“...is weary [no one] ...stumbles, [nor] slumbers [nor] sleeps....”** I mean, they are awake and alert and ready to come. It says, **“...Nor is the belt at its waist undone, nor [is] its sandal strap broken.”** In other words, they are ready for war. **“Its arrows are sharp, and...its bows are bent; [the hoofs of its horses seem like flint and its chariot wheels like a whirlwind. Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; it growls as it seizes the prey...And it will growl over it in that day, like the roaring of the sea.”** (Isaiah 5:26-30) You can see an animal with its prey. You can see somebody else that approaches it. You can hear it growl, “Don’t touch my prey.” And it says, **“...If one looks to the land...,”** what land? The land that God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and his twelve sons, the sons of Israel, as an everlasting possession. **“...If one looks to the land, behold, there is darkness and [there is] distress; Even the light is darkened by [the] clouds.”** (Isaiah 5:30) It’s a dreary, dreary day, and the message ends for a time. But then it tells about an event in history, Isaiah chapter 6 verse 1. It says, **“In the year of king Uzziah’s death I...,”** I, who? I, Isaiah. **“...I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim [burning one] stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face...with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one [seraph] called...to another [seraph] and said, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.’ And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke [with the presence of the Lord].”** (Isaiah 6:1-4) We talked about the presence of the Lord all week. **“[And] I said, ‘Woe is me, ...I am undone, I am ruined! I am a man of unclean lips, and I [dwell in the midst of] a people of unclean lips...”** (Isaiah 6:5) No comparison now about how he is better than these people,

because he has seen his sin. He has seen his unclean lips and the unclean lips show what's in the heart, ["because out of the abundance of a man's heart he speaks"]. (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 12:34) He speaks what is in his heart and he says, ["I am undone, I am ruined. I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."] (PARAPHRASE Isaiah 6:5) God has Isaiah right where He wants him. Isaiah has seen his sin, not because he's looked around him, Beloved, but because he has seen God. Do you know what the purpose of this program, Precepts for Life is? It's to help you, Beloved, see God. To see Him in His Word, to see Him as He moves among His people, to see Him in His actions to see Him in His power, to see Him in His righteousness, to see Him in His holiness, to see Him in His indignation—to see God, so we can see ourselves. Oh, how important this message is. We'll be back in just a minute, but think on these things in that minute.

PART TWO

You know, Beloved, it's one thing to see your sin and it's a hard thing to see your sin. And yet, when you see your sin, then God is ready to forgive. So instead of looking around you at others and comparing yourself and thinking that, relatively, you're okay, you need to get a glimpse of God. You need to understand His holiness, because Precious One, when you and I understand the holiness of God and we see our sin and we confess it, then God is ready to move. Watch what happens in Isaiah chapter 6. He saw the Lord, he saw the seraph, he heard them saying, "**Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts.**" (Isaiah 6:3) And he said, "**Woe is me...I'm ruined, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for [mine] eyes [mine eyes] have seen the King....**" (Isaiah 6:5) Mine eyes have seen the king, the one that rules, the Sovereign of all the universe, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the One who is Lord, the One who is Master, the One who is the Supreme Being: the King. The Lord of hosts. And then it says,

“**Then...**,” “then,” put a clock there. If you don’t know what I’m talking about, listen, we want to teach you how to study the Word of God for yourself, how to discover truth for yourself. We do it through the inductive method of Bible study, teaching you the skills of observation, interpretation, and application. You can download absolutely free a study guide, a study guide that tells you that it’s important to notice the sequence of time, to put a green clock around this, and this is so important at this point. “**Then one of the seraphim...**,” “seraph” means “burning one; “i-m” means a plural. “**...Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs....**” (Isaiah 6:6) What altar is that? Leviticus chapter 6 verse 9, and 12 through 13 tell us about the altar of the burnt offering. The altar, we read about it when we looked at Moses building the tabernacle and constructing it and offering a sacrifice, a burnt offering, and a meal offering, on this altar. There was a perpetual fire on that altar, (See Leviticus 6:9, 12-13) because we need to stay in a state of constant cleansing with God; constant communion, constant awareness of His presence, so that when we sin we’re aware of it and we confess it. And God knows that all sin is not intentional. It’s not, “Okay, you drew the line, I’m stepping over it, and I don’t care.” But it is a, “I didn’t mean to do that. I didn’t mean to say that. Why, why did, why did I wear that dress? Why did I act like that? Why did I respond that way? Why did I spend that money that way?” It’s an unintentional sin. But as we live in His presence, intentional or unintentional, there is a fire on the altar of sacrifice where sin offerings were put and there are coals on that altar, and he takes that coal with tongs off the altar. He puts it in His hand and He comes and He touches Isaiah’s lips, and listen to what he says, “**He touched my mouth with it and said, ‘Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven.’**” (Isaiah 6:7) Isn’t that awesome? Your iniquity is taken away. Your sin is forgiven. Just like that. Just like that. Why? Because Isaiah did not compare himself with others, but he saw the

Lord, he saw his sin, he saw the awfulness of the sin of the people and he acknowledged it **“...Woe is me...I am undone...I am a man of unclean lips.”** (Isaiah 6:5, KJV) **“[And] then [he] heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ [And] then I said, ‘Here am I [Here am I]. Send me!’”** (Isaiah 6:8) “Send me. I’m ready to go.” O Precious One, when you get a glimpse of God, when you see Him in all of His holiness, and you see your sin, then God, seeing your heart, is quick to forgive us that sin, and we’ll look at it later, but to forgive us that sin, and then you and I can hear His voice. And when we hear His voice, we hear His heart. We hear the burden of His heart. We hear what God wants to do. He says, **“...Who will go for Us...?”** Oh, that’s interesting, for “Us.” “Us,” who? “Us,” the Father, “Us,” the Son, “Us,” the Spirit. **“...Who will go for Us?”** [And Isaiah] **said, ‘Here am I [here am I, Lord]. Send me.’”** (Isaiah 6:8) I want to pause for a minute, and I want us to go back and look at this timeframe. I want us to go to 2 Chronicles 26, we see Uzziah, and we see that this is when Uzziah dies, that Isaiah has this vision. What’s significant about the death of Uzziah? Well what you see is, when he begins his reign according to verse 1, he is 16 years old. And it says in verse 3, **“[He] was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem....”** (2 Chronicles 26:3) Verse 4, **“...He did right in the sight of the Lord according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He continued to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the vision of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God prospered him.”** (2 Chronicles 26:4-5) And you read that God helped him and he became very, very strong. And you see how God blessed him and how he made engines of war and how great his fortifications were and it says, **“...Hence his fame spread afar...,”** verse 15 **“...for he was marvelously helped until he was strong [until he was strong]. But when he became strong, his heart [became] so proud [he was lifted up] that he acted corruptly ...he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered**

[into] the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar....” (2 Chronicles 26:15-16) And he was not allowed to do that. He was from the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of Levi. And the priest Azariah goes in with valiant men to stop him, and in his fury, he picks up the censer that belongs to the altar of incense and he turns around to look at them and to rebel against them, and all of a sudden Azariah and the eighty look at him. He breaks out with leprosy on his head, and they rush him out of the temple. (See 2 Chronicles 26:19-20) What is the lesson for us? The lesson is: Don’t think that you can become so proud that you can get away with presumptuous sin. See God as He is. He’s holy, and worship Him accordingly.