

# Services in the Churches

Creamed Comments on the Sunday School Lesson, "Isaiah's Vision of the Holy God," Isaiah 6:1-10, for Sunday, August 14.

The prophet Isaiah, of the tribe of Judah, had a long career from 742 to about 700 B.C., prophesying during the reign of five kings. His writings are among the most sublime and oft quoted of the prophecies, and nowhere in the Bible do we find such distinct pictures of Jesus, the suffering Messiah. This lesson deals with the account of a great religious experience in which Isaiah received a call to be a prophet. He was about 30 years old at this time.

V.1. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." Uzziah had had a prosperous reign of 52 years, but when he attempted to usurp the duties of the high priest, he was stricken

with leprosy, and suddenly the last hope of Israel was gone. Isaiah's vision of God sitting on his heavenly throne probably occurred during a great ceremony in the Temple of Solomon where he may have served as an official of some kind. Because the Hebrews believed that the invisible Yahweh was enthroned on the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies of the Temple, the sight of this object may have induced this vision.

V.2. "Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet and with twain he did fly." The seraphims were mythical creatures believed to be half animal and half human. They were considered to be attendants upon the heavenly king. Four wings were for devotion and two were used for activity.

V.3. "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." God's holiness was frequently mentioned by Isaiah. He often referred to God as "The Holy One of Israel." Two ideas are conveyed in the word "holy" namely, God's distinction and exaltation above everything earthly and the splendor of his moral perfection. Mention of the word three times relates to the doctrine of the Trinity.

V.4. "And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." The shaking of the foundations of the thresholds was an evidence of the powerful presence of God. The burning of the incense may have caused the smoke, but smoke in the temple on previous occasions indicated the presence of God.

V.5. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Isaiah was overwhelmed with the sense of his own unworthiness, so made a very explicit confession which was a necessary prelude to his forgiveness and cleansing. Isaiah contrasts the divine King who never dies with the earthly king who had just died.

Vs.6,7. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: ... And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips: and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isaiah believed that he was forgiven by the fact that the seraphim took a burning coal from the incense altar, the place of sacrifice for atonement, and burned away his uncleanness. In the old Egyptian religious rites there was a similar ceremony of mouth purification for priests at their ordination, and this may have been carried over into Jewish ritual.

Vs.8, 9. "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me ... And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." Having been purged, Isaiah is fit to converse with God and to become His spokesman to the people. Isaiah is a willing prophet, unlike Moses and Jeremiah, who hesitated before answering God's call. Isaiah is challenged to prophesy to a people who see and hear, but refuse to understand or accept the truth.

V.10. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their eyes heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes; and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." Isaiah felt he must prophesy to the people even if they were unresponsive to his message and morally insensitive to truth.

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OUR PREACHER  
Says



St. Mary's Catholic Church

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Simeon Schmitt

## SUMMER SCHEDULE

### Sunday masses

6:00 a.m.  
7:30 a.m.  
9:00 a.m.  
10:30 a.m.

### Weekday masses

6 a.m., 7 a.m., and 8:15 a.m.  
Tuesday — 5:30 p.m.

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Mercer Avenue at Five Points

Harold J. Bond, minister

9:30 a.m., unified morning family worship. All members of the

family can come to the Sanetary at the same time to worship (ex-

cept nursery, kindergarten and

primary departments which meet

at 313 Mercer in the Sunday school annex).

The pastor will speak this Sunday upon the theme, "The Victorious Life With Christ," as sug-

gested by John 10:9-10, "I am the

Door ... I have come that they may have life, and have it abund-

antly."

Whosoever Will, May Come.

The Minister reserves time each day for confidential interviews

who wish private, Christian and

sympathetic counsel. Appointment

can be made at the church office

by phoning 3-2522.

Worship with us in the cool of

the morning.

The fear of the Lord is the begin-

ning of wisdom."

A good name is rather to be

chosen than great riches."

"He that is soon angry dealeth

foolishly. He that is slow to wrath

is of great understanding. A soft

answer turneth away wrath."

"One man gives freely, yet

grows all the richer; another

withholds what he should give,

and only suffers want."

"She is more precious than

rubies."

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