

SERMON: THE TEMPLE THE THRONE AND THE TRAIN

Isaiah 6:1

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple.

Introduction

Like all of Judah, Isaiah was grieving the death of king Uzziah. He became king at the age of sixteen and reigned for fifty-two years. He had been a strong and successful ruler, and under his leadership the nation enjoyed success and prosperity. For many of his subjects, including Isaiah, he was the only king they had ever known. Despite his mistakes- we all make them- he was considered the greatest king since David. Now he is dead- and he died of the horrible disease, leprosy.

Not only was there grief in the nation, but also fear and uncertainty. Their prosperity was fragile because Assyria was flexing its military muscles and might invade Judah. Would the new king be strong enough to repel or prevent an invasion?

Isaiah was devastated more than most of the citizens because Uzziah was his cousin and his mentor. Uzziah was his role model and his hero. Perhaps Isaiah thought, "Who knows how the next king will treat me? He might not give me the time of day. He might jail me or even execute me, in fear that I will start an insurrection."

In his depression, Isaiah went to the temple. The house of God is a good place to go when trouble comes. While there, he had the most meaningful experience of his life. In dramatic language Isaiah relates how, in this mysterious experience, his inward eyes were opened and he saw God in all of His holiness and majesty. The earthly temple faded from his perception and Isaiah was permitted to look into the heavenly throne room. He was made to realize that although the throne room of Judah was vacant, the throne room of the universe was still occupied by the sovereign Creator. With a reverent, meditative spirit, he came seeking God and he was not disappointed. He had a worship experience that radically changed his life. It was during this experience that he answered the call to his prophetic ministry.

Let's review some of the thoughts that are spawning from this verse.

Exposition

1. The Tragedy and The Timing.

(In The Year King Uzziah Died.)

(Something Must Die In Your Life Before You See God As He Really Is.)

(Sometimes Tragedy Precedes Transformation.)

2. The Temple.

(A Place of Worship & Divine Assistance.)

3. The Throne.

(Displaying Majesty, Power, And Authority.)

(Sometimes It Is Easy To Forget How Majestic Our God Is.)

4. The Train.

(Documenting Past Successes And Accomplishments.)

(The Greater The Accomplishments The Larger The Train.)

(The Train Is Ever Increasing.)

(No Room For Flesh To Glory.)

5. The Truth.

(The King Of Kings Will Never Die.)

(He Shall Reign Forever And Ever.)

Closing Thoughts

There is an old saying: “When the outlook is bleak try the uplook. Look to the hills from whence cometh your help. The uplook is always better than the outlook.” This is what Isaiah did. He went to the temple and worshipped the true and living God and he did not leave the same way he came. I will close with a question. If you could add a few statements to His train, what would you write?

End Notes:

1. The Book of Isaiah is not in chronological order. If it were in chronological order, chapter six would be chapter one. Some non-believers try to make this a big deal, but it is not. There are many books and documents organized by categories rather than by a time line.

2. We are familiar with the train connected to a bride’s wedding gown. We are also familiar with the academic hoods worn during graduation ceremonies. These are similar to the train to which Isaiah refers. The king’s train was the trailing part of his robe. Sometimes it was attached around his neck or around his waist. When it became excessive it was also attached to the hem of his robe. Some of the regal trains had multiple layers of fabric. Embroidered on the train were the accomplishments of the king. It was done with style by the court tailor or seamstress. With successful kings it was an ongoing challenge to keep the train up to date. New pieces of cloth had to be constantly added and embroidered with the artistic style that reflected the king’s stateliness. God, as the King Of Kings had so many great and marvelous works until his train consumed all of the space in the temple. What a mighty God we serve! There are many spiritual implications here. His train filled the temple. The temple had many courts

and administrative rooms. His train filled them all. When God shows up there is no room for the flesh or anything else. I call it the law of spiritual impenetrability: Two objects cannot occupy the same space and the same time. When our personal temples are filled with faith, there is no room for doubt. When filled with love, there is no room for hate. When filled with forgiveness, there is no room for revenge.

3. This may come as a downer, but as great as Uzziah was, he did not finish well. Please read 2nd Chronicles 26:16-23. I pray daily that I may finish well. On this matter I solicit your prayers also.

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