

In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

...as follows in Jesus' name:

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. 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. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!"

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 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; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." And He said, "Go, and say to this people: "'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And He said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and the Lord removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy Seed is its stump. (ESV)

*This is Your Word, heavenly Father; **sanctify us in the truth, Your Word is Truth.** Amen.* (John 17:17)

People loved by God, declared to be holy and acceptable before the King of hosts,
having been touched and covered by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

You are currently sitting in the throne room of God, right where Isaiah was.

Maybe that's difficult for you to recognize it, but it is the spiritual reality.

It's probably not what you imagine heaven looking like...

probably not what your mind's eye saw while listening to Isaiah.

But here it is, heaven on earth... at least in this place.

Obviously, there are things that you can't see or hear from Isaiah's vision.

You don't see the seraphim with their 6 wings flying around with reverently covered faces and feet,
but they are here, as Jesus said, watching over you while they always see the Father's face.

You don't see the train of God's robe filling the room, but you are clothed in Christ's righteousness.

You don't see an altar of incense with coal... or the smoke coming from the altar... ELH #283:5

or smell the **prayers** of the saints, **rising up as incense**, *wafting their praise on high*. Rev. 8:3; Ps. 141:2;

but your heavenly Father receives your prayers as a sweet-smelling sacrifice.

You don't hear the voices of the seraphim, those ministering spirits — those messengers of God —
shaking the foundations of the thresholds,

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but you do hear the echo of their song as we join in singing *with angels and archangels* in the Sanctus

"Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabbaoth; heaven and earth are full of Your glory!"

And you do get a depiction of that glory...of **the Lord of hosts, on His throne, high and lifted up.**

...Wait! That's not what you pictured in your mind's eye!?

But it is like what St. John saw in Jesus' Revelation 5:6: **a Lamb standing as though it had been slain.**

Here is a depiction of the King of Grace on **His throne, high and lifted up...**

just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. John 3:15

So the reality is that you are... here and now... in God's throne room.

...

So... How dare you!

How dare you stand here half-mindfully in the throne room of **the King, the Lord of hosts,**
hardly thinking about the prayers and praises coming from your mouth.

How dare you sit down before Him, and daydream about what you could be doing somewhere else!

How dare you even speak in His presence... you, a person **of unclean lips,**

who has *cursed... falsely sworn... lied... or deceived by His name,*

and yet **out of the same mouth... have blessed our Lord and Father**

and **cursed... gossiped... slandered... betrayed... and spoken idly about people** 8th Comm. Explanation

who are made in the likeness of God. James 3:9-10

...

This is but a hint of what Isaiah felt — though I would imagine, much more intensely and acutely —

It's what caused him to cry out **"Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips,**

... for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

...

Now, we do not see the Lord, but we know that He is here.

For where two or three are gathered in My Name, He tells us, there I am among them. Matthew 18:20

& We are gathered here **in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

His name is such a holy thing... so holy, the Lord would protect it by the 2nd Commandment:

that **we should not take His name in vain...** that is, use it as if it were a meaningless/empty word.

And yet, how often have we used it as just another common expression of surprise?

Then again, maybe it doesn't escape our unclean lips nearly as much as it ought,

because neither do you use it as often as you should to *pray, praise, and give thanks.* 2nd Comm. Explanation

... Though He commands, **Call upon Me in the day of trouble,** with the promise **I will deliver you,**
yet you still strive, without prayer, to find the solution yourself.

Or, if you do pray for His help, forget to **glorify Him** Psalms 50:15

or **give thanks to Him for His mercy that endures forever.** Psalms 136:1

Do you then, along with Isaiah, cry out, **"Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips"?**

Yes, do it! Do it here... in His presence... before His gracious and glorious throne.

Of all places, here is the place to open those unclean lips to confess your sins.

Don't keep silent about them. Don't imagine that you can hide them from the Lord of hosts.

Of all places, bear your soul here so that the Lord can send His messengers to you

and speak His Word of comfort to you, just as He sent the angel to Isaiah and Isaiah to Israel.

Think of that! The Lord sent the seraph to Isaiah so that he would no longer be in fear of God's glory.

Listen to the angel's message again, **"Behold,"** because something surprising is going to be said next...

“this [burning coal from the altar] has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”
Note that Isaiah’s guilt wasn’t just forgotten; it was **taken away** from him... given to another.
It was no longer HIS guilt... and neither was it just left lying about as if to be picked up/recalled later.
The seraph said it was **atoned for**... paid in full... redeemed.

How could this be? Who would dare to take on Isaiah’s sin... and Israel’s sin... and your sin?
It is none other than the Lord Himself, **the holy Seed**... as the Lord sent Isaiah so clearly to proclaim:
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14
Immanuel, that is, “God with us,”
so united and connected with us that He is the twice-burned **stump of Jesse** that Isaiah described.
Though twice-burned, yet life would revive in Him, as Isaiah also described, Isaiah 11:1
There shall come forth a Shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
And Isaiah goes on to describe Him and his work: **For He grew up before Him like a young plant ...**
Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows...
But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities;
upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.
... and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:2-6

...
The reason you dare to be here in God’s throne room – in His presence –
is because of that **Holy Seed**, that fruitful **Stump of Jesse**.
Just as the Lord sent the angel to Isaiah to speak the good news to him – words of forgiveness/comfort –
so the Lord has sent His messenger to you to declare **YOUR guilt is taken away & your sin atoned for**.
The Lord didn’t call Isaiah to His throne room in order to condemn him, but to forgive and send him.
So too, He does not call you here to condemn you, but so that you would **turn and be healed**.

1 John 1:7
You reason you dare come each week is because **the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses you from all sin**.
You dare to stand here because **as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** Gal. 3:27
You dare sit here because this is your house, too... the house of your heavenly Father,
because **in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.** Galatians 3:26
You dare to speak, even sing the song of the seraphim to the thrice **Holy, Lord God of Sabbaoth**/hosts,
because as you come forward to the altar, His messenger touches your unclean lips and cleanses them
with the twice-burned, but still-living coal of the Stump, the body & blood of Jesus Christ, **Immanuel**.

... Stand, sit, and boldly, yet humbly, be present here in God’s throne room, with His holy angels,
and, in the peace of your forgiveness, speak, sing, and proclaim His thrice-holy name,
and with the angels and archangels, and with Isaiah, and all the heavenly hosts,
“Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously;
let this be made known in all the earth.” Isaiah 12:5

In Christ, you have nothing to fear:
Not in here, not now...
Not out in the world, not on your last day...
Not at the pearly gates, not on THE Last Day...

In Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

Soli Deo Gloria