

Worship, Part Two

In Isaiah 6:1-8, Isaiah recounts that it was in the year of King Uzziah's death that he saw the Lord sitting on a throne lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.

What does it mean that God sat on a throne? Well, clearly it is a symbol of kingship and sovereignty. The throne indicates that the one who sits upon it is both king and judge. It represents both power and righteousness.

But there is more to this high and exalted Lord who revealed himself to Isaiah. The one whose train filled the temple with His glory is not alone. Isaiah is not alone. There are beings here with him. Verse two tells us that seraphims stood above him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

These seraphims had six wings, and these six wings convey a great deal of symbolism. With two he covered his face. That must certainly indicate humility. They dared not look at the holiness of God. And with two he covered his feet. Surely this represents purity. And with two he flew. But these winged creatures are not merely flying. Isaiah states, "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

Interpreters of the Hebrew language tell us that there is no adequate comparative or superlative form, so the pattern of repetition is used in order to make a point. We see this thrice-repeated pattern again in Revelation 4:8-11: "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Both Isaiah and John saw God in His essence, and His essence exalted His holiness.

What does the holiness of God mean? It means certainly His separateness from his creation. He is what we are not. We are finite; He is infinite. God is transcendent (above His creation). Holiness includes all of God's attributes. God's holiness is that which defines Him.

For your own benefit of worship, go back and reread Isaiah 6:1-8, and Revelation 4:8-11. Get fixed in your mind the action that took place in both texts.