

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

12 July 2026

The Great Encounter

Text: "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". *Isa. 6:8* From *Isa. 6:1-13*.

It has been said that until a person has seen God in some sense, they begin at no beginning and work toward no end.

Isaiah saw the Lord.

His encounter with God is recorded for us in *Isaiah 6*.

It is a truly great chapter; it provides a glimpse of the marvels of God.

It tells us how Isaiah came to be a prophet of God.

A glorious vision of God.

"I saw the Lord".

Isaiah had a vision of God.

What did he see?

It is interesting to note that, although he describes the throne, the robe, and the heavenly attendants, he does not attempt to describe God.

Nevertheless, certain truths about God were indelibly etched on him.

He saw that God is sovereign.

It was a time of crisis, confusion, and change.

Yet above all the tragedy and turmoil, Isaiah saw the Lord as the sovereign ruler of the world.

Uzziah, the earthly king, was dead, but the divine King never dies.

The throne in Judah was empty, but the throne in heaven was occupied by the eternal King whose glory filled the earth.

Isaiah never forgot this vision.

No matter how black life about him became, he was held by the conviction that God is the sovereign Lord of the universe.

He saw that God is majestic.

Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Seraphim were present, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Each of the seraphim had six wings, with two wings each covered his feet, a symbol of reverence and awe; with two wings each covered his face, a symbol of humility; and with two wings each flew.

A symbol of their readiness for service.

Isaiah never lost sight of the majesty of God.

Throughout his long and eventful ministry, he manifested a consciousness that God is great and glorious.

He saw that God is Holy.

The word holy means separate or remote.

The word designates God as separate from and other than man.

Isaiah was preeminently the prophet of the holiness of God in Old Testament days and may have coined the phrase found so frequently in his prophecy, the Holy One of Israel.

We need such a vision of God.

We need to realize afresh that God is; that he is on his throne; that he is great, majestic, and holy.
A vivid awareness of sin.

A profound awareness of God always brings a painful awareness of sin.

After their sin of disobedience, Adam and Eve were very much aware of their sinfulness.

Moses felt it at the burning bush and hid his face from the Lord's presence.

Peter felt the heavy weight of guilt and cried, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

The more we see of God the more we are conscious of our sin.

The conviction of sin.

Isaiah was convicted of his sin.

Listen to him as he cries, "Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips."

The literal meaning is, "I am cut off; destroyed!

It can be translated, "Woe to me, for I am a goner!"

The confession of sin.

Isaiah could not help but admit that he was a man of unclean lips and that he dwelt in the midst of an unclean people.

Isaiah confessed that he was unworthy either to join in the praise of God or to deliver a message in his name.

The vision of the majesty and glory and holiness of God made him acutely aware of his own unworthiness.

The cleansing of sin.

Fire has always been regarded as an emblem of purifying: one of the seraphim laid the hot coal on Isaiah's mouth and declared that his sin was purged.

The word for purged means purified or removed.

The Hebrew word was used to refer to an atonement for sin.

The fact that the coal was taken from the altar of sacrifice was an indication that he was pardoned through the atonement.

Fire burns, but it also, cleanses.

God did not tell Isaiah to take a bath, or to wear better clothes, or to get an education.

He touched a hot coal to his lips and said, "Your guilt is taken away and your sin forgiven.

A willing commitment to service.

For the first time in the vision, God speaks: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

God's call to service comes in different ways.

For Jacob it was angels and a ladder; for Moses it was a burning bush; for Samuel it was a call in the night; for Elijah it was a still, small voice; for David it was the anointing by Samuel; for Peter it was a call to be a fisher of men; for Paul it was a blinding light on the Damascus road.

For Isaiah it was a vision from God.

The response Isaiah gave.

Isaiah was willing and eager.

His urgent response suggests that he was afraid someone else might be chosen.

One can almost see him waving his hand and shouting to gain God's attention.

He did not know the nature of the mission, but he made himself available.

He would go wherever God sent him.

The difficulty Isaiah faced.

The people of Israel were a rebellious people.

They would resist him as a prophet and harden their hearts against his message, covering their ears, refusing to hear, and covering their eyes, refusing to see their sinful condition.

In spite of this difficulty, Isaiah was given no time limit.

He was to continue until his job was complete.

The assurance Isaiah received.

Even though the people would reject the message and be destroyed, there was still a ray of hope.

As a felled tree retains a spark of life in its stump and begins to grow again, so in Judah there would be left a righteous remnant through whom the purposes of God would ultimately be realized. Isaiah had a life-changing encounter with God.

Nothing in the ministry or message of Isaiah can be properly understood apart from this experience.

We are in a different time and country than Isaiah.

Many things are different; many are the same.

Our world, like that of Isaiah, is in a state of crises, confusion, and change.

Although we live in a highly technological age the basic needs and issues of life are still moral and spiritual

Robert Louis Stevenson once said, "No man can truly say that he has made a success of life unless he has written at the top of his life journal, Enter God,

Let us do so with awe.