

Isaiah's Throne Scene

John M. Buttrey II

The prophet Isaiah was privileged to behold, whether by vision or dream, the Lord sitting on His throne. Here is a portion of the prophet's description of what he beheld:

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple (Isaiah 6:1).

Of course, no man has literally seen God. God told Moses, no one could see His face and live (Ex. 33:20). John wrote that no one at any time has seen God (John 1:18). Still, Isaiah was given some manifestation of God.

What an awesome sight this must have been for Isaiah! He immediately recognizes the great significance of what he is seeing:

Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5).

Accompanying this incredible sight is the prophet's commission to go and declare the word of God. Here, again, is how Isaiah described what he saw and heard:

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.' "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed." (Isaiah 6:8-10 Emphasis Mine)

Notice the question presented by the Lord: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" This gives us a wonderful picture of the Trinity: The "I" speaking of one God, the "Us" speaking of the three persons of the Godhead (cf. Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:6-7). An even greater picture of the Trinity is discovered, when we look at two other texts which make reference to this scene of Isaiah's commission. The first of these is found in the Gospel of John. The text begins with Jesus speaking:

*"While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them. But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, "He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and be converted and I heal them." **These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him** (John 12:36-41 Emphasis Mine).*

John tells us the Lord seen by Isaiah was the person of the Trinity we know as the Son. This is incredible! If one looked strictly at the Old Testament account found in Isaiah, he might come to the conclusion that God the Father was in view. Yet, the text in John would seem to say

different. However, before we reach a final conclusion as to exactly Who Isaiah saw, there is one more text to consider. Here it is:

*And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, **“The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying, ‘Go to this people and say, “You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; And you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes; Otherwise they might see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I would heal them.”’**”* (Acts 28:25-27 Emphasis Mine).

The apostle Paul says it was the Holy Spirit speaking with Isaiah. All combined, we have three different texts, identifying the three different persons of the Godhead. This is no contradiction; it is an incredible picture of the Trinity.

While the prophet beheld an awesome scene of the Lord sitting on His throne, we too can behold awesome scenes of God. They are beheld in many different ways, one being pictures such as this found in God's word.