



What Is Sin?

Part 2

“But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God – who chose you to be his children is holy.” (1 Peter 1:6, NLT)

Do you wonder how King David, who so loved the Lord, could commit adultery and murder? At the peak of success, did he think he could do anything he wanted? No matter how close you are to God, you can always fall into sin. David forgot that **sin is against the holiness of God**. God, completely separated from sin, is absolutely pure and spotless. In Psalm 51:4a, David cried out for mercy, saying, *“Against you, and you alone, have I sinned.”* Although sin hurts the person who sins and others, ultimately sin is against God’s holy way of living. He calls you to live a holy life. *“For he himself has said, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’”* (1 Peter 1:16, NLT)

The holiness of God

The prophet Isaiah understood his sin when he saw the Lord in a vision. One gaze at the holiness of the Lord, and he saw what a foul-mouthed sinner he was. Let him tell you about his encounter with the Lord. Imagine yourself in that holy room!

I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs [angels], each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” (Isaiah 6:1-3 NIV)

Holy! Holy! Holy! Morally perfect, pure, righteous and set apart from all sin. High and exalted – King of the universe! God’s glory shone with more brilliance than the sun. Can you picture that? According to John 12:41, **Isaiah saw a vision of Jesus.**

A repentant heart

As the angelic beings cried out, the foundations of the Temple shook. The entire sanctuary filled with smoke (God’s glory). Shaken to the core of his being, Isaiah looked at himself. Horrors! He was dirty, filthy, and unclean with no hope of being holy. He cried out in fear, dread and shame. *“I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips [sinful], and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.”* (Isaiah 6:5) Has your sin ever caused you to feel dirty and unclean?

There is no good comparison, but imagine that you have worked in the yard and dirt all day. Your hair is filthy and uncombed, your face smeared with sweat and dirt, your hands and nails grungy, your overalls cruddy, and your shoes ready for the trash! You walk into your house. To your horror, you walk into a graduation party girls in prom dresses! Boys in tuxedos! Now look at yourself. Do you feel a little like Isaiah did?

Cleansed and holy

God quickly accepted Isaiah's heart repentance. One of the angelic beings touched Isaiah's lips with a live coal from the altar and announced, "*See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sins are all forgiven.*" (Isaiah 6:7) (The coal did not cleanse him, God did) What sweet relief Isaiah must have felt! Precious one, do you know that God loves you so much that he forgave and took away your guilt when you believed in his Son? Enjoy that love!

Prepared for ministry

Cleansed and made holy, Isaiah stood in awe in the presence of a holy God. He heard the Lord ask, "*Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?*" Isaiah responded quickly: "*Here am I. Send me!*" (Isaiah 6:8, 9) He was ready to be a prophet to his hard-hearted people who would not listen and repent.

Your challenge

Why tell you the story of Isaiah? To help you see the tremendous gap between a holy God and a sinful person. (Before you can understand dirty, you need to understand clean.) When you sin, you will know that you are sinning against your holy, loving God. Being holy is not a grim-faced determination to keep a bunch of rules and regulations that take all the fun out of life. It is an invitation to join a joyful God who knows you will only be full of joy if you live according to his way. The next time you are tempted, remember what happened to David when he failed to take his way of escape. Run to Jesus and depend on the Holy Spirit to give you the power to do what is right. He is faithful. He will never leave you!

God has created you for good works. He still asks, "Who will take the Good News to the people?" Why not respond as Isaiah did, "Here am I Lord, send me?"

Attitude Check:

- As you grasp the meaning of the holiness of God, what changes do you need to make in your attitude toward disobeying God?

Explore:

- Read Revelation 4. From Revelation 4 and Isaiah 6:1-8, write in your journal the meaning of sin and your vision of a holy God.

Talking with God:

- Father, reveal anything in my thoughts, words or actions that displease you. Create in me a clean heart that I might live a holy life.