

GOD IS HOLY

Part 4 of Knowing God. Isaiah 45.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. February 18, 2024.

A POWERFUL SEASON OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

There are good reasons to observe the season of Lent.

- It can be a powerful season of spiritual development.
- Pick up the booklet on the book table.

THE CONTEXT OF ISAIAH 45

God's people were unfaithful and the Lord permitted Babylon to conquer.

- The people wondered if God was done with them. Was restoration possible?
- Answer: Yes. The Lord would raise up pagan King Cyrus to restore them.

THE PORTRAIT OF GOD IN ISAIAH 45

Isaiah 45 paints a vivid portrait of God.

- He is the creator and savior. He is supreme over people and events. He orchestrates victory and defeat.
- He raised up Cyrus to free God's people, and so that Cyrus would know the Lord.

Isaiah 45:3b (ESV) that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.

THE ONLY GOD

Isaiah 45 contains six references to the Lord as the one and only God.

Verse 5: I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God;

Verse 6: from the rising of the sun and from the west, ... there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Verse 14: They will plead with you, saying: 'Surely God is in you, and there is no other, no god besides him.'

Verse 18: "I am the LORD, and there is no other."

Verse 21: And there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me.

Verses 22-23: "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

The biblical and theological term for this "only one God" concept is "holy."

Verse 11: Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel ...

EXPLAINING HOLINESS

The primary meaning of holiness is separation.

- God is holy because he is separate from the universe.

First, the Lord is one of a kind.

- Nothing else is God.

Isaiah 44:6, 8 (ESV) Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. 7 Who is like me? Let him proclaim it... 8 Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any."

Second, the Lord is not one of us.

- He's the uncaused cause ...

Exodus 3:14 (ESV) God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."

Acts 17:24-25 (ESV) 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

Third, the Lord is not defined by us.

- He's not like Mr. Potato Head.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF GOD'S HOLINESS

First, since God is holy, we should offer him reverent worship.

- The Seraphim and prophet Isaiah illustrate this.

Isaiah 6:2 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. 3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

Second, since God is holy, we should praise him for creating us.

- He freely, without any necessity, chose to make you and me.

Psalms 139:13-14 (ESV) For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

Third, since God is holy, we should receive Jesus and his saving work.

- He freely, without any necessity, chose to make you and me.

The God who exists outside of time and space could have chosen to remain far off as we self-destruct. But he chose to become flesh and blood in Jesus.

SMALL GROUPS GUIDE

READING

- This week, read Chapter 6 of Ingram. Or Chapter 8 of Packer. Or pages 84-87 of Wilson.

GET STARTED

- When I have free time, I like to????

DIVE IN

- Review the study guide. What were Peter's main ideas, insights, or Bible passages related to the holiness of God?
- Peter described holiness as coming from a Hebrew root that means separate from. God is separate from the universe he created. Discuss the three ways Peter identified this separation in the sermon section called Explaining Holiness.
- Read Isaiah 6:1-7 and discuss its meaning. How is God's holiness revealed? Why "holy, holy, holy?" Why did the seraphim cover themselves? Why did Isaiah fall and mourn his sinfulness? What are the implications for our lives? How can we approach the Holy One?
- Read 1 Peter 1:15-16. What does Peter mean when he asks us to be holy? What does a holy life look like? Why is self-righteous smugness a temptation when we attempt to live a holy life?

PRAY TOGETHER

- Pray for each other to rest in the supremacy of God in all situations.
- Pray for the Cornerstone - people, leaders, health, and faithfulness.
- Pray for our families, communities, and nation.