

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 4: The God Like None Other

Unit 4 Big Question and Answer:

Can Anybody Tell Me What the LORD Is Like?

He's Not Like Anyone Else!

PFI ESV Songs 4, Tracks 3,4

Unit 4 Bible Verse: 1 Kings 8:23, ESV

Bible Verse: "O LORD...there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath."

PFI ESV Songs 4, Tracks 6,7

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 6

The LORD Is Holy

God is holy. He set apart from everything and everyone else. He is good and He is great. He never sins in anything He thinks, says, does or plans. Because He is holy, He hates sin. Sin is rebelling against God and His good ways. God is so holy that nothing sinful can come into His presence.

We are all sinners, so how can we ever become God's people? It is only because of Jesus, the holy Son of God. Jesus came to earth and lived a perfect life. He chose to die on the cross to pay for the sins of God's people. He suffered the full punishment for their sins, exchanging their un-holiness (sinfulness) for His perfect holiness. Now all who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior are saved. They get to know God and will one day live in His holy presence forever.

God calls His people to live for Him by being holy as He is holy. He wants them to reflect the way He is. God's Holy Spirit helps them do this. He lives in their hearts and helps them to love God and obey Him. God's people will always struggle with sin while they live here on earth. But one day, they will live with their wonderful God in heaven, perfectly good and holy, changed by Him to never sin again! How wonderful that will be!

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 6 Bible Verse: Isaiah 6:1-3

"I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings...And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

CASE STORY

Revelation 1-7

Our story is:

The Case of the Very, Vivid Vision.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. Who got to see the vision? Who was he supposed to share the vision with?
2. Why did these people need encouraging? What about God did they find encouraging?

This story takes place in New Testament times, about sixty years after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

An old man named John sat writing a letter on a scroll on the lonely island of Patmos. The Romans had put him here, trying to stop him from telling more people about Jesus and from encouraging the Christians who were part of the seven churches of Turkey. It was true, John certainly couldn't share about Jesus in person anymore, but he could still write. So that he did.

"How are you, believers in Philadelphia, in Ephesus, Laodicea; Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira and Sardis?" John wanted to know. "Are you being persecuted? Are you holding onto your faith in Jesus?" he asked them.

John was saddened, but not surprised by the news he received from them: the Romans had increased their persecution of the Christians again. The emperor Domitian was requiring everyone to confess Him as Lord and God. Whoever refused would be punished. The Christians were being arrested, hurt and killed. Their houses and their belongings were being taken.

Many believers were scared and discouraged, but they held on to their faith. Domitian was nothing like God! They knew that! The LORD was holy and good. Domitian was only a wicked, proud man. How could they dream of worshipping Him instead of Jesus! But the persecutions were terrible! The believers worried that they would not have strength to endure their sufferings to the end.

John cared for these seven little churches of Turkey and longed to encourage them. He did all that he could do: he prayed long hours for them and wrote them words of wisdom and encouragement.

But John was not the only one who cared for these poor, suffering, scared believers. The greatest Someone of all--the Lord Jesus, Himself--knew what they were enduring;

and He, Himself, wanted to give them special encouragement. So one Sunday, Jesus came to John in a vision and gave him a special message in words and pictures for the seven churches of Turkey. It was this very vision that John was busy writing down on his scroll just then. A vision of things far more beautiful and wonderful than anything that could ever be seen on earth.

John wrote: "One Sunday, while here on Patmos, I heard behind me a very loud voice say, 'Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.'

"When I turned around to see who was speaking to me, I saw a glorious-looking person standing among seven lampstands. He was dressed in a long robe with a golden sash around his chest. He was prepared for battle. His head and hair were snowy white. His eyes, feet and face shone bright with God's glory. And when he spoke, his voice was loud and powerful like a crashing waterfall. His words were powerful like a sword sharp on both sides. They could protect God's people and they could punish their enemies," John wrote.

Who was this glorious, powerful Person? It was Jesus, the Holy Son of God, in all His glory! To each of the seven churches of Turkey, Jesus gave special instructions. Some He warned: "Remember your Holy God. Stop sinning!" Others He praised: "You have lived holy lives that please your holy God, Well done!" He encouraged all: "Keep going, even though it's very hard. The holy Lord reigns! He won't leave the sins of rebellious people unpunished forever. He won't let His people endure these hard times forever. Don't be scared. Don't be discouraged. Keep going! He who overcomes all these terrible days will live and reign with Me forever just as I overcame when I suffered and died on the cross, but now have sat down with my Father on His throne," Jesus said.

What wonderful words! What wonderful promises the Lord had for those seven churches of Turkey! But there was more. In his vision, John looked up and there before him was a door standing open to heaven, itself! "Come up here," Jesus said to John, "and I will show you what must take place after this."

As John entered the door, he saw the most unbelievably beautiful things. There was a magnificent throne and on it sat God the Father Himself, in inapproachable, glorious light that kept you from seeing Him, yet shown out from

Him in beautiful, jewel-like colors. Completely surrounding the throne was what looked like a rainbow of emerald green. And right in front of the throne was a huge lampstand with seven flames that stood for the full, powerful presence of the Holy Spirit. Then spreading out from the lampstand was a huge circle of made of spotless, priceless, sparkling crystal. Four cherubim were perched on each of the four corners of the throne: one with the face of a lion, another with the face of an ox, the third with the face of a man and the fourth with a face of an eagle. They all had six, magnificent wings and many eyes with which to see everything in every direction. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." John was overwhelmed with this picture of God's perfect, majestic holiness.

John was not the only one to be hearing and seeing these glorious things. There were twenty-four elders there, too. Each sat upon a golden throne that together formed a circle all the way around God's throne. They were dressed in white and they had crowns of gold on their heads. Whenever the cherubim sang out their words of glory, honor and thanks to the Lord who reigns and lives forever, the twenty-four elders would fall down before the Lord, laying their crowns before Him and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory, honor and power, for by Your will You created all things and cause them to live."

John saw picture after picture of the wonderful things to come. He saw Jesus approach His Father's throne and receive the loud shouts of praise from millions of angels and creatures.

But John also learned about the terrible sufferings that the world would face as judgments for their sins against the holy God. He learned about the hard times that God's people would endure as people persecuted them for their faith. John listened as some of God's people who had been killed, cry out: "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the earth for how people have treated us?"

"The holy Lord reigns!" they were told. "He won't leave the sins of rebellious people unpunished forever. Keep going! You must wait a little longer. Still more of God's people will first suffer and die for their faith."

More who must suffer and die?! The believers in the seven churches of Turkey knew all about that. They were those who were suffering and dying right then. Oh, how they longed for it to be over! Jesus knew how hard it would

be to hear these words and so He gave John a peek into of what they would enjoy when their sufferings were over. John looked and he saw that now there before the throne with the cherubim and the twenty-four elders and the ten thousands of ten thousands angels, a great multitude of people that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of Jesus had come. They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. They shouted: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to Jesus." Again, all the angels and the twenty-four godly men fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped, saying: "Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power and strength be to our God forever. Amen!"

"These people are those who suffered and died for their faith in Jesus," John was told. "They will get to come before God's throne and serve Him day and night in his temple and God will, Himself, take care of them forever. Never again will they hunger or thirst or suffer at all. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. They will have eternal life through Jesus."

How loving of God to give the believers in Turkey this heavenly hope! The holy Lord reigned! They didn't need to be scared or discouraged. He wouldn't let His people endure suffering forever. He would bring an end to those terrible times at just the right time.

Our Bible Truth is: The LORD Is Holy

Our Bible Verse is: Isaiah 6:1-3

"I saw the LORD seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with 6 wings...and they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory!'"

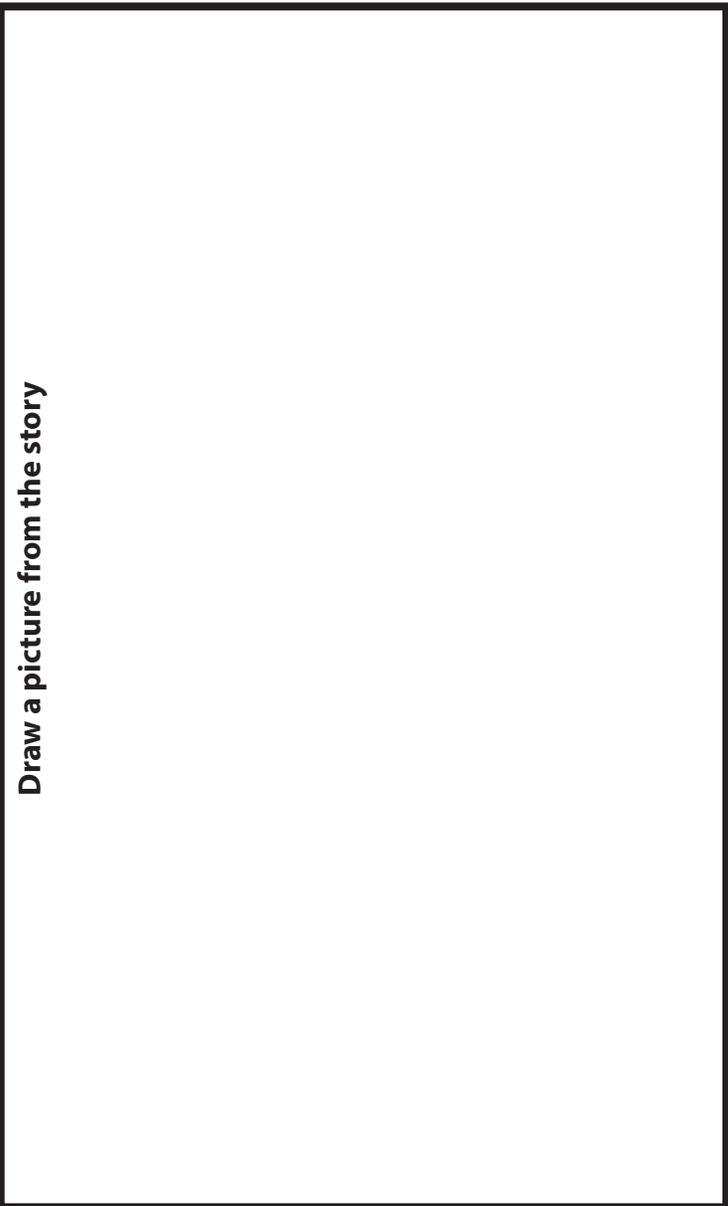
John saw a picture of the Lord on His throne. He understood that the Lord is the holy God. He won't always leave sin unpunished. One day it will be gone forever and God's people will live in heaven with Him, where there will be nothing but perfect holiness. How happy John must have been to bring these words of encouragement to those suffering believers!

But what about you and me? What does this story mean for us? It is a warning and an encouragement. It is a warning to take our sins as seriously as God does. He is holy and

He hates sins. We should turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. When we do, we will receive God's forgiveness instead of facing His judgment.

But it's also an encouragement. For not only does God offer full forgiveness through Jesus, but He also promises to help us endure any sufferings we may face as His people. And best yet, He will make us among those whose tears He will wipe away and welcome to live in His glorious presence forever....if we will repent of our sins and put our trust in Him as our Savior.

Let's praise God for not only being perfectly holy and promising one day to bring the end to all sin and suffering. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts that we might confess our sins and turn to Him for forgiveness. Let's ask Him to help us to brave when facing suffering and to remember the wonderful blessings of His presence He promises us in heaven.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: God calls His people to be holy, but they have to do it on their own without His help. Answer: False! God's Holy Spirit lives inside His people. He helps them to live holy lives.</p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions a. Who got to see the vision? Who was he supposed to share the vision with? Answer: The apostle John. The Christians in the seven churches of Turkey.</p> <p>b. Why did these people need encouraging? What about God did they find encouraging? Answer: They were being terribly persecuted by the Romans for their faith in Jesus. That He was holy and one day would bring justice. He would take them home to live with Him in heaven. He would do away with sin, suffering and death forever.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Isaiah 6:1-3 "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and ____ ____; and the train of his robe filled the _____. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings...And one called to another and said: "_____ is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" Answer: lifted up; temple; holy, holy, holy.</p>

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN
<p>Holy, Holy, Holy <i>PFI ESV Songs 4, Tracks 26,27</i></p> <p>Verse 2 Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee, Casting down their golden crowns, Around the glassy sea; Cherubim and seraphim, Falling down before Thee, Who wert, and art, And evermore shall be.</p> <p>Verse 3 Holy, holy, holy! Tho' the darkness hide Thee, Tho' the eye of sinful man They glory may not see; Only Thou art holy; There is none beside Thee, perfect in pow'r, In love and purity.</p> <p>Words: Reginald Heber Music: John B. Dykes</p> <p>This song is a picture of God in His splendid holiness in heaven. One day, God's people will come before Him and</p>

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being the Overcomer of all evil and the Savior of His people.</p> <p>C God, we confess that many times we choose not to trust God in hard times, afraid that He won't take care of us.</p> <p>T God, we thank You for offering salvation through Jesus. Thank You for the wonderful home that all Your people will enjoy with You forever.</p> <p>S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to trust You and help us to endure any suffer we might face because we believe in You. Please help the Christians facing terrible suffering from enemies even today. Give them relief. Help them to endure them with joy and peace.</p>

BIBLE VERSE SONG
<p>I Saw the LORD <i>PFI ESV Songs 4, Track 28</i></p> <p>I saw the LORD, Sitting a throne, High and exalted, Sitting a throne, Above Him stood the seraphim, Each had six wings, And they called to one another, "Holy is the LORD, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts. Isaiah Six, one through three.</p> <p>Words: Isaiah 6:1-3 ESV Music: Constance Dever ©2012</p> <p>These verses are a picture of God's holiness. The LORD is so high and exalted because of His perfect holiness and He is to be worshiped. He is so holy that the seraphs repeat to each other how holy He is. He is so holy that even the whole earth is filled with the glory of His holiness.</p>