

Where Sin Belongs

Are you super organized? Ladies, are all of your kitchen gadgets properly arranged and stored away? Men, does every tool have its place in your garage or workshop? Yes? But be honest... You have a junk drawer though, right? Don't be ashamed. Everybody does. Every homeowner has a little drawer that is filled with a collection of odds and ends - mismatched pens, crusty rubber bands, twisty-ties, unsharpened pencils, faded receipts, a handful of stale Cheerios, and so on.

Similarly, everybody has a drawer filled with sin. Generally speaking, our life is organized and presentable, in part because we place things where they belong. As followers of Jesus, we admit that sin is incongruous with the holy life to which we have been called, but we keep some compelling ones in our home, neatly stashed away for convenient access.

In Zechariah 5:5-11, we read of a symbolically bizarre vision whose divine significance is powerful as it is beautiful. The seventh of Zechariah's eight dreams involves a large basket, covered by a heavy lid, and containing a confined woman named "Wickedness". This basket and its contents are then supernaturally moved from Jerusalem to Shinar, also known as Babel/Babylon, where it is permanently placed in a home prepared for it. The basket represents a gathering of Israel's transgressions. Due to their repeated sin and idolatry, God's people have been in exile from their home and passed through the hands of one pagan nation to another. Yet God has not forgotten them. His desire is for them to be holy as He is holy (Lev 11:44; 1 Pet 1:16) and despite their repeated failure, He promises to remove their sin once and for all and send it to where it belongs - far away, to the place of its origin.

What a beautiful truth! God doesn't just demand our holiness, but He actively works to provide it for us and create it in us (2 Thess 2:13). Paul refers to God's purging and restorative work in his letter to Philippians:

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6)

God is intently involved in your life and your spiritual well-being. His greatest desire is for you to become holy and Christ-like. He uses a broad spectrum of "tools" to accomplish His work in you: His Word, prayer, the local church,

circumstances, suffering, just to name a few. He is skillful, careful, and reliable in His craftsmanship. His righteous and sovereign plan will not be thwarted or delayed. So, don't shove your sin in the figurative junk drawer... Open it up, let Him clean it out, and take its contents to where they belong - away from you, child of God!

Isaiah 6:1-7 (ESV) - *"In the year that King Uzziah died 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: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!' And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: 'Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!' **Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: 'Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.'**"*