**The Book of Isaiah I**

**The Lord Is Salvation**

Isaiah 1:1 During the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah

740-690 BC Prophesied principally to Judah and Jerusalem (the southern kingdom).

Isaiah means “The Lord is Salvation.

Isaiah ministered to Judah during the time of the divided kingdom.

Fun fact: John Calvin (1530s) preached 342 consecutive sermons from Isaiah, without notes, preaching directly from the Hebrew and Greek text. For political reasons, he left Geneva in 1538. When he returned to the city in 1541, he continued from the same verse where he had left off.

He was a big fan of exegetical preaching. He railed against the preachers of his day who showed “contempt of Scripture… reading a verse from the Bible and preaching about something very different.”

Isaiah lived in Jerusalem and, unlike his contemporary Micah of Moresheth, who was from the countryside, he was a man of the court and the city.

It is likely he was of royal lineage. He had access to the kings/court. An insider.

Outline of Isaiah that explains this dichotomy (that Isaiah was concerned about national issues):

Isaiah 1-39 Messiah the King Assyria

Isaiah 40-55 Messiah the Servant Babylon and Persia

Isaiah 56-66 Messiah the Conqueror The whole world

The themes of Isaiah are the themes of the Bible.

1. The sinfulness of Judah and Jerusalem

2. Appeal of God to turn to him—to repent.

3. Judgment if they do not.

4. The Messiah—the Suffering Servant—is coming to save.

5. Restoration of a Remnant

Isaiah is about faith in God’s promises. Faith in God’s promises, not in the world’s power/Assyria & Babylon. We will see that Ahaz was not faithful, but Hezekiah was.

Isaiah 1 Introduction to Isaiah. This chapter includes most of the themes of the entire book:

The utter sinfulness of Jerusalem/Judah (v 3-8)

Tender appeal by Jehovah that Judah repent (v. 16-19)

The inevitability of judgment (v. 24-25, 29-31)

The possibility of salvation (v. 26-27)

The chapter is like a courtroom scene, including witnesses, with Judah as defendant.

Isaiah 1:2-4

Hear me, you heavens! Listen earth! Isaiah is calling the heavens and the earth as witnesses to what God is telling Judah. Appealing to creation.

God: I have raised you and loved you like a parent does a child. I have always maintained *hesed*—covenant-love, loyal-love

Q: How has God been like a parent to us? Parallel: Hosea 11:1, 3-4.

I think about my grandchildren this weekend. I find everything they do charming and delightful. I treasure them. If they are hurt, it hurts me. I desperately want the best for them.

But we have rebelled. How have we rebelled? How have you rebelled?

“The ox knows his master” Even dumb animals are smart enough to know who is master.

Humans are the only ones of God’s creation that does not obey him.

A donkey knows its owner’s manger

Our equivalent: A dog knows where the food comes from.

Q: Why does Israel (and do we) not know our master? (don’t bite the hand that feeds you) We forgot where home is. (coming home theme)

Do you know your master? Do you hear his voice?

v. 3 The word “know” here is *yada* which is an intimate knowing used even of the sexual relationship (Genesis 2). Do you know God like this?

v. 3 My people do not understand “people” = *ammi* (as opposed to *lo ammi* in Hosea not God’s people). God still loves Israel and calls her his children in spite of it all.

BTW Isaiah 1:4 in NIV is woe, but better translated alas!

Q: If you were to interview the residents of Jerusalem, would they agree with the assessment in v. 4? Probably not. Who, me?

Whose guilt is great: Whose sin is a heavy load, weighing the down. Can you relate?

Implication: We are easily deceived about who our master is.

Isaiah 1:5-8 What do we see about God here?

We see his justice, but also his compassion. It breaks his heart to see Judah like this (Luke 13:34-35 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem… Again, it reminds of Hoseah 11:8 How can I give you up?)

Note: v. 7 was literally true. 701 BC

v. 8 Jerusalem, the beautiful city, is left poverty-stricken.

“The key to national prosperity is righteousness, not sound fiscal policy.” (Motyer)

God: You drove me to this.

Isaiah 1:9 Here we have hope. Q: Who are these “survivors”? a hard question…. These are the remnant, which is a common theme in Isaiah.

We are those survivors.

What is the normal meaning in everyday usage of the word remnant?

The remnant: Anchor Bible: “What is left of a community after it undergoes a disaster.

The remnant is the small portion of the religious people who truly worship God and will, therefore be saved from destruction.

The Jews in Jerusalem are thinking they are just fine, but only a remnant of them will be saved. Application: Most who call themselves Christians are like these Jews. The remnant here are those who are saved from destruction, and they are a small minority.

I hope and pray that you/we are that remnant.

Isaiah 1:10-15 Why is God so angry? (He is, after all, calling us Sodom and Gomorrah)

What was the sin of Sodom? Ezekiel 16:49-51 Social injustice.

Didn’t he ask them to bring these offerings? (yes!). So what is the problem? (Malachi 3:10-12 bring in the whole offering, 1 Sam 15:22 to obey is “better” than to sacrifice Hos 6:6 I desire *hesed*, not sacrifice)

Being religious but not practicing *hesed* makes me sick!

v. 13 Might our worship be “worthless assemblies”?

So, what do we learn, then? What should we do?

Isaiah 1:16-17 Repent! What would we say we should do when we repent? Stop sinning, read the Bible and pray.

God says: Start behaving rightly toward the poor, the oppressed the orphan and the widow. Practice social justice. Do justice. Love me and act like me.

Isaiah 1:18-20. Come, let us reason together. Let’s have a conversation about this. God is willing to appeal to our reason.

Q: What does God offer? God offers salvation. Scarlet → white as snow.

What is required? That we are willing (ie choose freely) to obey

Two choices:

Willingly obey

Resist and rebel. What do you chose?

It comes down to this: Are you willing and are you obedient? Do you do the right things and do you WANT to do the right thing?

Skip to Isaiah 2

**Isaiah 2 The Mountain of the Lord** God gives us hope. (parallel to Micah 4:1-8)

Isaiah 2:1-5 A kingdom prophecy. “Concerning Judah and Jerusalem” here is both literal and symbolical of the kingdom of God. We are “Judah and Jerusalem.”

Vs 2. Last days, what last days? Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days…

Acts 2:17 “In the last days…” (quoting Joel 2:28-32)

What is the mountain of the Lord? It is Mt. Zion, it is Jerusalem, it is the Kingdom of God. It is the Church.

v. 3 The Law will go out from Zion. Pentecost and the early church?

v. 3 Many peoples… Genesis 22:18 Through you all nations will be blessed.

Vs 4. Is inscribed near the UN headquarters in New York. We can only hope….

What is the vision described here, how is it possible? God will bring peace and unity where there was war and division. This is the Kingdom of God. This is God’s vision. Do not hold your breath for the nations to do this.

v. 5 The precursor to “come let us go up to the mountain” (v. 3) is “Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Otherwise our evangelism will not produce “come let us go up.”

You and I need to “walk in the light of the Lord.” Then we can go up to the mountain.

A parallel kingdom passage: Isaiah 11:1-16.

11:1-3 A root (nazer) of Jesse. Matthew 2:23 He will be called *nazer*ene

Because of the sin of Israel and Judah (Isaiah 7), the royal kingship will become a stump.

But by God’s grace, from that stump will come a shoot/branch.

Isaiah 11:2 Note the mention of the Holy Spirit here. The Spirit is key.

11:4-5 Messiah will bring (social) justice (rightness, fairness) and righteousness. The needy and the poor cared for.

11:6-9 A kingdom prophecy. A beautiful image of the kingdom. Already but not yet.

v. 8 Look at this metaphor!!! The infant will play near the cobra’s den. This is God’s vision for his Church, for his people, for his Kingdom.

11:10-16 The kingdom of God is a banner, a resting place, a gathered remnant, a highway to heaven.

v. 10 Jesus is our banner! People will rally to Jesus!

He is also our “resting place.” Our safe place.

v. 11 Again, we are that remnant. God is trying to reclaim a remnant from Assyria, Lower Egypt, Cush, Delano, Visalia, Porterville, from Tehachapi and even from Buttonwillow.

Will you be part of that process?

v. 16 Picture the highway for God’s remnant.

Isaiah Ch 2-4 starts with Isaiah 2:2-5 and ends with Isaiah 4:2-6 This section begins and ends with hope. Ch 2-4 is like a sandwich. (inclusio)

Isaiah 4:2-6 The return of the glory of the Lord to the kingdom.

v. 2 In that day (again 2:2) the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful.

v. 3-4 The remnant will be cleansed.

v. 5 The Shekinah—the glory of the Lord, the cloud of smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night—will be with the people.

Jesus came and tabernacled among us John 1:18 He tabernacled among us. We beheld his glory—the glory of the one and only Son of God.

Branch → Cleansing → Booth/dwelling→Glory

Summary:  
The Lord is our salvation.

He has loved us like a father loves his children

But we rebelled

So God has disciplined us

He is preparing a remnant.

He is calling us into his kingdom. Jesus is our banner. He is our glory.

**The Book of Isaiah II**

**Here Am I, Send Me**

Isaiah 5:1-30 “The Song of the Vineyard” An Old Testament Parable

Isaiah 5:1-7 God’s vineyard

Is 5:1-2 God created a vineyard and he loved the vineyard.

Isaiah says: My loved (ie. God) one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. (The hills of Canaan, the Promised Land)

The vineyard was Israel and Judah (v. 7) in context, but for us it is the church.

v. 2 He cleared the land, took out the stones and added the choicest vines. That is what God has done for his church and even in your life. He created a life for us and gave us work to do.

v. 2 He set up a watchtower. God protects the church.

v. 2 He created a winepress. God gives us work to do, but expects a crop.

v. 4 What more could I have done for you, O church/O Israel and Judah?

God says to you: What more could I have done for you. I sent my son. He died for you. I offered forgiveness of sins. I gave you the Holy Spirit as a stream of living water. I gave you the church as an outpost of the Kingdom.

But I want you to produce fruit!

v. 4 When I came to pick grapes, there were only bad grapes. How does God feel about this?

Maybe they spent more time arguing over doctrines and sitting on committees, discussing style of songs, church budget, than sharing their faith and helping the poor.

v. 5 A strong warning! So it will be destroyed, its wall broken down and it will be a wasteland

v. 7 In case there were any doubt about the meaning.

Isaiah 5:8-30 God calls them out for their sin.

Isaiah 5:8-13 They were seeking wealth at the expense of the poor—driving the poor off their land.

Their houses got bigger and bigger.

Average American home in 1950: 950 sq. ft. Did they have less children?

1960: 1100 sq. ft.

1970: 1500

1980: 1740

1990: 2080

2000: 2266

2010: 2392

2014: 2657

Yet, one of the fastest-growing industries is the self-storage. Derrell’s is huge in Bakersfield!

v. 9 But their great houses will become desolate.

v. 11 They run after their drinks, and are inflamed with wine.

v. 13 Therefore, they will go into exile. They will not be part of God’s church. They will not be part of God’s people. They will forfeit the blessing.

Well, that is exactly what happened in 722 and 586 BC.

Isaiah 5:20-23 for example

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil.

We need to keep calling sin sin. It is not “making love.” It is adultery.

Like Jesus, we love the adulterer. We love the homosexual, but these things are sin!

It is not “boys will be boys.” It is pornography, orgies.

Believe in yourself. We call that pride.

Take care of #1. We call that selfishness.

v. 21 -wise in their own eyes. Are you wise in your own eyes? I don’t need advice. I do not need to listen to those who are older.

Thanks to Jeremy Newfield for giving our campus students great wise advice on finances.

-drunkards “heroes at drinking wine” = calling evil good

-injustice in the courts acquit the guilty and convict the innocent

He has entrusted us with his vineyard, so that we can produce the fruit of the kingdom, or we will be removed from his vineyard.

Isaiah 6 Isaiah’s commission. The year is 739 BC (the year Uzziah died)

Isaiah 6:1-4 Isaiah has a vision of God, similar to Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel 10 and Rev 4 and the cherubim. The seraphim here are the cherubim of Ezekiel.

The chief quality of God here is holiness! Holy! Holy! Holy! Revelation 4:8

God is wholly holy. He is separate. He is other. He is pure and unadulterated. He is without sin or blemish. Moral majesty.

What do I learn here? The first requirement for a prophet is to have a personal vision of God in heaven. Suggestion: Read Revelation 4, Ezekiel 1.

v. 3 The whole earth is full of his glory. This can only be seen through the eyes of faith.

Isaiah 6:5-7 As we would react in God’s presence. Woe is me!!! I am a sinner. Like Peter in the boat when Jesus calmed the story.

How would you like to meet God face-to-face?

What would it feel like in the waiting room for this meeting? What would you be thinking about?

Again, what is your picture of God? Get a mental picture right now!

v. 5 The unclean “lips” are particularly important for Isaiah the prophet.

6:7 A live coal. From the altar of sacrifice? Lips symbolic of his being a spokesperson for God. Isaiah is forgiven. He is holy so he can speak for God.

To be God’s prophet:

1. We have to see God.

2. We have to be cleansed.

6:8-13 Whom shall I send. I imaging Isaiah looking around, but he is the only one in the room.

God says to any of us: Whom shall I send?

God called Jan and I to Bakersfield.

Whom can God send to East Bakersfield?

Whom can God send to BC, CSUB?

Who can God send to Tehachapi?

Who can God send to Merced?

Here am I, send me. A great attitude. Do you have this attitude? If you say this, where might God send you? (into your neighborhood, to the hospital,…)

You want to be God’s prophet?

1. You have to see God.

2. You have to be cleansed.

3. You have to accept his mission to the lost wholeheartedly.

v. 9 You have to GO!

Isaiah 6:9-10 Isaiah’s commission. God says it will be easy NOT!!

God says I am sending you to stubborn Israel and Judah. It will not be easy, folks!

v. 9 They hear but not listen. They see but do not grasp.

v. 10 Calloused hearts. Stubborn. Say yeah, yeah…

Quoted in Matthew 13:14-15

Isaiah’s commission: Preach about repentance to a people for whom, other than a remnant, it is already too late. His message, simple as it is, will result in doom, not salvation for man of his hearers.

Isaiah 6:11-13 OK. Send me, but for how long?

Answer: Until the cities lie ruined… Until the job is done. Where is God sending you and for how long?

v. 11-13 is exactly what happened, both to the North in 722 and to Judah in 701. It also happened, most fully and finally, in 586 BC under Nebuchadnezzar.

Our job is not to bring God’s judgment to the people. Our job is to bring the truth to them and if judgment falls on them that is on them, as they say.

v. 13b. A tiny ray of hope. Judah will be a stump, from which a branch will sprout.

**The Book of Isaiah III**

**Ahaz and Hezekiah: A Tale of Two Kings**

Like I said the first week: Isaiah is about faith in God’s promises. Ahaz (not faithful) vs Hezekiah (faithful).

**Isaiah 7 Unfaithful Ahaz.**

Isaiah 7:1-9 Ephraim and king Pekah (the Northern Kingdom) is allying with Aram and king Rezin (Syria) to attack Judah. They are rebelling against Assyria. This is the Syro/Ephraimite war of 734 BC.

v. 2 A scary situation for Judah. What should they do? Who should they turn to?

Three choices: Submit to Ephraim/Syria Ally with Assyria Trust God.

v. 3 God had Isaiah name his son Shear-Jashub (a remnant will return)

God says I will protect you and a remnant will return.

v. 4 This is how we should react when things look really bad—when it feels like our enemies will overpower us.

-be careful.

-keep calm.

-do not be afraid or lose heart. Trust in God.

Q: When under stress from things in the world, do you keep calm, or do you get afraid and lose heart? How have you done with Covid?

What about if you lost your job or were diagnosed with cancer or your child went off the rails, spiritually?

v. 4,5 Rezin and Remaliah’s son (Pekah of Israel). Is there sarcasm here? Old what’s-his-name…)

Rezin and Pekah are mere humans. [If you trust God] v. 7 it will not happen.

v. 8 Ephraim will be shattered! (which happened during Isaiah’s ministry)

The question for today: Who do you trust? Who do you depend on when the going gets tough?

v.9 A great quote. But… If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.

Life will throw some “stuff” at you. A course you cannot pass. Non-Christians who are persecuting you or tempting you to drink or whatever…

Like we said, the key message to humans of Isaiah is that we need to maintain faith and reliance on God.

So, who will you rely on? Assyria or God? Money, health, status, education or God?

Isaiah 7:10-12. Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign—a miracle from God. Is this a good thing? Should we ask for a miracle? Ahaz does not turn to God.

God: I want you to step out on faith and rely on me to get you through it.

Ahaz: No, I plan on relying on Assyria.

Isaiah 7:13-17 God says, “I will give you a sign,” alright… But you, Ahaz, will not see that sign.

v. 14 “you” is not Ahaz. It is us! How do I know this? (you is plural)

v. 14 The sign? The virgin (young maiden) will give birth to a son who will be God-with-us. Jesus is called God-with-us in Matthew 1:22 and Matthew 28:20.

Surely Jesus will be with us always, until the end of the age.

[Aside: The Hebrew word young maiden, *alma* is ambiguous. It is not the word virgin, but it is never used of a married person in the Bible and the Septuagint has virgin, as only this would be a sign. So, yes! This is a prophecy that the successor to Ahaz/David will be born of a virgin.]

Jesus is God-with-us. Ahaz should have recognized this, but he did not look for the sign. Instead, he trusted in Assyria.

v. 16 The prophecy was fulfilled in Ahaz’ day, but not in a good way. The son of Ahaz is Hezekiah. 722 BC (12 years later) The land of Rezin (Aram) and Pekah (Samaria/Ephraim/Israel/Northern Kingdom) were laid waste v. 17 The Lord… will bring the king of Assyria.

The message: Trust in me!!! Like the Messiah, I will be with you!!!

Isaiah 7:18-25 This is exactly what happened! The Lord whistled for bees from Assyria. Assyria will come, will destroy Samaria and nearly destroy Judah.

Do you get the message?

Isaiah 9:1-7

Obviously a prophecy of the Messiah, how does Jesus fulfil vs 1-2?  (see the maps in the power point)

Isa 9:6-7  To us a child is born… A messianic prophecy. This is the same child of a virgin in Isaiah 7:14. What will Messiah be like?

v. 6 He will be a Son.

v. 6 He will be a governor, v. 7 He will reign on David’s throne (fulfilling 2 Sam 7:16 in which God promised that David would never fail to have a descendant on his throne)

v. 6. He will be called Wonderful Couselor (the Holy Spirit), Might God (Jesus) and Everlasting Father. Here we see the trinity.

He will be called Prince of Peace.

He will rule forever (no end)

His kingdom will be upheld by justice and righteousness.

v. 7 Messiah/Jesus will reign on David’s throne. (The promise: 2 Sam 7:16.)

**Isaiah 36-38 Faithful Hezekiah.**

Isaiah 36:1-3 The 14th year of Hezekiah 701 BC. (about 35 years later)

Sennacherib took all the fortified cities of Judah, including the brutal destruction and captivity of Lachish . (see the photos in the power point)

Like Ahaz, Hezekiah has 3 choices: 1. Submit to Assyria, 2. seek an alliance with Egypt or 3. rely on God.

Let us imagine that in this case, Sennacherib (or his field commander) will represent Satan. What is Satan’s strategy here? What are you tempted to feel right now?

Isaiah 36:4-22

Satan’s schemes. Satan to you: v. 5 On whom are you relying?

v. 6 Egypt is a splintered reed of a staff. Egypt is no help to you.

v. 7 On Jehovah? I already took all your towns. Face reality. Look around you. Do you really think God is in control?

Don’t rely on Hezekiah. He is a fanatic. He even tore down your high places. Don’t listen to your preacher. He is out of touch with the real world.

v. 8 The world says, “Come, let’s bargain. I’ll give you 2000 horses (if you can put riders on them, you pipsqueak nation). Let’s reach a compromise. You can go to church, be religious, as long as you continue to rely on the world for your true power and strength. I’ll give you a great position with benefits (but you will have to be out of town, not take care of your family and miss church)

v. 10 Satan: God told me to do this.

v. 11 Us to Satan: Please do not go after our young disciples. (Satan does not agree)

v. 14 Do not rely on God for deliverance. That is foolishness. This is what your worldly friends say.

v. 16 This is what Satan says: Make peace with me. I will take care of you (but you will be my slave). Make compromises with the world. It is what everyone does, even the “Christian” people.

v 18-20 Have the other gods saved them? Christianity is not logical. Only weak people are Christians.

v. 20 A fatal error on the part of the field commander: How can Jehovah deliver Jerusalem from my hand?

He is calling out God. A bad choice. The guy who did this was dead the next morning, by the way)

v. 21 (wisely) They refused to answer Satan. When Satan throws his junk at you, sometimes just keep your head down and do what is right.

Do not engage in a debate with your worldly friends. Just do the right thing and let your life speak for itself.

Isaiah 37:1-20 Hezekiah’s faithful response.

Read Is 37:1-4 Hezekiah sets a great example of how to trust in Jehovah:

v. 1 Hezekiah puts on sackcloth. He humbles himself before God at the temple.

v. 2 He seeks the advice of his spiritual mentor, Isaiah.

v. 3 Hezekiah repents and decides to rely on Jehovah, not on Egypt.

v. 4 Isaiah tells him to pray for the remnant in Jerusalem. Great symbolism.

Read 37:14-20 Hezekiah’s prayer. A great example.

v. 16 You alone are God.

v. 17 Notice Isaiah’s boldness. He calls boldly on God to intervene.

v. 18-19 Isaiah is “real” with God about what is going on. I am in trouble, God. I am in debt, God. I do not know how I will pass this test, God. The person I am studying with has a hard heart, God.

v. 20 But he prays boldly, nevertheless.

Isaiah 37:21-25 God’s response.

v. 21 Because you prayed this. Amazing. God had a different plan, but because of the prayer of a single faithful man, he changed the entire direction of the war!!!!

v. 23 You made a really big mistake, Sennacherib, when you decided to ridicule and blaspheme me!

Like Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:30 “Is this not the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my majesty and for the glory of my majesty?”

Is this not a great Hope program that exists because of my hard work and dedication?

Is this not an awesome Bible group, the result of my hard work and spirituality?

God’s answer: Read Isaiah 37:30-35 God rules the nations.

- In the third year…

-a remnant

-from Mt. Zion a band of survivors. We are that remnant, that band of survivors.

v. 35 God: I will defend this city!!! I will save it for my sake.

Here is this week’s memory passage.

Isaiah 37:36-37 God vindicates the faith of Hezekiah. God rules the nations.

Conclusion:

Let us not be like Ahaz who refused to seek a sign from God, but who instead sought help in a tough situation from the world.

Let us be like Hezekiah who relied on God in spite of terrible and seemingly impossible circumstances. God vindicated Hezekiah and he will vindicate you.

**The Book of Isaiah IV**

**Comfort for God’s People**

The background to our sermon from Isaiah 40 is Isaiah 39. First, let us remember the outline of Isaiah:

Isaiah 1-39 Messiah the King Assyria

Isaiah 40-55 Messiah the Servant Babylon and Persia

Isaiah 56-66 Messiah the Conqueror The whole world

**Isaiah 39 Hezekiah’s fatal error.** Transition to Isaiah 40 Part II of Isaiah and to Babylon/Persia.

Isaiah 39:1-8

v. 1-2 Marduk-Baladan of Babylon sends envoys to Hezekiah. At this time, Babylon was not a major independent power, but it was a possible rival of Assyria.

Babylon appeals to the pride of Hezekiah. You are one of the great leaders. You are my equal.

Foolishly, Hezekiah considers an alliance with Babylon. Hezekiah shows the envoys all the wealth of the temple.

Q: Have you sought an alliance with the world? Have you bargained with the world. I will give you this if you give me that.

The Devil and Daniel Webster (to win the presidency)

The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant

Faust A Faustian bargain

A Faustian bargain is to rely on the world in order to achieve something in this world you really treasure.

Like Esau bargaining away his inheritance for a bowl of lentil soup.

What might be your Faustian bargain?

v. 3-7 Isaiah confronts Hezekiah. Lack of trust in God is the ultimate sin in Isaiah.

[“What did these men say?” = “Where is your brother Abel?”

If you are trying to help your brother or sister see their sin or their error, ask them questions and let them discover for themselves.]

v. 6 All the things you boastfully showed to the Babylonian envoys will be carried of as plunder to Babylon.

Truly, this was a fatal error!!

This is exactly what happens in The Devil and Daniel Webster, The Year the Yankees Lost the Penant, and Faust. It’s what happened to Esay

It is exactly what will happen in your life. Can you learn this lesson?

v. 7 Some of your (royal) descendants will be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

This is exactly what happened about 90 years later when Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael became eunuchs in Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar when Judah submitted to Babylon and the items of the temple were carried to Babylon.

v. 8 Selfishly: Phew! At least there will be peace in my lifetime!

Now, Isaiah 40 Read Is 40:1-5

This is a prophecy for the Jews who were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar—the result of Hezekiah’s foolish choice.

Isaiah 40:1-2 Comfort, Comfort my people… Her hard service has been completed. Her sin has been paid for.

This is about the judgment of being sent into Babylon and, later, the return of a remnant from captivity in 536 BC, after 70 years. This is a prophecy.

But God is coming to save and to restore.

It is not unlike Jeremiah 29:10-14 After 70 years “I will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I banished you. This passage is about us who were banished from the presence of God and were held in captivity by Satan, but whom God will restore to himself through Christ.

The message? Comfort! Do you need comfort right now?

With the resurgence of Covid 19.

With the disastrous earthquake in Haiti.

With Afghanistan falling into Taliban hands.

With… fill in the blank. I need comfort right now.

Does anyone need strength today? What about in your life on a regular basis?

Isaiah 40:3-5 But it is also about the formation of the Church as a remnant. A kingdom prophecy.

Quoted in Matthew 3:3 Mark 1:1-4 John the Baptist is the one spoken of by the prophet Isaiah.

A straight way in the desert. Valleys raised, mountains flattened. God is clearing the way for us to come into the kingdom.

Last weekend I climbed Mt Baldy. It was hard work. But God is creating a level and smooth path for us to be restored to him.

The path may seem rocky, rutted, pitfalls, huge mountains, unpassable canyons and rivers.

God says to you: Every canyon will be raised up, and every mountain will be laid low for those who are in My kingdom!

v. 5 The glory of the Lord will be revealed. John 1:14 We have beheld his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father full of grace and truth.

That you were my child will be made fully known when the truth comes out.

Who, then, can you count on?

Isaiah 40:6-20 I am the Lord. I am great. I am sovereign. I rule the nations.

I am awesome, the New York Yankees are not. I am awesome, the US military is not. I am awesome, Drake is not. Ariana Grande is like a grasshopper. I am great, the Raiders are pipsqueaks.

v. 6-8 Cry out! All people are like grass… but the word of the Lord endures forever. Do you agree with God that you are like grass compared to the Word of the Lord?

Let’s do it. Let’s cry it out: All people are like grass!

By ourselves we are like grass on the side of the canyon compared to the canyon itself (10s of millions of years old)

But with God we are like the Canyon, only greater.

v. 8 So, what can I count on? The Word of the Lord.

And v. 10 The “mighty arm” here is Jesus (Isaiah 53:1-3)

This tells us a lot about Jesus.

v. 10-11 Jesus has: 1. Power 2. Reward 3. Gentle shepherd

How does this make you feel?

40:12-14 Q: Again, what do we see about God here? What Bible book does this sound like? (I think of Job). God is greater than all of those smart people.

Does this make you feel awesome and protected or does this make you feel scared? How does God want you to feel from this passage?

v. 14 Whom did the Lord consult to enlighten him? Q: Has God ever consulted you?

40:15-17 God is comparing himself to the nations. (context: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon) Do you agree with God here? How might we trust in the nations?

The forests of Lebanon are not enough for the Lord

Russia: a dustspeck.

The US government can construct the Federal Highway System, but can they create the Grand Canyon or build the Sierra Nevada?

Are you trusting in politics, in human organizations, in corporations for your strength. In Nike we trust! These things will fall!

v. 17 God regards these things as worthless and less than nothing compared to him. China is powerful. Amazon has a lot of power, but they are less than nothing compared to God.

Whom and what are you trusting in for your strength?

This is the message of the last sermon and of this sermon.

40:18-20 God is comparing himself to the idols here. Isaiah is being sarcastic. Are you serious about worshipping idols?

a metalworker casts it.

A person too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot (at least not right away!) Q: What is his point here? The irrationality of trusting in idols.

They hope it won’t fall over.

But we are too sophisticated to trust in idols. Not!

Our idols are our in-shape bodies, our degrees, our pop stars, our boyfriends, our social media, our video games…

Q: Where do you put God in relation to these things?

Isaiah 40:21-27 How awesome is God?

v. 21 Have you somehow forgotten? Have you lost your perspective? Have you lost your eyeglasses?

v. 22 A great memory verse How great is Jehovah?

He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth.

All its people are like grasshoppers. Like looking down from Mt. Baldy at the cars in the parking lot.

He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. To him, creating the universe is like you or me setting up an easy-up.

v. 23-24 Compared to him, Putin, Trump, Biden, Xi Jinping are nothing. They will blow away like chaff.

And so will you without the Lord!

v. 26 Look out at the stars, the Milky Way, the atom, the cell. Who created this?

v. 27 But God did not answer my prayer yesterday. God is not hearing my prayer. My life is not going the way I had hoped it right now. What about Covid? What about all the racial injustice?

40:28-31. Have you felt tired, worn out, weary lately? Have you felt used up? Do you need an increase of power? Have you stumbled and fallen?

Do you not know? Are you unaware? Have you forgotten who God is?

v. 31 The key to making it out of the low places is hoping in the Lord. It is like a shot of spiritual Gatorade. It will renew your strength.

What or whom do you put your hope in?

Q: When you hear about soaring on wings like eagles, what can you see God doing through you?

In the Lord, you can run up the Grand Canyon walls of your life.

Or if you want, you can walk, but you still will not faint.

The Lord is the everlasting God. The Creator of the Grand Canyon, and the entire universe. Do you think you can trust in him? Can you get your strength from him?

**The Book of Isaiah V**

**God Saves a Remnant**

Isaiah 44-45, 49 God will save a remnant.

Isaiah 44:6-20 The foolishness of idols Idols vs. YHWH

How do we know God has power, and the idols do not?

Background:

God foretold the events prophesied in Isaiah many times.

Deut 28:15… Deut 28:49-52

But… Deut 30:1-6 v. 3 Restore. Here is that remnant who will return

Similarly, Isaiah 39:5-7 But Isaiah 10:20-21 a remnant will return

And Jeremiah 25:8-11 But 25:12-14 and 29:10-14

When God says it, that is exactly what will happen.

In 605 BC Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael as hostages

In 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and killed Zedekiah.

But 70 years later in 536 BC Cyrus the Persian defeated Babylon, virtually without firing a shot, and sent Judah back to rebuild the temple.

Ezra 1:1-4 Cyrus sends a remnant to return. Remember that name.

70 years after the temple was destroyed, it was rebuilt under Haggai, Zerubbabel and Joshua.

The point for us: God will do the same for you and for those we meet.

When God proposes, he disposes.

This is the background to Isaiah 44-45.

Is 44:6-8 I am the alpha and the omega—the first and the last. I am the only God!

v. 7 Let the “gods” foretell what will come.

Anyone want to guess what will happen in Afghanistan the next few years?

What about the winner of the superbowl—and stake your entire reputation on it?

Jean Dixon…

v.8 Is there any God besides me? I am the only rock!

I know not one!!!

Is there any other rock? What about the economy? What about your good looks? What about your new romantic relationship?

This is our God. The ONLY God. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

v. 9-20 A diatribe about the foolishness of idols. Much sarcasm. Elijah: maybe Baal is sleeping. Wake him up!

v. 15 some he uses to warm himself, and some he use to fashion a god and worship it.

Oh, but we are so much more sophisticated with our idols

v. 19 Think! Does any of this make sense? Half for a god, half for fuel.

v. 20 the idols are delusions. The world is delusional with its idols of wealth, fame, pleasure, military power, physical fitness,…

They think that they can make God!

Is 44:21-23

v. 21 They make idols. I made you! I will not forget you.

v. 22 I sweep away your sins. So return to me! Has anyone else done that?

v. 23 Shout for joy oh heavens and earth, mountains and forests. I have redeemed Israel.

How great is YHWH?

44:26-28 He is the one who is able to call Cyrus 120 years before he is born!!!

170 years before the prophecy is fulfilled. He will call Cyrus.

Cyrus will say to Judah: Reinhabit Jerusalem. Rebuild Judah. Restore the cities.

v. 28 Cyrus told Judah: Let the foundation of the temple be laid.

This is confirmed in the Cyrus Cylinder and in Ezra 1:1-4.

Remember how in Is 44:7-8 God said he is the one who can foretell what will happen. Can any other god do this?

Here is God’s message to you: v. 26 I will restore your life. V. 28 Let it be rebuilt.

He says to the BCOC “Let its foundations be laid!” Let it be rebuilt!

Isaiah 45:1-7 Who is Cyrus, symbolically/prophetically? He is a prefigure of the Messiah.

v. 1 He is God’s anointed (literally messiah) He is the one God uses to set his people free. Cyrus did not even believe in God, yet God used him.

v. 2 to level the mountains (so my people can come home)

This is what Jesus did.

Why would God do this? v. 3 “so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel who summons you by name.

v. 4 Why? For the sake of my servant Jacob. For us.

v. 6 so that “people may know that there is none besides me. I am the Lord and there is no other.”

v. 7 As for Cyrus and his career, “I do all these things.” Amazing.

Is 45:9-13

v. 9 Does the clay say to the potter, “What are you making?”

Q: Who is the potter? He is the one who will raise up Cyrus.

v. 13 I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free. Cyrus is the new Moses.

Isaiah 49:1-7 God will use Jesus to save a remnant.

v. 1 “Listen to me” (the only time in the OT) Rem: God on Mt of Transfiguration: Listen to him. a messianic passage

v. 1 The “islands” are the nations.

v. 1 Before I was born the Lord called me… v. 5 He who formed me in the womb.

v. 3 Israel has failed as servant, so Messiah is the personification of Israel.

The Father had this plan in mind from the beginning. Jesus is the lamb slain from the foundation of the earth (Rev 13:8)

What will Messiah do?

v. 5 ….to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself.

v. 6 to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept—the remnant.

v. Also a light to the Gentiles…. To the ends of the earth.

Q: What did Jesus do for you?

Q: Where did Jesus rescue you from?

v. 7 Jesus, the one despised and abhorred by the Jews.

Jesus, the servant of rulers

Isaiah 49:8-18 God is restoring a remnant of Israel.

v. 8 Jesus is restoring the remnant to the land—to the kingdom.

v. 9a You were a captive to sin. But Jesus said to you, Come out! Be free!

What did Jesus call you out from?

What did Jesus free you from?

v. 9b-13

v. 9b pasture on every barren hill

v. 10 no more spiritual hunger or thirst.

v. 10 compassion on them.

v. 10 lead them to springs of water.

v. 11 prepare a smooth road to the kingdom.

v. 12 all nations, North, South, East, West. Taft, Tehachapi, Shafter, Porterville

v. 13 comfort. We have come full circle.

So, you Christian, shout for joy!

v. 14 But, despite all that God did, Zion felt forsaken and forgotten.

v. 15-16 God’s loving compassion as a mother for her children. “Can a mother forget the baby at her breast, and not have compassion on her infant?”

Response: Impossible!!! Even if the mother would forget, I would not forget you, O Israel/church/Christian

v. 16 You are engraved in the palm of my hand. I never forget you!!!

I will take you back. Only return to me.

Isaiah 49:18-26 v. 18-20 Look! Your children gather around. This is our spiritual children—our spiritual fruit. Though you were a spiritual ruin and desolate. The land will be too small to contain you.

This passage is about evangelism. Can you envision God using you to bring many to Him?

v. 21 We were bereaved, barren, exiled and rejected and alone!!!!

v. 22 But God will lift up a banner and we will come.

v. 22-23 your children will be saved. You will have kings and queens as spiritual offspring/parents. Your evangelism will be wildly successful.

v. 23 Are they literally going to be licking the dust at your feet? ☺.

v. 26 Then all will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior and Redeemer. When you bear bounteous fruit for God.

God says to the “idols” I am the only God. There is none beside me.

Who else can raise up nations and tear them down?

My purpose? To restore you. To free you from captivity.

I will flatten the mountains and raise the valleys.

Cyrus will do this.

Messiah Jesus will do this.

I will do this.

Will you not come back and be restored ?

**Who Would Have Believed Our Message?**

**Isaiah 52/53 Sermon**

This is the last of four Servant Songs in Isaiah (42:1-9, 49:1-13, 50:4-9 and 52:13-53:12) They are songs of the triumph of the Suffering Servant.

Ex: Read Isaiah 42:1-9

Messiah will bring justice to the nations, yet he will not cry out or raise his voice in the streets!

In fact, a bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.

So, how will he bring about justice? (v. 4) And how will he be a light to the Gentiles? (v. 6) And how will he free the captives from prison without an army/without even crying out? (v. 7) We will find out in our passage.

Jesus is a lion and he is a lamb. Rev 5:5-6 Here Jesus is both “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” to God’s enemies and he is “a lamb, looking as if it had been slain” to God’s people.

Isaiah 52:13-15 How will all this work? How will the servant bring about justice?

v. 13 My servant/Messiah will act wisely. How?

v. 13 The Messiah will be lifted up. Sounds great, right??? No! Jesus in John 12:32 I, when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto myself.

What is the means by which Messiah will bring justice to the nations? By being lifted up. By submitting to the powers of the world, and by triumphing over them on a cross. By submitting to a dehumanizing and humiliating torture and execution.

God’s enemies—the same ones who enslaved us in Egypt, will “lift up” Jesus.

Jesus will conquer by submitting to his enemies.

Of course, this is not the only way Jesus was lifted up.

1. On the cross.

2. In his resurrection.

3. In his ascenscion.

4. When we lift him up as we share our faith.

So, what did this look like?

v. 14 He was brutally beaten to the point that he barely looked like a man. That is my Savior Jesus!

v. 15 His blood will sprinkle many nations. This is the same blood we came into contact with when we were baptized into Christ.

Isa 53:1-3 The Messiah/Suffering Servant:

Who would believe it? This is amazing. Stupendous. No one ever would have imagined it. Messiah is the arm of the Lord. “Arm” represents agency or power. Isaiah 40:10 “The Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.

So, what is this powerful arm of the Lord like?

v. 2 Like a tender shoot. A child. He begins as a baby. A helpless little one. Not a very auspicious beginning!

v. 2 “no beauty or majesty.” Not what the world expects. The ultimate anti-hero. An average Joe/Jose Like Samuel and Jesse…

v. 3 Despised and rejected. Held in low esteem. This is Jesus! This is the arm of the Lord. Who would have believed it?

Isa 53:4-6 v. 4a He took on our pain and suffering.

Q: How did that work?

Hebrews 2:14-18 He shared our humanity. “Fully human in every way.” (v. 17) He suffered when he was tempted (v. 18) Heb 4:15 tempted in every way just as we are.

v. 4 He took it up. He took the suffering on himself. It was not thrust in him.

v. 4b But we got it all wrong. We did not see it that way at all. We thought it was a sign of weakness. How foolish we thought! Submit to humiliation at the hands of your enemy? How weak?

Who would have believed it!?

v. 5 cause: Our transgressions effect: led to his piercing

cause: Our iniquities effect: led to his being crushed.

But…

Cause: His being punished (instead of us), effect: led to our peace

Cause: His wounds effect: led to our healing.

v. 6 We left God, but he did not leave us. We were the Prodigal Son.

Here is the reason that Jesus sweat blood in Gethsemane. ALL of our sins were put on him.

Look at this !!! the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. What was that like? Imagine the pressure!!!

Like 53:1 Could anyone have believed this? Do you have any concept what Jesus did for you?

How can his suffering, pain, piercing, and wounds bring us peace and healing? See 1 Peter 2:23-25

Isa 53:7-9

Oppressed, afflicted, led like a lamb to the slaughter. Sounds helpless, but was he helpless? No! Yet he went like a lamb. He did not resist at all. He did it willingly. See John 10:17-18 “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.”

He was not the typical sacrificial lamb at all.

Jesus was silent: See Matt 26:59-63 for example.

Assigned a grave with the wicked (plural) and the rich (singular: Joseph of Arimathea, an interesting prophetic note): See Luke 23:32-33 (crucified with criminals—the wicked). See Luke 23:50-56 (with the rich. Joseph of Arimathea)

Read Isa 53:10-12

Verse 10, the King James Version says “it pleased the Lord to bruise him”, why would God be pleased by Jesus being crushed?

53:1 Who would have believed it?

God was not “pleased” (ie happy) by Jesus suffering directly but by the reconciliation it produced.

53:11 But that is not the end of the story, is it? After all this suffering, “He will see the light of life.” He will be resurrected after his suffering and death.

Verse 12, what is Jesus’s portion among the great?

God raised him from death.

He raised him to his side in the throne room of God. See Philippians 2:5-11

**Isaiah Sermon VI Isaiah 54-56**

**Come, All Who Are Thirsty**

Isaiah 54:1-3 The result of the work of the Suffering Servant: This “barren woman” is the Gentile nations. We are this barren woman.

The one with a husband (v. 1) is unfaithful Israel.

Therefore…. Sing barren woman! Sing, church!

The motif of barren women is quite common in the Bible. Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, Elizabeth. God makes the barren fruitful.

You are that barren woman, as is the church.

v. 1 We will have many children. This semester on campus, but also this Fall in Bakersfield. Yes! In Tehachapi. Yes! In the Cortez Bible group. Yes! In the single professional Bible group.

v. 2 lengthening our cords and strengthening our stakes = the kingdom, the number of saved growing greatly.

v. 3 Where? To the right, to the left to all nations. To their cities with all their desolate people, living their desolate lives.

Like I said last week to Taft, to Shafter, to Tehachapi and Porterville. Yes, to Merced.

v. 3 Bakersfield is one of those “desolate cities.”

Isaiah 54:4-6 The shame “of your youth” (of your days before Christ) will be taken away. You will be guilt-free (Hebrews 9:14 The blood of Jesus cleanses our consciences. Heb 10:2 we no longer feel guilty.)

So let us sing like a barren woman who gives birth to many children.

What was our shame replaced by?

v. 5 God is now our husband. Our kinsman/redeemer (Ruth and Boaz).

When a Jewish husband died, the kinsman/redeemer took her as spouse.

v. 6 We are a wife called back into an intimate relationship (Hosea and Gomer)

Isaiah 54:7-15

v. 7 God abandoned us because of our sins, but only for a short time.

v. 8 But now I am taking you back forever with “everlasting kindness” and “deep compassion.”

v. 9 It is like Noah. I promised I would never again flood the earth. Now I promise you that you will never again be out of a relationship with me—never to rebuke again.

Like me with my son Ben. How could you do this.

Just read v. 10-15

Isaiah 54:16-17

See, it is I Behold! Check this out!!! I did this!

Is it true that God created the destroyer to “wreak havoc.”?

I thought that God did not create evil. What is this about? This is what God allows to come into existence in order to bring us to repentance. He gives us over (Romans 1) to the things we love.

Satan may think he is pulling a “fast one” on me (God), but I created him and I even use him for my purposes in your life.

v. 17 Conclusion: No weapon of the enemy can prevail against my people.

I will vindicate my people. Why? Because the Suffering Servant was pierced, crushed for our iniquities and yet he saw the light of life and given a portion among the great. Why? Because he poured out his life unto death. Because he bore the sin of many…

Isaiah 55:1-5 v. 1 “Come to the waters.” and “come buy and eat.” Has to do with the things in life which really satisfy. Only in Christ do we have real life that fully satisfies.

v. 1 So, we at the BCOC say COME!!!!

Come O thirsty.

Come, O hungry.

Come!!!

Come for the food that really satisfies!!!

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

v. 2 Have you spent yourself on things that do not satisfy? Note: Among the things that are not real is bread. Bread is not “bread”!

v. 1 Are these things really without cost? No! They were very costly! (see Isaiah 53 He was pierced and crushed to obtain these things) Could it mean that these are things that we cannot buy with our money?

v. 2 What did you formerly (or do you still) spend your money on and give your labor to that will not satisfy?

v. 2 What is this “richest of fare” we can delight in? (the things that truly satisfy).

It is true friends, true love, true purpose, true satisfaction.

Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy!

[John 10:10 The thief kills and destroys. I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full.]

v. 3 Listen!!! This is about the New Covenant

-everlasting v. 3

-promised to David/Messiah v. 3

v. 4 See!!! Watch what I will do! (Come!!!! v. 1, Listen!!! v.3)

-Messiah as ruler v. 4

-many nations will come running!

-splendor.

Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the Lord. We are entering a season of planting the seed for a harvest in October and November. Let us say to our neighbor, to our fellow students, to our co-workers, Come! Listen! See! Seek the Lord!!!

Come! Listen! See! Seek!

Isaiah 55:8-9 As the heavens are above the earth….

How are God’s thoughts above ours? We think we are pretty smart, and compared to a cow we are!

It is like us compared to a cow.

Q: Have you ever played golf with a real pro? Talked to a bona fide genius?

I once skied with my cousin who was a professional skier.

I once went to the gym with Kaido Leesman.

Isaiah 55:10-13 God’s word always accomplish its purpose.

What about those who hear it but reject it? (John 12:47-48).

Yes! Even when people reject God’s words, it still accomplishes its purpose to save or to judge. (Heb 4:12-13 it judges our thoughts and attitudes)

We say Come! Listen! See! Seek! But it is the word of the Lord that does the work, so we need to get people into Bible studies!!!!!!

v. 12 You will go out in joy. Get the picture!!!

v. 12 The mountains will sing for you.

The trees will clap for you.

v. 13 No more thornbush or brier. What have God’s words accomplished in your life? What are the juniper and myrtle to you?

Let us be in category #1. Let us be of those who hear and obey are lifted up and saved by God’s words.

[Isa 56:1-8 Our part in this wonderful plan.

v. 1. Maintain justice

v. 2. Do the right things in all circumstances. (obedience to commands, but also those things we know are right.)

v. 3-4 No-one will be excluded. The foreigner and the eunuch (who was unclean according to the Jews)

v. 5 Yes, even the eunuch and foreigner will be given a name better than sons and daughters. What might that name be? Revelation 3:12 “The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God… I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.

v 6-8 All who are obedient and who love the Lord and who serve him will be brought to his holy mountain—to the Kingdom of God.

v. 7 God is calling us to be a house of prayer for all nations! (quoted in Mark 11:17, Matthew 21:13)

God is calling us to be that house of prayer.]

Summary:

Who would have believed what God has done through Jesus?

Therefore, sing, barren woman!

Enlarge your tent! Lengthen your cords.

Conquer and settle the desolate cities.

Forget the shame of your youth.

Come! Come to the waters.

Listen!

See!

Seek!

God is doing this. He will accomplish this.

Let us be a house of prayer for all nations.

**Singles Devotional**

**Isaiah 60-62**

Isaiah 60:1-7 This is about the future kingdom, but primarily about now in the church.

v. 1 His glory appears over you. What does this make you think of?

v. 2 Darkness covers the earth. Thick darkness!!!

But the Lord rises on you and his glory appears over you.

Q: What does this mean to you? “His glory appears over you.”

What will this look like?

v. 3 Nations will come to you.

v. 4 Sons and daughters come from afar.

v. 5 heart will throb and swell with joy

wealth on the seas will be brought to you.

v. 6 herds of camels, gold and incense.

Q: What will that look like in your life?

60:10-22. Is he talking about the Church or is he talking about our final state in heaven with him? Both, of course, but this is more about the New Heaven and New earth than our current state.

1. v. 11 Foreigners will rebuild your walls.

2. v. 11 your gates will always stand open.

3. v. 13 juniper, fir, cypress

4. v. 15 forsaken and hated becomes joy

5. v. 16 drink the milk of nations.

6. v. 18 no more violence, ruin or destruction.

7. v. 19 the Lord will be your light, not the sun. The sun will never set.

8. v. 21 only the righteous

Q: What do you think our final state with God will be like?

Isaiah 61:1-4

“The Spirit of the Lord is on *me*, because he has anointed *me* to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

His message, His good news: (quoting Isaiah 61:1-2)

1. Good news for the poor (in spirit?) 61:1

2. Freedom/release for (spiritual) prisoners 61:1

3. Healing for the (spiritually) sick (specifically the blind in Luke 4:18)

4. Release the (spiritually) oppressed Luke 4:18

5. The favor of the Lord. 61:2, Luke 4:19

Note: If you go to Isaiah 61:1-2 Jesus skips part of the passage. “and the day of vengeance of our God.” Why did Jesus not include this? Because Jesus came, “I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.” (John 12:46)

Notice Luke 4:21 “Today, this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Q: Which of these qualities of the Messiah catches your attention?

-good news for the poor in spirit

-freedom for spiritual prisoners

-healing for the spiritually sick

-release for the spiritually oppressed

-the favor of the Lord.

v. 2b-4 The result:

-comfort for those who mourn

-joy instead of mourning

-oaks of righteousness. Strong, righteous

-destroyed lives will be rebuilt.

Read Isa 62:1-5 This is just about the most beautiful promise in the entire Bible.

-a new name Q: What do you think that your new name will be?

-a crown of splendor

-a royal diadem in the hand of your God

-Hephzibah (my delight is in her), Beulah (married)

-your builder will marry you.

Isaiah 62:6-7 A great memory verse. You who call on the Lord give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.

Q: Have you been giving yourself rest? Give yourself no rest until the final kingdom of God is established on earth.