

## LECTURE 16: ISAIAH

**“The God who saves”**

Jason S. DeRouchie, PhD

### I. Orienting Data

- A. Prophet and Audience:** Isaiah (“Yahweh is salvation”) of Jerusalem to Judah
- B. Date of Prophetic Activity:** 740–700 B.C.
- C. Historical Background:**
  - 1. Ministered in Judah during the reigns of four kings—Uzziah/Azzariah (792–740), Jothan (750–732), Ahaz (735–716), and Hezekiah (716–687) (Isa. 1:1)
  - 2. Called as a prophet in ch. 6
  - 3. Witnessed the rise of the Neo-Assyrian empire & dismemberment of the northern kingdom.
  - 4. Served as Yahweh’s covenant enforcer against faithless Ahaz and stood as the faithful confidant and friend of the good king Hezekiah
  - 5. A contemporary of Micah (in Judah), as well as Amos & Hosea (in Israel)
- D. Content:** Yahweh’s sovereign majesty and redemptive love, revealed in his dealings with his chosen people the Israelites, who are destined for both judgment and salvation, in which the nations will also be included
- E. Emphases:**
  - 1. The character of God expressed on behalf of the world
    - a. His holiness, majesty, and righteousness
    - b. His compassion and saving mercy
  - 2. The redemptive role of God’s (suffering) servant, and the central role of Israel and Zion in Yahweh’s plans for the nations and the world
  - 3. The glorious final future God has in store for those who are his

### II. Structural Overview of Isaiah

- A. Book of Judgment (Warning) (1:1–39:8)**
  - 1. Oracles Concerning Judah and Jerusalem (1:1–12:6)
  - 2. Oracles Concerning the Nations (13:1–23:18)
  - 3. Isaiah’s Apocalypse (24:1–27:13)
  - 4. Book of Woes (28:1–33:24)
  - 5. Book of Hope (34:1–35:10)
  - 6. An example of Hope: Book of Hezekiah (36:1–39:8)
- B. Book of Comfort: Looking Beyond Exile (40:1–66:24)**
  - 1. Israel’s Hope in the Lord of History (9 chs.) (40:1–48:22)
  - 2. Israel’s Hope in Yahweh’s Salvation (9 chs.) (49:1–57:21)
  - 3. Israel’s Hope in Yahweh’s Vindication (9 chs.) (58:1–66:24)

**Fig. 16.1. Isaiah’s Mini-Bible, both in Structure and Message** (so Walter C. Kaiser Jr.)

Book of Judgment with 39 chapters (Isa. 1–39) parallels the 39 books of Old Testament  
 Book of Comfort with 27 chapters (Isa. 40–66) parallels the 27 books of the New Testament

- Begins with John the Baptist (ch. 40)
- Centered on the atonement (ch. 53)
- Ends with the glorious image of God & restored creation (chs. 65–66)

### III. A Key Interpretive Issue: The Composition, Unity, and Authorship of Isaiah

#### A. Introductory Comments:

1. Until the last two centuries, Jewish and Christian interpreters alike regarded Isaiah son Amoz (Isa. 1:1) to be the “author” of the entire book. This does not mean someone else could not have collected his sermons, but it does mean that all the oracles in the book were originally given through this eighth century prophet (740–700 B.C.).
2. In the last two centuries, numerous scholars have questioned the unity of the book, proposing at least two authors for the whole: (1) from Isaiah of Jerusalem (chs. 1–39); (2) from “Deutero-Isaiah” (chs. 40–66). Others have added a “Trito-Isaiah” (chs. 56–66), which they place in the post-restoration period.
3. Three reasons for this view (highlighted by Longman and Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 303–306):
  - a. *The historical situation*: Most of the first half of the book assumes the Assyrian crisis (but see chs. 13–14), whereas the second half addresses a group already in Babylonian exile (48:20), who are anticipating imminent judgment on their captors (43:14–15; 47:1–15; 48:14; 49:24–26; 51:21–23) and imminent restoration to Zion (40:9–11; 42:1–9; 43:1–7; 44:24–28; 48:12–22; 49:8–23; 51:11; 52:1–12), which includes the reconstruction of Jerusalem and the temple (e.g., 45:13; 51:3; 54:11–14; 58:12; 60:10; 61:4).
  - b. *Theological differences*: The first half emphasizes God’s majesty, points to a king descended from David, highlights the faithful remnant, and offers numerous historical details as the context for the oracles. The second half focuses on the universal dominion and eternality of God, points to a Servant of Yahweh with no explicit mention of the Davidic dynasty (but see Isa. 53:3), speaks of the remnant much less, and does not include historical details with the oracles, including no mention of Isaiah himself.
  - c. *Language and style*
4. In more recent days, scholars have recognized the remarkable unity and coherence of the whole book, though most (including many “evangelicals”) have still affirmed that multiple authors had their hands in shaping the whole. Many have spoken of “prophetic schools” working long after Isaiah of Jerusalem who affirmed his teaching and built upon it, much like Pastor John Piper has built on Jonathan Edwards. A key difference, however, is that John Piper has never written words and then attributed them to Edwards, as would be the case here!

#### B. Arguments for Authorship by Isaiah of Jerusalem: There are solid reasons for believing that the whole book originated with the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophet Isaiah, who actually foretold the Assyrian destruction of the north, the Babylonian destruction of the south, and the return of the exiles under the guidance of Cyrus, king of Persia:

1. The book itself only asserts that it contains the messages of the 8th century Isaiah (1:1), and no one questions that the other latter prophets--all of which use similar introductory formulas--contain messages from those prophets.
2. In a context so thoroughly against false prophecy, I question whether pseudonymous writings would truly be present, for they by nature make an attribution of authorship that is false.

3. The NT quotes from both halves of the book attributing it to the singular 8th century prophet Isaiah. For example:
  - a. John cites Isaiah 6:10 and 53:1 in consecutive verses, stating they are both from Isaiah (John 12:38–41);
  - b. Luke affirms that when the Ethiopian eunuch read from Isaiah 53:7–8, he was reading from “the book of Isaiah the prophet” (Acts 8:28).
4. A number of prophets living in the midst of the Babylonian crisis (Nahum, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah) all appear to use the second half of Isaiah’s book, which would necessitate it being complete by their time.
5. Numerous themes and vocabulary can be shown to be aligned across both halves.
6. One of the key arguments in Isaiah 40–55 is that Yahweh is God *because* he is able to foretell the future and the idols can’t; place the book’s second half during or after the events it speaks about and you lose the entire force of the argument.
7. Chapters 13–14 already anticipate the Babylonian crisis and are introduced as a vision “Isaiah son of Amoz saw” (13:1).

### C. Conclusion:

1. Tremper Longman III and Raymond Dillard assert, “The question of the authorship of Isaiah probably should not be made a theological ... text of orthodoxy” (*An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 311). In support, they compare the question of the authorship of Isaiah with that of the Deuteronomy. “Recognizing that the setting of Deuteronomy 34 [the mention of Moses’ death] requires an author living later than Moses, the author traditionally assigned to the book, is not materially different from recognizing that the background of Isaiah 40–66 presumes an author living during the exile.”
2. In contrast, the issue in Deuteronomy is *very different* than that described for the book of Isaiah.
  - a. Deuteronomy never asserts that Moses finalized what we call Deuteronomy. It only asserts that the sermons shaping the body of the book came from the prophet Moses. In contrast, all of the book of Isaiah is attributed to the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophet Isaiah.
  - b. While Moses could have predicted his death, there is nothing in the book that would suggest his death account is to be read this way. Rather, it is straight narrative, suggesting that some other hand, living *after* Moses and *within* the Promised Land, put Deuteronomy in the shape we now have it. In contrast, given God’s ability to foretell the future, nothing in the book of Isaiah demands that someone later than the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophet prophesied the material. And indeed, the explicit statements call us to read it all as coming from the mouth of Isaiah of Jerusalem.
  - c. Because the narrator’s intent in Deuteronomy was clearly to create a context for *Moses’ actual words to be heard*, it is *not* an error for later biblical authors to attribute to Moses the words in Deuteronomy. There is no sign that the prophet’s original voice has been altered or added to at all. In contrast, what Longman and Dillard are suggesting is the book of Isaiah actually attributes messages to the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophet that *did not actually originate with him*. This is a problem, for it calls the doctrine of inerrancy into question.

3. *One's view on the authorship of Isaiah is a legitimate test of theological orthodoxy.* The reality of a sovereign God and of prophetic inspiration means that Isaiah of Jerusalem could have foretold accurately and in detail any events of the future, including all those recorded in the book of Isaiah. The book itself and the rest of Scripture attribute the material to the 8<sup>th</sup> century prophet, which suggests that the only biblical, true, God-honoring approach is to affirm that the book in its entirety has its origin in Isaiah of Jerusalem. Any alternative perspective calls into question the doctrine of inerrancy.

#### IV. Introduction: Israel's Problem and Yahweh's Answer (Isaiah 1)

##### A. The First Declaration (1:2–20)

1. 1:2–9: *Indictment* – Israel has turned from God, becoming like Sodom & Gomorrah
2. 1:10–17: *Instruction* – Israel's present acts of "worship" are useless; they must return to Yahweh, focusing on God's Word (1:10) in a way that overflows in good deeds (1:16–17)
3. 1:18–20: *Warning* – The Day is coming!
  - a. Coming is a time of forgiveness and restoration for the repentant and loyal
  - b. Also coming is a time of destruction for all who resist and rebel

##### B. The Second Declaration (1:21–31)

1. 1:21–23 – *Indictment*: Israel has become a harlot (1:21–23)
2. 1:24–31 – *Judgment*:
  - a. A time is coming when God will restore his people and land
  - b. A time is also coming when God will destroy the haughty and rebellious

##### C. "The Day" anticipated:

1. 2:1 – "last days" – Gentile repentance: surrender to God and his Word
2. 2:11 – The Day of Yahweh – "a day" of judgment for the proud and the exaltation of God through his Messiah!
  - a. A day of humbling the proud (cf. 2:12)
    - A day of recognizing the hopelessness of idolatry and a day of reading Yahweh (2:20–21)
    - A day of lack (3:7)
    - A day of death (3:18–26)
    - A day of shame (4:1)
  - b. A day of Yahweh's exaltation and boasting only in his Messiah (cf. 2:17; 4:2). The result ... Those who surrender will be:
    - Called "holy" and have a lasting name (4:3)
    - Forgiven and cleansed (4:4)
    - Protected by the ever-present God (4:5–6)

#### V. Isaiah's Messianic Hope

##### A. Matthew's messianic hope from Isaiah

1. The birth narrative (Matt 1:21–23)
  - Matt 1:21–23. "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:<sup>23</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel." (Cf. Isa 7:14; cf. 8:8, 10.)

2. John's announcement (Matt 3:1–3)
  - Matt 3:1–3. In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” <sup>3</sup> For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’” (Cf. Isa 40:3.)
3. The dawn of Jesus' ministry (Matt 4:13–17)
  - Matt 4:13–17. And leaving Nazareth [Jesus] went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: <sup>15</sup> “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—<sup>16</sup> the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” <sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Cf. Isa 9:1–2; cf. 42:7.)

## **B. Isaiah's Judgment of the Vineyard and Immanuel (Isa 5–12)**

1. Overview:
  - a. Intro: The Song of the Vineyard (ch. 5)
  - b. Isaiah's Mission of Judgment (ch. 6)
  - c. Judgment on Judah (7:1–9:7)
  - d. Judgment on Israel (9:8–12:6)
2. Intro: The Song of the Vineyard (Isa 5:1–7, 13–17, 20, 24–25, 26, 30)
3. Isaiah's mission of judgment and the new creation messianic hope (Isa 6)
  - Isa 6:13. “And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled.” The holy seed/offspring is its stump.
  - Isa. 11:1–2. There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. <sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.
  - Isa. 53:2. For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.
4. Judgment on Judah (7:1–9:7)
  - Isa 7:14. Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin will conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
  - Isa 9:1–7[8:23–9:6]. But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. <sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. <sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. <sup>4</sup> For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup> For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.
5. Judgment on Israel (9:8–12:6)
  - Isa 10:12, 17–23.
  - 10:33–11:10.
  - 11:11–12:6 (a 2<sup>nd</sup> exodus that will trump the 1<sup>st</sup> exodus).

## VI. God's Incomparability and Isaiah's Mission

### A. *The Context of the Mission:* Syncretism shown in pride, oppression of others, and idolatry will give rise to judgment and then mercy.

1. Israel does not know Yahweh and has rejected his law.
  - Isa. 1:2–4. Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken Yahweh, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.
  - Isa. 5:24. They have rejected the law of Yahweh of hosts, and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.
2. Israel is full of self-exaltation and pride, materialism and idolatry, all resulting in partiality and injustice.
  - Isa. 1:23. Your princes are rebels and companions of the thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not bring justice to the fatherless, and the widow's cause does not come to them.
  - Isa. 2:6–8. They are full of things from the east and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines, and they strike hands with the children of foreigners. Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots. Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to their work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.
  - Isa. 5:20–23. Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight! Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink, who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of his right!
3. Yahweh promises to bring them low.
  - Isa. 2:11–12, 18–19. The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. <sup>12</sup>For Yahweh of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low.... <sup>18</sup>And the idols shall utterly pass away. <sup>19</sup>And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of Yahweh, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth.
4. Afterward, Yahweh also promises to exalt a remnant from both Israel and the nations.
  - Isa. 1:24–27. Therefore the Lord declares, Yahweh of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: "Ah, I will get relief from my enemies and avenge myself on my foes. <sup>25</sup>I will turn my hand against you and will smelt away your dross as with lye and remove all your alloy. <sup>26</sup>And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city." <sup>27</sup>Zion shall be redeemed by justice, and those in her who repent, by righteousness.
  - Isa. 2:2–5. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, <sup>3</sup>and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. <sup>5</sup>O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of Yahweh.
  - Isa. 4:2–6. In that day the branch of Yahweh shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel. <sup>3</sup>And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in

Jerusalem, <sup>4</sup>when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning. <sup>5</sup>Then Yahweh will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy. <sup>6</sup>There will be a booth for shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.

**B. *The Nature of the Mission:*** To declare judgment on Israel until the curse is accomplished (Isa. 6).

1. The immediate setting for the mission:
  - a. Yahweh, the Sovereign Holy God, initiates an encounter with Isaiah, giving the prophet eyes to see divine glory and ears to hear the glory proclaimed (6:1–4).
  - b. A true encounter with Yahweh’s holiness manifest in glory humbles Isaiah, creating a deep sense of unworthiness (6:5).
  - c. True repentance and recognition of a universal need is matched with divine mercy (6:6–7)
  - d. The divine request is met with Isaiah’s hearing ears and willing heart (6:8)
2. The essence of Isaiah’s mission (vv. 9–10):
  - a. In Isaiah’s day:
    - Isa. 6:9–10. And [Yahweh] said, “Go, and say to this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”
  - b. In Jesus’ day:
    - Matt. 13:13–16. This is why he spoke to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: “You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.” But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.
    - John 12:37–41. Though [Jesus] had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him, so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.” Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoken of him.
3. The timing of the mission (vv. 11–12):
  - Isa. 6:11–12. Then I said, “How long, O Lord?” And he said: “Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and Yahweh removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.
4. The hope of the mission:
  - a. The surface “hope” of the mission.
    - Isa. 1:18–20. Come now, let us reason together, says Yahweh: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.

- Ezek. 33:18–19. When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by this. (Cf. 18:26–28)
  - Jer. 18:7–10. If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will relent of the good that I had intended to do to it.
- b. The surface “hope” is no hope at all, because God has not enabled a heart change.
- Deut. 29:4. But to this day Yahweh has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
  - Isa. 43:8. Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears!
  - Isa. 44:18. They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand.
  - Rom. 11:7–8. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,<sup>8</sup> as it is written, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.”
- c. The ultimate hope of the mission: God will preserve a remnant, from which he will raise a Messianic deliverer who will redeem a remnant from both Israel and the nations and rule with equity, justice, and peace.
- Isa. 6:13. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled.” *The holy seed is its stump.*
  - Isa. 11:1–12:6, esp. 11:1–5, 10. *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.* And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh. And his delight shall be in the fear of Yahweh. And he shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.... In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious. (Cf. 4:2; 60:21; 61:3)
  - Isa. 53:2–6. *For he grew up before [Yahweh] like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.*<sup>3</sup>He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.<sup>4</sup>Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and Yahweh has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

### THINK!

Isaiah 7:14 – “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Matthew declared this prophecy to be fulfilled through the incarnation of God in Jesus (Matt. 1:23; cf. Luke 1:31–34). How are we to understand this use of the Old Testament, especially in light of the numerous textual clues in Isaiah 7–8 that appear to suggest the prophet anticipated at least initial fulfillment *in his lifetime*? Make a list of these textual clues and provide reflective comment on what Matthew is doing.



**C. *The Basis for the Mission:***

1. The incomparability of Yahweh summarized (Isa. 40): “To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? ... To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One.”
  - a. Incomparable in power (vv. 1–17)
  - b. Incomparable in his person (vv. 18–24)
  - c. Incomparable in his pastoral care (vv. 25–31)
2. The incomparability expounded:
  - a. Yahweh alone holds the future in his hand (41:22–29; 44:6–8; 46:8–11; cf. “Cyrus” in 44:28; 45:1)
  - b. Yahweh alone can save (43:10–12; 46:20–22)
  - c. The folly of idolatry (44:9–20; 46:5–7)
  - d. Yahweh is the one who ordains and stands as the maker and sustainer of all things (44:21–28)—e.g., calling forth “Cyrus” of Persia (44:28; 45:1)
  - e. Yahweh is the only God, sovereign over all things (45:5, 7; 48:11–13)

**D. *The Foundational Principle:*** What you revere you will resemble, whether for restoration or ruin; we are what we worship.

- Deut. 29:4. But to this day Yahweh has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
- Ps. 115:4–8. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell. They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk; and they do not make a sound in their throat. *Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.*
- 2 Kgs. 17:15. They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. *They went after false idols and became false*, and they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom Yahweh had commanded them that they should not do like them.
- Jer. 2:5. What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and *went after worthlessness, and became worthless?*
- Isa. 44:18. They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand.
- Rom. 1:22–28. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity.... God gave them up to dishonorable passions.... And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

## VII. The “Gospel” of Isaiah and His Vision of the Messianic Servant

**Fig. 16.1. Comfort and Redemption for Zion and the World: An Overview**

<i>Outline</i>	<i>Texts</i>	<i>Gospel Message or Servant Song</i>
Universal consolation for Israel and the nations	40:1–42:17	Gospel (40:9–11) Song 1 (42:1–9)
Promises of redemption: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Release</li> <li>• Forgiveness</li> </ul>	42:18–44:23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42:18–43:21</li> <li>• 43:22–44:23</li> </ul>	
Agents of redemption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyrus: liberation</li> <li>• Servant: atonement</li> </ul>	44:24–53:12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44:24–48:22</li> <li>• 49:1–53:12</li> </ul>	Song 2 (49:1–7) Song 3 (50:4–11) Gospel (52:7–10) Song 4 (52:13–53:12)
Universal proclamation for Israel and the nations	54:1–55:13	
		Gospel (61:1–4)

### A. Introduction:

1. Key Questions and Isaiah’s Answer:
  - a. Key Questions:
    - i. How can the Book of Judgment give rise to the Book of Comfort?
    - ii. When will Yahweh truly be imaged / glorified among his people so that the nations will know him as King?
    - iii. How can God justly grant comfort to a cursed remnant?
  - b. Key Answer: Good news of God’s reign through his Messiah
2. 4 Aspects of Messianic Expectation in Isaiah:
  - a. King (4:2; 7:1–16; 9:1–7; 11:1–16; 24:21–25; 28:16; 30:19–26)
  - b. Servant (42:1–9; 49:1–7; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12)
  - c. Anointed Conqueror (55:3–5; 61:1–3; 63:1–6)
  - d. Fruit-bearing shoot/branch (6:13; 11:1; 53:2; cf. 4:2; 60:21)
3. Overview of the Servant of Yahweh in the Book of Comfort, Isaiah 40–66
  - a. Breakdown:
    - i. “Servant” occurs 20x in Isa 40–53, all in the singular:
      - (1) “Servant Songs” (8x):
        - (a) 42:1–9 (v. 1)
        - (b) 49:1–7 (vv. 3, 5, 6, 7)
        - (c) 50:4–10 (v. 10)
        - (d) 52:13–53:12 (52:13; 53:11)
      - (2) Others, all with apparent reference to the entire nation (12x):  
41:8–9; 42:19 (2x); 43:10; 44:1–2; 44:21 (2x); 44:26; 45:4; 48:20
    - ii. “Servant” occurs 11x in Isaiah 54–66, all in the plural.
  - b. Question: Is there any theological significance to the shift from singular to plural after Isaiah 53? What happens in Isaiah 53 that is significant in creating servants of Yahweh among Jew (63:17) and Gentile (56:6) alike?
4. Good News in Isaiah and the NT: An Overview:
  - a. Key texts:
    - i. Isa. 40:9–11 (v. 9, 2x)
    - ii. Isa. 52:7–10 (v. 7, 2x)

- iii. Isa. 61:1–3 (v. 1, 1x)
- iv. See also Isa. 41:27; 60:6
- b. NT Usage: Verb (54x) “proclaim the gospel” (*euangelizo*); Noun (76x) “Gospel; good news” (*euangelion*)
  - i. The gospel was the essence of what Jesus taught on earth.
    - Matt. 4:23. And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the *gospel* of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.
    - Luke 4:43. [Jesus] said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.
  - ii. The gospel is about what Jesus accomplished through his death and resurrection.
    - 1 Cor. 15:1–8. Now I would remind you, brothers, of *the gospel I preached* to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup>and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word *I preached* to you—unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup>Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup>Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.
  - iii. The gospel finds its source in God, was anticipated by the prophets through the Old Testament, and concerns Jesus Christ as son of David and Son of God.
    - Rom. 1:1–4. Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, <sup>3</sup> concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.
  - iv. The gospel is the means by which Jew and Gentile are to persevere unto salvation, for in it alone is the righteousness of God revealed.
    - Rom. 1:16–17. For I am not ashamed of the *gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”
  - v. The end will come after the gospel is preached to all nations.
    - Matt. 24:14. And this *gospel* of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
- 5. Preparatory NOTE: As you read through Isaiah’s “gospel” and “Servant” texts, keep in mind the NT call for the church to pattern its living after Christ.
  - Phil. 2:5–8. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup>And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
  - 1 John 2:5–6; 3:16. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.... By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.
  - Heb. 12:1–3. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the

joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

## **B. Isaiah's Good News Texts and Servant Songs**

1. 40:9–11: Good News!
  - a. Context: Be comforted, for sin is pardoned!
    - 40:1–2. Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from Yahweh's hand double for all her sins.
  - b. Nature:
    - i. No need to fear (v. 9)
    - ii. "Behold your God" (v. 9)
    - iii. God comes in strength and is ruling (v. 10)
    - iv. His reward is with him (v. 10; cf. 62:11; Rev. 22:12)?
    - v. God cares for his flock, protecting and leading (v. 11)
2. 42:1–9 (Song 1: biographical): The Servant's Ministry (cf. Matt. 12:15–21)
  - a. The servant is especially chosen and beloved of God and empowered by him (v. 1)
  - b. The servant is empowered by God's Spirit for absolute, global rule (v. 1)
  - c. The servant is meek in character but firm in faith (vv. 2–4)
  - d. The servant will provide oversight through his "law/instruction" (v. 4).
  - e. With God's help, the servant will bring justice to the entire world and provide a covenant for the people, a light to the nations, and mercy to the oppressed (vv. 5–7).
  - f. The servant is about glorifying God (vv. 8–9).
3. 49:1–7 (Song 2: autobiographical): The Servant's Mission
  - a. God predetermined the servant's mission and destiny and gave him a special name (vv. 1–2; see 7:14)
  - b. The servant's mission involves proclamation that is piercing but must be heeded (vv. 1–2)
  - c. The servant's mission is difficult, but God will vindicate him and be glorified through him (vv. 3–4).
  - d. The servant's mission involves bringing "Israel" and Judah back to God (v. 5).
  - e. God honors and strengthens his servant (v. 5).
  - f. The servant's will provide light for the nations, which means their salvation (v. 7; see 9:1–7; 42:6).
4. 50:4–11 (Song 3: autobiographical): The Servant's Obedient Suffering
  - a. The servant is learned, having been taught by God, and through his ministry of the Word, he will sustain others (v. 4)
  - b. The servant is tenacious in obedience, even through harsh persecution (vv. 5–7)
  - c. Gods will help the servant, who will hope in God's deliverance (vv. 7–9)
  - d. The servant is guiltless & no accusers will be able to stand against him (v. 9).
  - e. Through his entire ministry, the servant views God as his "master/lord/sovereign" (vv. 5, 7, 9).

- f. Those who fear Yahweh must heed the voice of Servant; those who stand against him will experience torment (vv. 10–11).
- 5. 52:7–10: Good News! (cf. Rom. 10:15)
  - a. Peace *with God* is possible (v. 7)
  - b. Happiness, joy, and celebration at Yahweh's return (vv. 7, 8, 9)
  - c. Salvation (vv. 7, 10)
  - d. "Your God reigns" (v. 7)
  - e. Comfort has come for those in waste places (v. 9)
  - f. God has redeemed Jerusalem (v. 9)
  - g. Yahweh has worked mightily before the eyes of the nations (v. 10)
- 6. 52:13–53:12 (Song 4: biographical): The Servant's Substitutionary Atonement
  - a. The exaltation and triumph of the servant is certain (52:13; 53:11–12).
  - b. The mystery of the servant: poor appearance (52:14) yet global awe (v. 15).
  - c. The servant is despised and rejected by all (53:1–3).
  - d. The purpose of the servant's rejection and suffering is vicarious: he is divinely smitten for our sin and to win us peace (53:4–6); Yahweh caused our sin to fall on him.
  - e. The servant's suffering is divinely imposed, but the positive results are guaranteed; Yahweh was pleased to crush him and to make him prosper for the justification of many and his own ultimate exaltation (53:7–10).
  - f. Many are accounted righteous through the Righteous One, the servant, who bears the iniquities of many and makes intercession for them (53:11–12).
- 7. 61:1–3: Good News!
  - a. *The Messenger's Preparation.* The Spirit of Yahweh has anointed this messenger to proclaim good news to the "poor" (i.e., afflicted in any way, even over sin, Ps. 25:16–21) (v. 1)
    - i. John Oswalt (*The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, 565): "Who are the poor? Those who are so broken by life that they have no more heart to try; those who are so bound up in their various addictions that liberty and release are a cruel mirage; those who think that they will never again experience the favor of the Lord, or see his just vengeance meted out against those who have misused them; those who think that their lives hold nothing more than ashes, sackcloth, and the fainting heaviness of despair. These are they to whom the Servant/Messiah shouts 'Good news!'"
    - ii. Jesus came to announce good news not to those comfortable and in control but to those in trouble.
      - Matt. 9:12–13. But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Cf. Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31–32.)
  - b. *The Messenger's Task.* This proclamation is now viewed as a commissioning to six tasks:
    - i. To bind up the broken-hearted—i.e. broken over sin (v. 1)
      - Isa. 1:4–6. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken Yahweh, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged. <sup>5</sup>Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole

heart faint. <sup>6</sup>From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and raw wounds; they are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil.

- Isa. 57:15. For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.
- ii. To proclaim liberty to captives (v. 1)
- iii. To proclaim the year of Yahweh’s favor & the day of God’s vengeance (v. 2)
- iv. To comfort all who mourn, specifically over sin (v. 2)
  - Isa. 40:1–2. Comfort, comfort my peoples, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from Yahweh’s hand double for all her sins.
  - Isa. 49:13. Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For Yahweh has comforted his people and will have compassion on his afflicted.
- v. To grant to those who mourn in Zion (v. 3)
- vi. To replace their brokenness with joy (v. 3)
- c. *The Result of the Messenger’s Work*. “...that they may be called *oaks of righteousness*, the planting of Yahweh, that he may be glorified” (v. 3)
  - i. We become what we worship. In contrast to the life of idolatry and self-exaltation, which results in withering and death, humility before God results in life and strength.
    - Isa. 1:29–31. For they shall be ashamed of the oaks that you desired; and you shall blush for the gardens that you have chosen. <sup>30</sup>*For you shall be like an oak whose leaf withers, and like a garden without water.* <sup>31</sup>And the strong shall become tinder, and his work a spark, and both of them shall burn together, with none to quench them.
    - Isa. 57:4–5. Whom are you mocking? Against whom do you open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue? Are you not children of transgression, the offspring of deceit, <sup>5</sup>*you who burn with lust among the oaks*, under every green tree, who slaughter your children in the valleys, under the clefts of the rocks?
    - Ps. 1:1–3. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; <sup>2</sup>but his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and on his law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup>He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are no so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
  - ii. The righteousness is what was secured for us through the substitutionary death of the Servant, the Righteous Branch.
    - Isa. 53:11. By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous.
    - Rom. 1:16–17. For I am not ashamed of *the gospel*, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup>For in it the *righteousness of God* is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”
- 8. Conclusions:
  - a. The Gospel is primarily about God’s reign through his Messiah that is exerted on behalf of all who trust in him; the treasure of the good news is God in Christ, and the salvation, peace, comfort, and joy is only experienced in relation to him.

- b. Jesus is Israel, Isaiah's "Servant"
  - i. The One Representing the Many
    - (1) Evidence from Isaiah:
      - (a) Isaiah's "servant" the nation must be distinguished from his "servant" the Messiah, who represents the people:
        - (i) A nation, the singular servant is portrayed with spiritual blindness and disobedience (41:8; 42:16, 18–19; 43:8); as a person, the servant is guiltless and without sin (50:9; 53:9)
        - (ii) The Servant *Israel* (the man) (49:3) will restore *Israel* (the nation) (49:5) and the nations (49:6), empowering them to be *servants* (54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65:23).
      - (b) Both Isaiah's kingly Messiah and the Servant:
        - (i) Will bring justice to the nations (9:7; 42:1–4).
        - (ii) Will grow up as a tender shoot (11:1; 53:2), with stress made that the Messiah will particularly come from the stump of Jesse.
        - (iii) Will have the blessing of God's Spirit (11:2; 42:1).
        - (iv) Will function as a great light (9:2; 42:6; 49:6) that will bring joy to all mankind throughout the world (9:3; 42:10–13; 49:13).
      - (c) The singular "servant" (20x) in Isa 40–53 expands to plural (11x) in Isa 54–66 directly after the penal substitution text! Both restored Israelites (63:17) and Gentiles (56:6) will become God's *servants*, joined together as his offspring (54:17; 65:13 with 23).
    - (2) Corporate solidarity was established in Israel through kingship, where the one represented the many.
      - (a) Israel as God's son; God as Israel's father
        - Exod. 4:22–23. Then you shall say to Pharaoh, "Thus says Yahweh, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me.'"
        - Deut. 32:6. Do you thus repay Yahweh, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you?
      - (b) The king as God's son
        - 2 Sam. 7:12–15. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup>*I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.* When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, <sup>15</sup>but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you.
        - Ps. 2:7–8. I will tell of the decree: Yahweh said to me, "*You are my Son*"; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession."

- (3) “Servant” as representative is an echo of “David, my servant” (Isa 37:35; cf. 2 Sam. 7:5, 8, 20–21, 25–29), which becomes shorthand for the Messiah.
  - Jer. 33:25–26. If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and *David my servant* and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them.”
  - Ezek. 34:23–24. And I will set up over them one shepherd, *my servant David*, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, Yahweh, will be their God, and *my servant David* shall be prince among them.
  - Ezek. 37:25. They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children’s children shall dwell there forever, and *David my servant* shall be their prince forever.
  - Cf. Pss. 78:70; 89:3, 20; 132:10, 11; 144:10; Luke 1:69
- ii. Later Old Testament and Extra-biblical Perspectives:
  - (1) Zechariah brings together Isaiah’s messianic “branch” and “servant” language with the concept of atonement.
    - Zech. 3:8–9. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring *my servant the Branch*.... And I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.
  - (2) There is evidence in the DSS that speaks of the wounding and death of the “Branch of David” (R. Eisenmann & M. Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, 1992).
- iii. NT Fulfillment:
  - (1) Simeon views baby Jesus as the fulfillment of the hopes of Isaiah’s Servant Songs (Luke 2:32; cf. Isa 42:6; 49:6; 52:10).
    - Luke 2:30–32. My eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.
    - Isa. 42:6. I am Yahweh; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations.
    - Isa. 49:6. It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.
    - Isa. 52:10. Yahweh has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.
  - (2) Jesus’ opens his ministry with the “Good News” text of Isa 61:1–4, declaring the inauguration of “the year of Yahweh’s favor” (Luke 4:17–21). Question: Is there any theological significance related to where Jesus ended his quotation of Isaiah 61?
    - Luke 4:17–21. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”<sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll



and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. <sup>21</sup>And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

- Isa. 61:1–4. The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; <sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of Yahweh’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup>to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, that he may be glorified. <sup>4</sup>They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

### (3) Matthew saw Jesus as Isaiah’s Servant

- Matt. 12:15–21. Jesus ... withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all and ordered them not to make him known. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”
- Isa. 42:1–3. Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

### (4) Matthew connected Jesus to Isaiah’s the “light” to the nations texts (Isa. 9:1–2 in Matt. 4:15–16).

- Matt. 4:12–16. Now when [Jesus] heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. <sup>13</sup>And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: <sup>15</sup>“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—<sup>16</sup>the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”
- Isa. 9:1–2. But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. <sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

### (5) Peter explicitly calls Jesus God’s servant, called “to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness” (Acts 3:26).

- Acts 3:24–26. And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be

blessed.” God, *having raised up his servant*, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”

(6) Philip interprets Isaiah 53 messianically to the Ethiopian Eunuch.

- Acts 8:27–35. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch.... He had come to Jerusalem to worship<sup>28</sup> and ... was reading the prophet Isaiah.<sup>29</sup> And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.”<sup>30</sup> So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”<sup>31</sup> And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.<sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth.<sup>33</sup> In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”<sup>34</sup> And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?”<sup>35</sup> Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him *the good news about Jesus*.

(7) Peter saw Jesus as the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53:

- 1 Pet. 2:21–25. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, *neither was deceit found in his mouth*. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. *He himself bore our sins* in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. *By his wounds you have been healed*. For you were *straying like sheep*, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
- Isa. 53:4–9. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.<sup>5</sup> But *he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities*; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with *his stripes we are healed*.<sup>6</sup> *All we like sheep have gone astray*; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and Yahweh has laid on him the iniquity of us all.<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.<sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?<sup>9</sup> And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was *no deceit in his mouth*.

c. The Church in Messiah Jesus is Israel, Isaiah’s “Servant”

i. Paul believed Jesus commissioned him to carry on the mission of Isaiah’s Servant.

- Acts 26:15–18, 22–23. And the Lord said, “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.<sup>16</sup> But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as *a servant* and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you,<sup>17</sup> delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you<sup>18</sup> to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”<sup>22</sup> To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass:<sup>23</sup> that the Christ must

suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

- Isa. 42:6–7. I am Yahweh; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

NOTE: Acts opens by declaring the Gospel of Luke only contained “all that Jesus *began* to do and teach” (Acts 1:1), suggesting that the rest of Acts contains what Jesus, through his Spirit, continues to do and to teach through his Church (cf. Acts 1:8; 16:7).

- ii. Paul’s missional focus away from the Jews to the Gentiles was viewed as a fulfillment of Isaiah’s Servant’s mission to the nations.
  - Acts 13:45–48. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. <sup>46</sup>And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.” <sup>47</sup>For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, “I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.” <sup>48</sup>And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.
  - Isa. 49:6. It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.
  - Cf. Isa. 42:6; 45:22
- iii. Paul saw the mission of the entire Church to be a fulfillment of the good news proclamation that Isaiah anticipated
  - Rom. 10:13–17. For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” <sup>14</sup>How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup>And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of *those* who preach the good news!” <sup>16</sup>But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” <sup>17</sup>So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
  - Isa. 52:7. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of *him* who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes.

**C. Isaiah’s Vision of the Inclusion of a Remnant from the Nations** (Isa. 2:2–5; 9:1[?]; 11:10, 12, 14[?]; 14:1–2; 16:3–5; 18:7; 19:16–25; 45:14, 20–23; 49:6, 22–23; 51:4–5; 52:15; 54:3[?]; 55:5; 56:1–8; 60:3, 4–7, 8–16; 61:5–9; 66:12, 18–23)

## VIII. Isaiah and the Future

### A. 5 Key Texts, Progressively Portraying the Future Zion (Isa 2:1–4; 4:2–6; 11:1–10; 25:6–12; 65:17–25)

1. Isa 2:1–4. The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, <sup>3</sup> and many peoples shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords

into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

a. 2:1 – “latter days”

i. The days of the royal deliverer

- Gen 49:1, 8, 10. The Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in the latter days. . . .<sup>8</sup> Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons shall bow down before you. . . .<sup>10</sup> The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
- Num 24:14, 17, 19. Come, I will let you know what this people will do to your people in the latter days. . . .<sup>17</sup> I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. . . .<sup>19</sup> And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!

ii. The days of when Israel experiences the curse of exile.

- Deut 31:29. For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded. And in the latter days evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.

iii. The days of the restoration after exile

- Deut 4:30–31. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to Yahweh your God and obey his voice.<sup>31</sup> For Yahweh your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.
- Hos 3:5. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek Yahweh their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to Yahweh and to his goodness in the latter days.

iv. The present days of the Spirit’s power

- Acts 2:16–17. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:<sup>17</sup> “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

v. The present days since Jesus’ first coming

- Heb 1:1. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.

b. 2:2 – “the mountain of the house of Yahweh”

i. Echoes of the garden of Eden

- Gen 2:10. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers . . . the Pishon . . . the Gihon . . . the Tigris . . . the Euphrates.

ii. Echoes of the Promised Land

- Exod 15:17. You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O Yahweh, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

iii. Anticipations already being fulfilled today

- Heb 12:22. You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering.

iv. Anticipations that will be fulfilled completely at the consummation

- Rev 21:2. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

c. 2:2–3 – “that he may teach us his ways . . . the law”

- Isa 51:4. Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will

- go out from me, and I will set justice for a light to the peoples.
    - Isa 42:4. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.
    - Matt 28:19–20. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded.
- 2. Isa. 4:2–6. In that day the branch of Yahweh shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel. <sup>3</sup> And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, <sup>4</sup> when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning. <sup>5</sup> Then Yahweh will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy. <sup>6</sup> There will be a booth for shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.
  - a. 4:2 – “the branch of Yahweh” (cf. 6:13; 11:1; 53:2)
  - b. 4:5 – “over all the glory there will be a canopy”
    - Jer 3:16–17. And when you have multiplied land and increased the land, in those days, . . . they shall no more say, “The ark of the covenant of the LORD.” It shall not come to mind or be remembered. . . . <sup>17</sup> At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart.
    - Zech 2:4–5. Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and livestock in it. <sup>5</sup> And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory in her midst.
    - Rev 21:22–24. And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.
- 3. Isa. 11:1–10. There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. <sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh. <sup>3</sup> And his delight shall be in the fear of Yahweh. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. <sup>6</sup> The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. <sup>9</sup> They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup> In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.
  - a. 11:2 – “the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him”
    - Isa 61:1–2. The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn. (Cf. Luke 4:18–19.)
  - b. 11:9 – “they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”
  - c. 11:10 – “the nations shall inquire”
  - d. 11:11 – “to recover the remnant that remains of his people”

4. Isa. 25:6–12. On this mountain Yahweh of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. <sup>7</sup> And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. <sup>8</sup> He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for Yahweh has spoken. <sup>9</sup> It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is Yahweh; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” <sup>10</sup> For the hand of Yahweh will rest on this mountain, and Moab shall be trampled down in his place, as straw is trampled down in a dunghill. <sup>11</sup> And he will spread out his hands in the midst of it as a swimmer spreads his hands out to swim, but Yahweh will lay low his pompous pride together with the skill of his hands. <sup>12</sup> And the high fortifications of his walls he will bring down, lay low, and cast to the ground, to the dust.
  - a. 25:6, 7, 10 – “On this mountain” (cf. Isa 2:2–3; 11:9; 27:13; 30:29; 57:13; 65:25)
  - b. 25:8 – “He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces.”
    - Rev 21:4. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.
5. Isa. 65:17–25. “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. <sup>18</sup> But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. <sup>19</sup> I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. <sup>20</sup> No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. <sup>21</sup> They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. <sup>22</sup> They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. <sup>23</sup> They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of Yahweh, and their descendants with them. <sup>24</sup> Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. <sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,” says Yahweh.
  - a. 65:17 – “I create new heavens and a new earth”
    - Rev 21:1. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.
    - 2 Cor 5:17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
    - Gal 6:15. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.
  - b. 65:25 – “my holy mountain” (cf. note on 25:6, 7, 10 above)

## B. Figures of speech and the future

1. The age of the messiah and the ingathering of the nations: no fear, for the lion is a vegetarian
  - Isa 11:1, 6–9. There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse. . . . <sup>6</sup> The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. <sup>9</sup> They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.
2. The age of the return to Zion: no fear, for the lion is not present
  - Isa 35:8–10. And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the

unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. <sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

3. The new creation: no fear, for the lion is a vegetarian

- Isa 65:17, 25. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. . . . <sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain.

**C. Synthesis:**

1. Isaiah's sees that in the latter days the centrality and importance of the new Jerusalem rise in the eyes of the world.
2. There God's law will go forth through the instrument of his messianic servant, who will establish both justice and peace.
3. There God's glory will both permeate and protect, and the boundaries of the city will expand to hold all the redeemed from the world.
4. To there the nations will gather as the culmination of a second exodus and new creation.
5. At that time, death and pain will be destroyed, and a new heavens and earth will be enjoyed by the preserved ones of the earth who have sought refuge in Yahweh and the Davidic king.
6. This messianic age of hope, where the curse is abolished is *already* and *not yet*.
  - a. It has truly been inaugurated already in the first coming of Christ; we are a new creation and are living in the last days and have already come "to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Our lives are already hidden with Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God (Col 3:1, 3). The Great Commission is seeing the ingathering of the nations to the heavenly Jerusalem, and the law of God has gone forth through his Servant, Jesus Christ.
  - b. But while the new creation is inaugurated, it has not yet been consummated. While death and the curse have been conquered, we await to see their complete eradication. While hope today exists through tears and pain, we look ahead to the day when tears and pain and all curse will be no more. We long for the day when we, with John, "will see the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev 21:2).

**IX. The Glory of God in Isaiah: A Sampling**

- Isa. 24:15–16. Therefore in the east *give glory* to Yahweh; in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. <sup>16</sup> From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise, of glory to the Righteous One.
- Isa 40:5. And *the glory of Yahweh* shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.
- Isa. 42:8, 12. I am Yahweh; that is my name; *my glory* I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.... Let them give *glory* to Yahweh, and declare his praise in the coastlands.
- Isa. 43:5–7. The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day. <sup>6</sup> I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, <sup>7</sup> everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for *my glory*, whom I formed and made."

- Isa. 44:23. Sing, O heavens, for Yahweh has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For Yahweh has redeemed Jacob, and will *be glorified* in Israel.
- Isa. 48:9, 11. For my name's sake I defer my anger, for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. <sup>11</sup>For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? *My glory* I will not give to another.
- Isa. 49:3. And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom *I will be glorified*."
- Isa. 61:1, 3. The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the poor ... that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, *that he may be glorified*.
- Isa. 66:18–19. For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see *my glory*, and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen *my glory*. And they shall declare *my glory* among the nations.

## X. Guided Reading for Isaiah:

### A. Points of Focus:

1. Key chapters: Isa. 6, 7, 9, 11, 36–37, 40, 44, 52:13–53:12, 65–66
2. Key persons: Ahaz, Cyrus, David, Hezekiah, Holy One of Israel, Immanuel, Isaiah son Amoz, Jesse, Rabshakeh, Sennacherib, the Servant

### B. Questions:

1. Isaiah was a contemporary of which other prophets? Under which Judean king did Isaiah have his greatest influence? Which world power confronted Judah during Isaiah's life and ministry?
2. Read the story in Isaiah 36–37 in order to better discern the role of the messenger of a king (whether of an ambassador of an earthly king or a prophet of God). What was the name of the foreign king that tormented Jerusalem during the time of Isaiah? What was the name of his messenger sent to the king of Judah? In the king of Judah's prayer to God for deliverance, what does he state will be the ultimate outcome of God's acting on his people's behalf? On what basis does Yahweh declare he will fight against the foreign oppressor?
3. Isaiah is made up of two parts. What are the titles given to these "books," and what chapters are associated with each?
4. What is the term given to the awful judgment that will be unleashed at the end of the age upon Israel and all the nations that defy God?
5. In Isaiah 6, Yahweh asked, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah answered, "Here am I. Send me!" The prophet's mission is then described. Was his mission one of hope or judgment? What was Isaiah being asked to do?
6. The biblical term "gospel" or "good news" finds its theological basis in the book of Isaiah. Read Isaiah 40:9–11; 52:7–10; 61:1–3 and list all the things that Isaiah regarded as the "good news." Now read Paul's quotation of Isaiah 52:7 in Romans 10:15. What does he change in the quotation, and why is this change significant?
7. How does Isaiah characterize the "new Messianic age," and what title does Isaiah apply to both the coming Messianic King and to Israel as a nation? Now read Isaiah 7, 9, and 11 and make two lists: the first including all you learn about the royal child of hope and the second detailing what you learn about the age of restoration.



8. Summarize in one sentence the main points of each of the following passages: Isaiah 40, 44, and 52:13–53:12.
9. Write down all you learn about the new heavens and new earth in Isaiah 65:17 and 66:18–24. What special role will some of the “nations” play at this time? How does Isaiah’s depiction of the new heavens and new earth compare or contrast to John’s description in Revelation 21:1–8?
10. “Have you not known? Have you not heard? Yahweh is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for Yahweh shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” In what chapter are these words found?
11. “The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of Yahweh’s favor; and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.” In what chapter are these words found?
12. ESSAY: Isaiah 7:14 – “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Matthew declared this prophecy to be fulfilled through the incarnation of God in Jesus (Matt. 1:23; cf. Luke 1:31–34). How are we to understand this use of the Old Testament, especially in light of the numerous textual clues in Isaiah 7–8 that appear to suggest the prophet anticipated at least initial fulfillment *in his lifetime*? Make a list of these textual clues and provide reflective comment on what Matthew is doing.