

Isaiah: A Vision of the Messiah

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*And here presented is vnto thy sight
The Roiall Prophet ESALIAS Euangel:
For so me thinkes I may it terme aright,
That Prince of holy Prophets doth so well,
So liuely Christs whole historie presage,
As if h' had liu'd in that same very Age.*
- Francis Hering

Introduction:

- I. What a challenging subject!
 - A. Yet what a treasure-trove of material.
 - B. Sixty years of preaching to savor and digest.
- II. Consider briefly Isaiah's times:
 - A. The kings of Judah (and Israel) were less than ideal.
 - B. The international situation was precarious and without peace.
 - C. The spiritual condition of the people was poor.
- III. Isaiah's role is to rebuke, remind, and reveal.
 - A. The sinfulness of the people must be rebuked.
 - B. Isaiah reminds them of Jehovah's holiness.
 - C. The prophet also reveals the coming Messiah, setting before the people the glory that is to come.
- IV. Previous prophets had revealed much about the Messiah. Isaiah enlarges and clarifies the picture.
- V. I want us to see what Isaiah saw, and to hear what his audience heard.
 - A. My approach will be to focus on passages in Isaiah that are plainly Messianic.
 1. Messianic truth can be found in virtually every chapter (1:18; 1:26).
 2. We will bypass passages that are vague or uncertain.
 - B. What was Isaiah's vision of the Messiah and the coming age?

Body:

- I. **EXALTED ZION (2:1-4).**
 - A. Mount Zion and the house of the LORD will one day be exalted above all.
 - B. The law and justice of God will sound forth from Zion to all nations.
 - C. God's rule will encompass all nations and peoples.
 - D. Peace and harmony will characterize their relationship under God.
- II. **THE BRANCH OF JEHOVAH (4:2-6).**
 - A. After the devastation of Judah and Jerusalem (3:1-4:1), from the broken stump a Branch will appear.

1. Isaiah appears to be the first to use the term “Branch” for the Messiah (although a related word is used in 2 Sam. 23:5 and Psalm 132:17).
 2. The reference is to the Davidic royal lineage.
 3. The suggestion is that he is also the Son (branch) of Jehovah.
- B. The surviving remnant are the “holy” ones.
- C. They will be guided by God (the fiery pillar) as in the Wilderness of Sinai (Num. 9:17-18), hence, this will be a new beginning for the nation of Israel.
- D. The holy remnant will be sheltered and protected by God as the Hebrews were by the Shekinah (Ex. 14:19-20).
- III. IMMANUEL (7:14).**
- A. The virgin will bear a son.
- B. A dramatic contrast is presented: the weakest of humanity (a newborn baby) is the mighty God with us (Immanuel). In our weakness, the power of God will appear and operate.
- C. Therefore, Jehovah is the One to be feared (8:12-14).
- IV. THE PRINCE OF PEACE (9:1-7).**
- A. Coming out of the gloom and darkness of Assyria-ravaged Israel a light breaks on the horizon! Gloom is turned to joy! Warfare is finally done!
- B. Warfare is done because (“for”) a child will be born to us. His name:
1. “Wonderful Counselor;” He possesses supernatural wisdom.
 2. “Mighty God;” a divine son, He expresses the power of God.
 3. “Eternal Father;” He is unendingly a “father” to us (cf. 22:21).
 4. “The Prince of Peace;” His will be a rule of peace and prosperity.
- C. He rules endlessly, prosperously, fulfilling the promise of David, in justice and righteousness.
- D. How is this possible? The zeal of the LORD Sabaoth will accomplish this!
- E. Such a crescendo of light, glory, and peace leaves the listener breathlessly glorying in God!
- V. THE SHOOT FROM JESSE (11:1-10).**
- A. The perfect Davidic king will come.
- B. Endowed with God’s Spirit, His judgment (law, decisions) is perfect.
- C. By His teachings (the knowledge He imparts) universal peace will prevail.
- D. The nations (Gentiles, Rom. 15:12) are drawn to Him.
- VI. THE FOUNDATION STONE (28:16).**
- A. The assembly of God’s faithful remnant will be built on this firm foundation -- the Messiah.
1. This is in contrast to their imagined refuge in “falsehood” (idols).
 2. God’s “stone” is tried, precious, and firmly set.
- B. Those who have faith in Him will not be shaken.

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- VII. **A TIME OF HEALING, JOY, AND HOLINESS (35:1-10).**
- A. The spiritual desert of Judea will blossom profusely.
 - B. The blind, deaf, lame, and mute will be healed (Jn. 7:31; Lk. 7:22).
 - C. There will be a “Highway of Holiness.”
 - D. The ransomed will have everlasting joy!
- VIII. **A PROCLAMATION IN THE WILDERNESS (40:1-11).**
- A. A voice will call out, Prepare the way for the LORD.
 - B. The glory of the LORD will be revealed (6:1-3; Jn. 12:41; 17:1ff).
 - C. Good news will be proclaimed: Here is your God, the Good Shepherd!
- IX. **THE SERVANT OF JUSTICE (42:1-9).** [First Servant Song]
- A. God’s Servant is endowed with His Spirit.
 - B. He will (with gentleness) bring forth justice on the earth, His law to the nations.
 - C. He will be a covenant to the people, a light to the Gentiles.
 - D. He brings liberty and justice to God’s people.
- X. **THE SERVANT, “ISRAEL,” (49:1-13).** [Second Servant Song]
- A. From the womb the LORD has called His Servant, “Israel.”
 - 1. He is all that Israel should have been and more.
 - 2. He calls Israel back to the LORD.
 - B. The Servant is a light to the nations.
 - C. Mixed in with the prophecy are suggestions of apparent failure.
 - D. In the day of the LORD’s salvation, He will comfort His people.
- XI. **THE DISCIPLE-SERVANT (50:4-9).** [Third Servant Song]
- A. The Servant is God’s Disciple:
 - 1. He listens as a disciple.
 - 2. He teaches as a disciple.
 - 3. He obeys as a disciple.
 - B. The Servant suffers beatings and humiliation, but is not ashamed.
 - C. God vindicates His Servant (resurrection?).
- XII. **THE GOOD NEWS OF SALVATION (52:7-12).**
- A. A messenger (Rom. 10:15, plural) brings good news of salvation to Zion!
 - B. The universal response is joy!
 - C. Zion will be restored.
 - D. A new Exodus is proclaimed, “Depart” from the land of bondage!
- XIII. **THE SUFFERING SERVANT (52:13-53:12).** [Fourth Servant Song]
- A. He prospers and is exalted -- successful even though He dies.
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- B. He is astonishing, shutting the mouths of kings.
- C. The message of the Servant's saving power (arm) is unbelievable.
- D. The Servant is humble and outwardly unimpressive.
- E. He is despised, forsaken, rejected by men.
- F. He is a man of sorrows and grief.
- G. He suffers, not for His own, but for the people's wrongdoing.
- H. He is stricken, crushed, and killed.
- I. In all of this, He is as innocent as a lamb, suffering silently.
- J. His suffering is mysteriously the will of God.
- K. Fulfilling the role of the sin-bearer, the guilt-offering, justifying the people of God.

XIV. THE RESTORATION OF ZION (54:1-17).

- A. The barren, desolate Zion is now restored by the Servant (Gal. 4:27; Heb. 12:22-23).
- B. Zion will be enlarged to hold all the children, offspring of the Servant (53:10; 54:1-3).
- C. God will redeem, reclaim His beloved Zion (54:4-8).
- D. God's new covenant will never be broken or set aside (54:9-10).
- E. Renewed Zion will be invincible (54:11-17).

XV. AN INVITATION TO SALVATION (55:1-13).

- A. All nations are invited to abandon vanity and accept what the Servant has provided.
- B. The Son of David will be a leader for all nations. He is glorified by God.
- C. All who turn to the LORD will find forgiveness.
 - 1. That may seem contrary to man's ways.
 - 2. God's word will not go forth in vain -- it will accomplish its purpose.
- D. The Messiah's salvation will bring joy and peace.

XVI. THE CONQUEROR-REDEEMER (59:16-21).

- A. Man's sinfulness leaves no option for salvation except God's own action.
- B. God dresses for battle and defeats His enemies.
- C. All nations will fear Jehovah's name and glory, from the west and the east.
- D. The Redeemer (*Goel*) will come to the penitent in Zion.

XVII. ZION OF GLORY, CITY OF LIGHT (60:1-22).

- A. Zion will have no more darkness; only bright, glorious light!
- B. The abundance and wealth of nations will be brought to Zion.
- C. The city will deserve the name, City of the LORD.
- D. Peace and righteousness will rule this city.
- E. God is Zion's light and glory.

XVIII. THE SPIRIT-ANOINTED MESSIAH (61:1-11).

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- A. The Messiah is anointed with God's Spirit (Lk. 3:22; 4:18; Ac. 10:38).
 - B. He is thus consecrated to proclaim the good news: it is the Jubilee of liberation!
 - 1. Anointing is a sign of God's choice, consecration, commission.
 - 2. Empowerment by the Spirit is commonly associated with proclaiming God's word (11:2; 59:21; Jn. 3:34; 1 Pet. 1:10-11).
 - C. The Day of the Messiah will bring both favor and vengeance.
 - D. The mourning in Zion will be replaced with joy.
 - E. Zion will be restored and rebuilt, raised above the nations (as in 2:2).
 - F. The Messiah will be clothed with salvation.
- XIX. ZION, THE BRIDE OF THE LORD (62:1-12).**
- A. Zion *will* be righteous!
 - B. Zion will be God's pride and joy: Hephzibah and Beulah!
 - C. She will be protected and will worship unmolested.
 - D. He who is the embodiment of Salvation will come to Zion (Matt. 21:5).
- XX. THE ANOINTED AVENGER (63:1-6).**
- A. A startling, blood-drenched figure appears, carrying out God's vengeance (61:2).
 - B. The redemption of God's people will also mean vengeance on His enemies (Edom).
- XXI. THE NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH (65:17-25).**
- A. The times of the Messiah will be a new spiritual reality, as though God's people were living in another world, a new heavens and a new earth.
 - B. Spiritual longevity will be the rule ... but there will be exceptions (65:20).
 - C. No enemies will threaten or plunder.
 - D. God will readily answer prayer.
 - E. All who live here will dwell in peaceful harmony.
- XXII. THE NEWLY BORN NATION (66:7-24).**
- A. Out of the birth-travail of the punishment of old Jerusalem (66:1-6) a new nation is suddenly born.
 - B. The new people of God will enjoy peace, glory, comfort, and care.
 - C. God's enemies will be finally done away with.
 - D. All nations will be gathered to God's "sign" (66:19).
 - 1. The same word is used in Ex. 10:2 and Psa. 78:43 for the miracles performed in Egypt.
 - 2. The great sign to which all nations gather is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Matt. 12:38-40; Acts 2:24ff; 17:18; 1 Cor. 15:1-4).
 - E. The nation will be priests to God.
 - F. The nation will endure, but the corpses of the enemies will be burned endlessly.
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Conclusion:

- I. For sixty years, the voice of Isaiah rang through the streets and courts of Jerusalem.
- II. Those who listened carefully to the prophet,
 - A. Would be reminded of their need for purity in serving the Holy One of Israel,
 - B. And they would have their hopes buoyed and their spirits lifted by the vision of a glorious new world and a wonderful Messiah.
- III. They could look forward to the times of everlasting joy and peace as they gloried in the “Salvation of Jehovah.”

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