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The Kingdom of Israel

Isaiah: 9; 11; 40; 50; 53; 55; 60

A year through the Bible

May 17, 2023

Pastoral Prayer:

I want you to see beautiful things. See beautiful things He has made. Beach, mountains. Pause.

I want you to walk even further into the place all beauty comes from.

I want you to see what is keeping you from this place and deal with it.

I want you to see beautiful things.

Scriptures:

Focus on: Isaiah‬

As we enter deeper into the prophets there is a central theme they speak on over and over again. I will let two schools speak for me.

“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ.”

-Pascal

“If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.”

-C.S. Lewis

Every rock thrown by a rioter at a window, every picket sign held on capitol hill, every sexually unsatisfied young adult, every disenfranchised middle-aged adult, every unhappy busy professional, everyone who misses the good times of the past and wishes their body worked better. They are all saying the same thing.

Things are not okay, and I want a better world. All humans feel it.

I believe the onset of postmodernity was seen in the arts. Listen to the lyrics by Linkin Park in the year 2000. “I tried so hard and got so far, but in the end it doesn't even matter” -Linkin Park

I was at school this last week and my professor interviewed Ismail Royer. He was a suburban Catholic kid radicalized by Islamic extremists. He spent time in prison and now works to help rescue others from radicalization. We had a long conversation. I want to give you two questions we asked him.

* Question: Why is this radicalization happening with American, suburban, middle-class kids who have “everything?”
  + Answer: The modern world is removing real meaning in life. Video games, sex of any kind, and money don’t give real purpose.
  + Answer: When we remove God, we find people unhappy with their new reality.
* Question: How do we reinsert meaning?
  + Answer: We must not only return to the Bible textually, but living like we believe it.

Let’s make this personal.

Where do you feel the effects of sin?

(Give them time to contemplate.)

Romans 8:22–23 (ESV)

For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. [[1]](#footnote-2)

Let’s go to the prophet Isaiah.

Background:

**Isaiah** (Person). Eighth-century (b[[2]](#footnote-3)c) prophet during the reigns of the Judean kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; author of the biblical Book of Isaiah (called Esaias in kj[[3]](#footnote-4)v N[[4]](#footnote-5)T)… Isaiah worked to reform social and political wrongs. Even the highest members of society did not escape his censure. Isaiah foretold the coming of the Messiah, the “peaceful prince,” and the ruler of God’s kingdom (11:1–11)… He also depicted this Messiah as a suffering, obedient servant (53:3–12). Isaiah was preeminent among the prophets for the variety and grandeur of his imagery. His imagination produced forceful, brilliant figures of speech.[[5]](#footnote-6)

Isaiah has seen how awful it becomes when humans define right and wrong on their own terms.

He has seen murder justified. Rebellion justified. Hoarding and starvation justified.

He has seen lying justified. Unlimited sexual practices justified.

Worst of all he has seen what happens when a society makes them “the good.”

This goes back to the Garden of Eden. The first lie of the enemy. “You can be like God… you can define right and wrong for yourself.”

In the wake of all this suffering he prophesies hope in a person coming to fix it.

Text:

Isaiah 9:6–7 (ESV)

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. 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 the Lord of hosts will do this. [[6]](#footnote-7)

* The Messiah is the answer. The one to come and undo all this brokenness.
* This Messiah will take on himself all the pain, suffering, selfishness, revenge, and hatred.
  + Isaiah 53:4–6 (ESV)

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. [[7]](#footnote-8)

* Because of a religious worldview we can name what we intrinsically know is off. Evil is real and it has poisoned this good world.
* Our broken world has a solution: Jesus.
  + Revelation 21:4 (ESV)

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.” [[8]](#footnote-9)

Final Thoughts:

Take a moment and answer this question.

Who am I?

CrossFit, clothes, a lot of money, sex, fame, even your health will eventually fail you.

We need a good greater than all the bad that’s in this world. Jesus is the answer. Have you put hope in Jesus?

1. [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/esv?ref=BibleESV.Ro8.22-23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. bc before Christ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. kjv The King James Version [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [“Isaiah (Person),”](https://ref.ly/logosres/bkrencbib?ref=Page.p+1046&off=3839&ctx=ld+be+saved+(6%3a13).%0a~Isaiah+foretold+the+) in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1046. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/esv?ref=BibleESV.Is9.6-7). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/esv?ref=BibleESV.Is53.4-6). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/esv?ref=BibleESV.Re21.4). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)