

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

[www.twojourneys.org](http://www.twojourneys.org)

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at [twojourneys.org](http://twojourneys.org)

## **As Far as the Eye Can See: The Glory of God to the End of Time**

**Isaiah 40-66**

“As far as the eye can see...”

Summer of 1987, short-term mission trip to Pakistan... travelled along the Karakoram Highway through the lofty Khunjerab Pass from Pakistan into China—the highest paved international highway in the world; on the return trip, I rode on the luggage rack of the minivan we were travelling in. As we passed through the Khunjerab Pass, I had an amazing view of the mountain ranges that spread out from the that lofty perch as far as the eye could see. The Pass is 15,397 feet above sea level... the highest I've ever been on earth. The air was amazingly thin up there... and the visibility that day was astounding. You could see mountain range upon mountain range until the earth curvature hid them from sight. It has occurred to me since that day that these mountains, the second-highest in the world, looked like they were literally on top of each other, but were actually separated from one another by as many as a hundred miles or more. Line upon line of snow-capped peaks, looking like they were touching, were actually far apart...

But to my eye, from that perspective, they were close together

So is the astounding prophetic eye of Isaiah the prophet

He stood at a moment in time—seven centuries before Christ was born. He listened to the eternal God whisper His words into his prophetic ear. They filled his prophetic mind with visions of God's glory and infinitely wise plan... a plan for Redemptive History that would unfold generation after generation, century after century... until the end of time. Each phase of God's unfolding redemptive plan would bring Him glory, but the real glory lay in the BIG PICTURE: the salvation of sinners from every nation, to the ends of the earth, through the atoning work of His Son, Jesus Christ

Isaiah stood there at that brief moment of time, when the Assyrian threat had been removed by God's spectacular deliverance in a single evening—185,000 Assyrian soldiers dead by the Angel of the Lord—and Isaiah looked ahead to what would come next

And he wrote line upon line in a prophetic book—a scroll that covered centuries of the future—a scant few inches from each other on the page, but covering events that would be fulfilled centuries apart:

The idolatrous rebellion of Judah under Manasseh

The invasion and conquest of Judah by Babylon

The destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple by Babylon

The exile of the small remnant of Judah to Babylon

The destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus the Great

The decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple by Cyrus

The restoration of a small remnant of Jews to the Promised Land to do the rebuilding

The coming of the Messiah—Jesus Christ

The suffering and death of Christ on the cross

The resurrection of Christ from the dead

The coming of the Holy Spirit on God's people

The understanding that Jesus is the "light for the Gentiles" and that the gospel message must be spread to the ends of the earth

The spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth—the success of the gospel among the Gentile nations

The final wrath of God poured out on the rebellious nations of the earth

The restoration of the final remnant of the Jews by faith in Christ

[Possibly] the Millennial Kingdom, in which Christ would reign on earth for 1000 years in a time of special blessing by God, including unnatural long life and flourishing agricultural wealth and blessing

The Judgment Day, when all mankind will be divided into believers and unbelievers

The place of final condemnation—Hell—where unbelievers will experience torment forever

The eternal state, with the New Heavens and New Earth, in which the believers will live in joy

ALL OF THESE EVENTS in Redemptive History can be found discussed to some degree in the 27 chapters that lay out ahead of us...

Row upon row of mountain ranges, separated by centuries—even by millennia—of time, but side by side in this small book, this prophetic scroll

All written by Isaiah the prophet about 700 years before Christ was born!

That is the AWESOME GLORY that we will see to unfold as we begin this journey in the second “half” of Isaiah—Isaiah 40-66.

***Isaiah 46:10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.***

***Isaiah 49:6 I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.***

***Isaiah 53:6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

***Isaiah 66:18 I, because of their actions and their imaginations, am about to come and gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see my glory.***

## I. Setting the Context

### A. Assyria is Gone; Babylon Next

#### 1. Assyria the Focus of Isaiah 1-39

Mentioned 40 times from Isaiah 7-Isaiah 38

#### 2. Assyria Hardly Mentioned Beyond 38

One more mention: Isaiah 52:4

#### 3. Babylon Mentioned in Both Halves... but not nearly as much

#### 4. Two clear moments:

##### a. The destruction of Assyria’s army and retreat to Nineveh

***Isaiah 37:36-37 Then the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning-- there were all the dead bodies! <sup>37</sup> So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.***

##### b. The envoys from Babylon

***Isaiah 39:6-7 The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup> And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."***

5. Isaiah 47:6 is a clear prediction of God's use of Babylon to "desecrate his inheritance"

***Isaiah 47:5-6 "Sit in silence, go into darkness, Daughter of the Babylonians; no more will you be called queen of kingdoms. <sup>6</sup> I was angry with my people and desecrated my inheritance; I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy.***

- a. God clearly predicts the fall of Babylon in Isaiah 13, then again in Isaiah 47

***Isaiah 13:19-20 Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. <sup>20</sup> She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there.***

***Isaiah 47:1 "Go down, sit in the dust, Virgin Daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, Daughter of the Babylonians.***

- b. Final mention of Babylon: Isaiah 48—the command to flee Babylon

***Isaiah 48:20 Leave Babylon, flee from the Babylonians! Announce this with shouts of joy and proclaim it. Send it out to the ends of the earth; say, "The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob."***

## B. The Eternal Eye of the Prophet

1. By the Spirit of God, Isaiah the prophet is able to see distant things that no one could ever predict!
2. He writes of events that would not come to pass for centuries
3. He writes of tiny details that boggle the mind and stagger the imagination
4. But he does all of this only by the direct communication of the Holy Spirit of God into his heart... not because of any special ability he possessed

***2 Peter 1:20-21 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.***

## C. The Idolatry of Judah, the Destruction of Jerusalem, the Exile, the Restoration and Rebuilding... All in the Future!

### 1. The Rise of Babylon

- a. When Isaiah wrote these chapters, the invasion by the Assyrians was over and Sennacherib had been turned back to his own nation

- b. At that point, Babylon was a conquered city-state in the Assyrian empire
  - c. Babylon was a small actor on the world stage... but all of that would change in the decades that followed Isaiah's prophecies
  - d. The Assyrian Empire had reached its zenith, and would gradually—over the next century or so—retreat and lose power and influence
  - e. Babylon would become mighty and would conquer the Assyrian empire and go beyond it to build the largest empire the Ancient Near East had ever seen
2. The idolatry of Judah
- a. Hezekiah was a godly king who had finally gotten rid of the high places and had turned the official religion of Judah and Jerusalem back to the living God
  - b. But his son, Manasseh, would come along and aggressively turn Judah back to Baal and Ashtoreth and Molech... he would lead Judah into wretched idolatry... worse than any king that Judah had ever seen
3. The Destruction of Judah and Jerusalem... including the temple of the Lord

***Isaiah 44:24-28 I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself, <sup>25</sup> who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense, <sup>26</sup> who carries out the words of his servants and fulfills the predictions of his messengers, who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be inhabited,' of the towns of Judah, 'They shall be built,' and of their ruins, 'I will restore them,' <sup>27</sup> who says to the watery deep, 'Be dry, and I will dry up your streams,' <sup>28</sup> who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'***

#### D. One Mountain Ridge After Another

- 1. Analogy: Lewis and Clark Expedition looking at row upon row of mountain ranges yet to cross
- 2. So Isaiah is able to see a series of events in one chapter after another which in their fulfillment will be decades if not centuries apart

#### E. Only God Knows the Future

- 1. One of the most astounding aspect of Isaiah 40-49 is God's challenging the idols (and all humanity) in this one issue: the prediction of the future

2. We will talk about this in detail, but let's just note these passages now

***Isaiah 41:22-23 "Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, <sup>23</sup> tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear.***

***Isaiah 44:7-8 Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come-- yes, let him foretell what will come. <sup>8</sup> Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one."***

***Isaiah 45:21 Declare what is to be, present it-- let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me.***

***Isaiah 46:9-10 I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. <sup>10</sup> I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.***

God alone knows the future because God alone can ordain the future! God rules heaven and earth and his purposes will always stand

AND God declares His purposes to the prophets and then upholds the predictions they make:

***Isaiah 44:26 who carries out the words of his servants and fulfills the predictions of his messengers, who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be inhabited,' of the towns of Judah, 'They shall be built,' and of their ruins, 'I will restore them,'***

3. The timeline is amazing

- a. Isaiah is writing after the Assyrian invasion of Judah has been stopped at the walls of Jerusalem... that happened in 701 BC
- b. He predicted the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians; that happened finally in 587 BC when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city
- c. He predicted the fall of Babylon to Cyrus the Great of Persia; he identified Cyrus BY NAME in Isaiah 44 and 45; Cyrus was born sometime between 600 and 580 BC—at least a century after the prediction of his name; and Babylon fell to him and his Medo-Persian armies in 538 BC, at least a century and a half after Isaiah predicted it

- d. The order for the rebuilding Jerusalem and of the temple was made by Cyrus as the scripture records in 2 Chronicles 36 and Ezra 1

F. Culmination: Finished Work of Christ and the New Heavens/New Earth

1. The GLORY OF GOD in the SALVATION of sinners is the central purpose in all of this
2. So Isaiah's prophetic eye sees into the distant future and sees the end of all things, and it is GLORIOUSLY BRIGHT
3. Isaiah 53 is the clearest prediction of the death of Christ in the Old Testament; it wouldn't be fulfilled until over 700 years after it was made!
4. Isaiah 65-66 contains the first mention of the New Heavens and New Earth, and those prophecies (obviously) haven't been fulfilled yet!!

So... let's trace out the main themes of these incredible 27 chapters of Isaiah—the second half of Isaiah's magnificent prophecy

## II. The Infinite Greatness of God

### A. Over all creation

***Isaiah 40:12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?***

### B. Over all idols and other “gods”

***Isaiah 40:18-20 To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to? <sup>19</sup> As for an idol, a craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions silver chains for it. <sup>20</sup> A man too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot. He looks for a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not topple.***

### C. Over all the nations, including their kings and mighty men

***Isaiah 40:22-24 He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. <sup>23</sup> He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. <sup>24</sup> No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.***

### D. Over time and history

***Isaiah 41:4 Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD-- with the first of them and with the last-- I am he."***

Omnipotent... absolutely immeasurable power:

***Isaiah 40:26 Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.***

Infinite also in His wisdom and knowledge:

***Isaiah 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.***

And yet... how incredibly gentle and tender-hearted God is! How great in mercy and kindness to sinners:

***Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.***

So... Isaiah pictures a God who is both terrifyingly IMMENSE in His power and knowledge, but also tenderhearted to save sinners. The display of the glory of this GREAT GOD is the centerpiece of Isaiah 40-66:

***Isaiah 40:9 You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "BEHOLD your God!"***

Nothing could be healthier and more encouraging this morning than for you to do precisely that... BEHOLD YOUR GOD!

My joy is to put Him on display by simply preaching the words of Isaiah!

### III. The Sinfulness of the Idolatrous Human Race

#### A. The wickedness of idolatry

1. This great God is a JEALOUS God... He created each of us to love Him, to cherish Him, to worship Him and delight in Him

***Isaiah 42:8 "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.***

2. Instead, the human race has run after idols:



***Romans 1:25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator-- who is forever praised. Amen.***

3. God is AT WAR with the idols throughout this section of Isaiah... idols are mentioned NINETEEN TIMES from Isaiah 40-66
4. He challenges them to a duel

***Isaiah 41:22-24 "Bring in your idols to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, <sup>23</sup> tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear. <sup>24</sup> But you are less than nothing and your works are utterly worthless; he who chooses you is detestable.***

B. He Mocks Them:

1. He says in Isaiah 40 they have to be NAILED DOWN so they won't topple over
2. In Isaiah 44, he mocks the idol-maker who uses half a piece of wood to cook his dinner and half of it to make a god which he bows down and worships:

***Isaiah 44:16-19 Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm; I see the fire." <sup>17</sup> From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, "Save me; you are my god." <sup>18</sup> ¶ They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. <sup>19</sup> No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?"***

C. The sinfulness of Judah and of All Nations

1. After Hezekiah, Manasseh would lead Judah into the worst idolatry of their history
2. Before it even happens, Isaiah's eagle eye of prophecy sees what will happen; God uses him to warn them
3. Judah will indulge in idolatry; this is the very reason why Judah will be sent into exile

***Isaiah 42:17-19 those who trust in idols, who say to images, 'You are our gods,' will be turned back in utter shame. <sup>18</sup> "Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see! <sup>19</sup>***

***Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one committed to me, blind like the servant of the LORD?***

4. But the NATIONS also are doing the same things!

5. In Isaiah 46, he exposes the idolatry of Babylon...

***Isaiah 46:1 Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low; their idols are borne by beasts of burden. The images that are carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary.***

#### IV. The Wrath of God in the Judgment of Sins

A. God is actively wrathful against human sins

1. Isaiah 40-66 portrays a God who actively intervenes in human history and uses His power to bring about His purposes
2. Among His purposes is the display of His wrath against the wickedness of human sin

B. God will judge His own people and purify them of their sins by slaying the wicked

***Isaiah 51:17-20 Rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, you who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes men stagger. <sup>18</sup> Of all the sons she bore there was none to guide her; of all the sons she reared there was none to take her by the hand. <sup>19</sup> These double calamities have come upon you-- who can comfort you?--ruin and destruction, famine and sword-- who can console you? <sup>20</sup> Your sons have fainted; they lie at the head of every street, like antelope caught in a net. They are filled with the wrath of the LORD and the rebuke of your God.***

He will destroy the Temple because of their sins:

***Isaiah 64:11 Our holy and glorious temple, where our fathers praised you, has been burned with fire, and all that we treasured lies in ruins.***

But God will restrain His wrath from completely exterminating the sons and daughters of Abraham... He will leave a remnant

Beyond the judgment of Judah and Jerusalem, however, God will extend His wrath on all nations of the earth...

C. God brings His terrifying judgments on all nations

***Isaiah 63:6 I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."***

**Isaiah 66:15-16** *See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. <sup>16</sup> For with fire and with his sword the LORD will execute judgment upon all men, and many will be those slain by the LORD.*

D. The devastation of cities, the slaughter of people

E. The culmination: the eternal torments of hell

1. The last verse in the Book of Isaiah is a picture of HELL

**Isaiah 66:24** *"And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."*

2. Jesus Himself quotes this verse and uses it to refer to Hell

**Mark 9:47-48** *And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup> where "their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."*

## V. The Atonement of Sins by the Redeemer, the Suffering Servant—Jesus Christ

A. The Initial Promise: A Full Payment for All Sins (Isaiah 40:1-2)

**Isaiah 40:1-2** *Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.*

B. The Servant of Lord: The Light for the Gentiles (Isaiah 49)

**Isaiah 49:6** *he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."*

C. The Term “Redeemer”

1. TWENTY-TWO TIMES in Isaiah 40-66 we have the term “redeem” or “redeemer”

2. The word means to buy a slave out of slavery or to ransom a captive out of captivity

3. Judah and Jerusalem will need to be REDEEMED from captivity in Babylon

***Isaiah 48:20 Leave Babylon, flee from the Babylonians! Announce this with shouts of joy and proclaim it. Send it out to the ends of the earth; say, "The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob."***

***Isaiah 52:9-10 Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.***

4. The whole world is in slavery to idolatry and to sin

5. Jesus Christ is the REDEEMER not merely for the Jews but for the whole world

***Isaiah 59:20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD.***

D. The Suffering Servant—Isaiah 52-53

1. Substitutionary Atonement

***Isaiah 53:4-6 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

2. The Glory of Resurrection

***Isaiah 53:9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.***

***Isaiah 53:11 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many***

VI. The Spread of the Word and the Call of the Gospel to the Ends of the Earth

A. The Powerful Word of God

***Isaiah 40:6-8 All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. <sup>7</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup> The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."***

***Isaiah 55:10-11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields***

*seed for the sower and bread for the eater, <sup>11</sup> so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

B. The “Ends of the Earth”: God’s saving intentions for the WHOLE EARTH

*Isaiah 42:12 Let them give glory to the LORD and proclaim his praise in the islands.*

*Isaiah 49:6 "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."*

*Isaiah 52:15 so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.*

C. The Messengers of Good Tidings

*Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"*

*Isaiah 66:19 "I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations-- to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations.*

D. The Call for Repentance and Faith

*Isaiah 45:22 "Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.*

*Isaiah 53:1 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

*Isaiah 59:20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the LORD.*

E. The Invitation to Free Grace

*Isaiah 55:1-2 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. <sup>2</sup> Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.*

*Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. <sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to*

*the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.*

## VII. God's Restoration of Israel and of the Promised Land Itself

### A. The Call of Cyrus the Great

*Isaiah 45:1-2 "This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: <sup>2</sup> I will go before you and will level the mountains*

### B. The Restoration of a Remnant of Israel

*Isaiah 43:5-7 Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. <sup>6</sup> I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth-- <sup>7</sup> everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."*

*Isaiah 45:13 I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the LORD Almighty."*

### C. The Rebuilding of Jerusalem and The Rebuilding of the Temple

*Isaiah 44:28 [The Lord] says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'*

### D. The "Flowering of the Desert"

*Isaiah 43:19-21 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. <sup>20</sup> The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, <sup>21</sup> the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.*

This is fulfilled in the giving of the Holy Spirit:

*Isaiah 44:3-4 For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. <sup>4</sup> They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.*

## VIII. God's Glory in the New Heavens and New Earth

### A. The Final Glory of Zion (Isaiah 60)

**Isaiah 60:1-7** *"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. <sup>2</sup> See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. <sup>3</sup> Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. <sup>4</sup> "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm. <sup>5</sup> Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. <sup>6</sup> Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD. <sup>7</sup> All Kedar's flocks will be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they will be accepted as offerings on my altar, and I will adorn my glorious temple.*

The glory of the perfect temple in Zion will come from all over the earth!

**Isaiah 60:13** *"The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the pine, the fir and the cypress together, to adorn the place of my sanctuary; and I will glorify the place of my feet.*

It will be a place of perfect peace and prosperity... a place illuminated by the glory of God continually:

**Isaiah 60:18-21** *No longer will violence be heard in your land, nor ruin or destruction within your borders, but you will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise. <sup>19</sup> The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. <sup>20</sup> Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end. <sup>21</sup> Then will all your people be righteous and they will possess the land forever.*

This is almost exactly like the description of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21!!

B. The "New Heavens and New Earth" (Isaiah 65)

**Isaiah 65:17-19** *"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. <sup>18</sup> But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. <sup>19</sup> I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.*

## IX. Applications

A. The centerpiece of Isaiah 40-66 is the gospel of Jesus Christ!

1. In the gospel, all these themes come together
2. The Infinite Greatness of God is on display... and should cause us to stand in awe of his holiness and power
3. The Sinfulness and Idolatry of the human race is a massive problem only in that it describes each one of us... we have all sinned and exchanged the glory of this infinite God for created things... we are selfish and lawbreakers
4. Because of this, we stand under the terrifying wrath of God, in deadly danger of eternal torment because of his righteous judgments
5. But God in his mercy sent Jesus Christ to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins... Isaiah 53 makes this so plain

***Isaiah 53:5-6 he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

6. If we trust in Christ fully, and forsake our sins calling on His name, we will be saved

***Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. <sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.***

#### B. Stand in Awe at the Miracle of Scripture: Fulfilled Prophecy!

1. God alone knows the future!!
2. Scripture alone contains accurate predictions of the future!!
3. No other religion in the world has this attribute: specific prophecies about world history that have actually been fulfilled
4. Isaiah stood at the crest of a mountain ridge and saw centuries and centuries into the future... and WROTE IT DOWN for us, so that we would trust in the God who told him all these things
5. So also we can look into the uncertain future and know that God has already figured it out in detail

#### C. Stand in Awe at the Majestic Power of God in fulfilling His plans!



***Isaiah 40:22 He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.***

1. The God of Isaiah 40 is worthy of worship for all eternity
  2. Let His infinite greatness dwarf your problems and swallow all your doubts
- D. Trust in this mighty God with the struggles of your lives

***Isaiah 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.***

1. No matter what you are facing, this awesome power of God is ready to deliver you and to strengthen you
  2. Rest in Him through all the trials you face
- E. Set your hope fully on the grace to be given you: final salvation in the New Heaven and New Earth