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Sermon Notes

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## **A Majestic Vision of Christ**

### **Panoramic Overview of Isaiah 1-66**

Some time ago, I was at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. and I saw an Imax movie in which we flew over the entire continental United States in one hour... it was a thrilled ride, to start over the Statue of Liberty in New York City's sparkling harbor... to move fast enough to cover the whole distance, but slowly enough to see amazing details. The editors seemed to know what to slow down over and what to speed up over... we saw countless farms in Pennsylvania, rolling hills leading to the coal mines of West Virginia, many sparkling rivers, and suburban centers and major cities like Cincinnati, expansive cornfields in Indiana; we crossed the mighty Mississippi River at St. Louis, and saw the Arch that dominates that skyline as the "Gateway to the West"; then we soared over the Great Plains of grasslands, wheat fields in Kansas, the breathtaking, snow-capped Rocky Mountains of Colorado, the desert of Utah and Nevada, the stunning beauty of Yosemite National Park with its awe-inspiring Half-Dome, then at last, the spectacular Pacific coastline of northern California. It was a journey of sights and sounds not easily forgotten. I want to attempt the same thing over the sprawling expanse of the Book of Isaiah... the most visionary of all the prophets.

When I was a new Christian many years ago, I listened to one of the most thrilling sermons I ever heard from John MacArthur, called "A Jet Tour through the Book of Revelation." I loved the way he gave a fascinating overview of the entire book in one hour.

If anything, the Book of Isaiah would repay even more such a handling; but I have less than one hour with you today.

There are a lot of ways I could do this, but it seems best for me to focus on how the prophecy of Isaiah foretells salvation in Christ. I could go topically in a logical and theologically organized manner, but that would result in a confusing jumping around in the book... from this chapter, then back to this one, then jump ahead to that one, then go all the way back to this... etc.

Instead, I want to go in consecutive order as the book of Isaiah has been presented to us by the Holy Spirit. My goal is to see how the book presents the amazing grace of God in Christ as the Savior of the world

***Revelation 19:10 The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."***

The central purpose of the majestic, sprawling, complex vision of the Book of Isaiah is giving testimony to Jesus

Essential to that is the ability that God alone possesses to predict the future... this sets Christianity apart from every other world religion:

God challenged the idols of Isaiah's day with this challenge:

***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 41:26-27 Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, 'He was right'? No one told of this, no one foretold it, no one heard any words from you. <sup>27</sup> I was the first to tell Zion***

***Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things, those of long ago; 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 can predict the future because he alone is sovereign over the events of human history... he decrees what will come to pass, and then makes it happen

What makes Isaiah so amazing and so challenging is how God weaves together current events from planet earth, including the rise and fall of all the nations together with his spiritual plans for sinners on the earth.

So, the coming of Christ was predicted and unfolded in great detail in the Book of Isaiah

When I first went through Isaiah in its entirety with the idea of doing this sermon, I zeroed in on 36 passages to highlight... THIRTY-SIX!!! If I keep this sermon to an ordinary length, that would mean I talk about each one of those for a little over a minute! I would barely be able to read those texts. So I had to cull it down to 15 or so.

The Sinfulness of the Human Race and God's Call to Repent:

***Isaiah 1:2-4 Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me. <sup>3</sup> The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand." <sup>4</sup> Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.***

God called a nation, Israel, to represent the entire human race. God gave them many blessings, but they refused to trust and obey God. So God had to bring judgments on them. The depravity of the entire human race is taught with great clarity throughout the book. So God calls on the people to repent and reason with him:

***Isaiah 1:16-20 wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, <sup>17</sup> learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow. <sup>18</sup> "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. <sup>19</sup> If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; <sup>20</sup> but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.***

This sets the stage for the whole book! The people CANNOT obey these commands... we cannot WASH and MAKE OURSELVES CLEAN from our sins; but Christ can! We cannot change our rebellious ways and stop doing wrong... but Christ can!!

Next: the vision of the entire world streaming to salvation in Christ:

***Isaiah 2:2-4 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. <sup>3</sup> Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.***

This is one of many verses in Isaiah speaking of how the gospel of salvation will begin in Jerusalem and spread to all nations... they will stream like a miraculous river UPHILL to Mount Zion... by faith in Christ. And they will COME and SAY "COME!"... the spiritual pilgrimage of sinners all over the world will include them inviting other sinners to join them.

Next: the Vision of the Preincarnate Christ on his throne:

***Isaiah 6:1-4 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. <sup>3</sup> And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." <sup>4</sup> At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.***

Isaiah's sense of guilt, and his atonement by Christ:

***Isaiah 6:5-7 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." <sup>6</sup> ¶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."***

Isaiah's calling to be a prophet... but that the people would not listen to him:

***Isaiah 6:8-10 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" <sup>9</sup> He said, "Go and tell this people: "'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' <sup>10</sup> Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."***

Next: the promise of the birth of a son called Immanuel:

***Isaiah 7:14 the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.***

The mystery of the Virgin birth of Christ... fully God, full human... is foreshadowed here; not just in the assertion, the Virgin will be with child, but also in the word "Immanuel" = GOD WITH US

This is heightened in this famous passage:

***Isaiah 9:1-7 in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan-- <sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. <sup>3</sup> You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. <sup>4</sup> For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. <sup>5</sup> Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.***

The prediction of a GREAT LIGHT shining in the region called “Galilee of the Gentiles” resulting in amazing joy and celebration... all of it focused on the birth of a child, a son... and the mingling of the GOD-MAN aspect of this baby in these four names: WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE... the combination of “a child born” and the phrase “mighty God” teaches clearly the incarnation of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. And the prediction of his rule on David’s throne satisfies our desire for a perfect GOVERNMENT... a righteous kingdom that will never end!!

Next: the picture of the greatness of Christ’s Kingdom:

***Isaiah 11:1-9 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. <sup>2</sup> The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD-- <sup>3</sup> and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. <sup>6</sup> The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup> They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.***

This predicts the perfect righteousness of Christ’s reign... and the removal forever of the curse from nature... animals will no longer we red in tooth and claw, ripping and shredding each other and us... there will be a perfectly peaceful earth on which he will reign

Next, Missions... the ROOT OF JESSE will stand as a banner for the assembling of the elect, both from the Jews and the Gentiles:

***Isaiah 11:10-12 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. <sup>11</sup> ¶ In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea. <sup>12</sup> He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.***

Next, a regular theme in Isaiah is the wrath and judgment of God on all the nations; Isaiah zeroes in on Babylon first, but Assyria is also in his mind:

***Isaiah 13:9-13 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming--a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger-- to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. <sup>10</sup> The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. <sup>11</sup> I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. <sup>12</sup> I will make man scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. <sup>13</sup> Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger.***

It is because of this terrifying wrath to come that we must flee to Christ!

So, we see how God controls the unfolding plan of human history:

***Isaiah 14:26-27 This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations. <sup>27</sup> For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?***

The PLAN is God's wisdom established for all nations and all people before the foundation of the world; the HAND is God's irresistible power for making that plan come to pass!

Isaiah 13-26 has oracles against all the nations that surrounded little Judah, and it shows how terrifying God's wrath will be for them all:

***Isaiah 24:1-6 Behold, the LORD is going to lay waste the earth and devastate it; he will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants-- <sup>2</sup> it will be the same for priest as for people, for master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor. <sup>3</sup> The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered. The LORD has spoken this word. <sup>4</sup> The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the exalted of the earth languish. <sup>5</sup> The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. <sup>6</sup> Therefore a curse consumes the earth; its people must bear their guilt. Therefore earth's inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left.***

God will destroy all his enemies, and the enemies of his chosen people... the last enemy to be destroyed is DEATH ITSELF... and that is clearly predicted:

***Isaiah 25:6-9 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines. <sup>7</sup> On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; <sup>8</sup> he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. <sup>9</sup> ¶ In that day***

***they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."***

By simple FAITH in the Lord are his people rescued from the SHROUD of death... Jesus' resurrection is our great hope that someday, death itself will die... So:

***Isaiah 26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.***

One theme we see again and again in Isaiah is how often the Jewish people resorted to religious machinery, and how repulsive that is to God:

***Isaiah 29:13 The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.***

This is GREAT DANGER for us as church-going Christians as well... that we are hypocrites, running a religious machine and having no genuine heart after Christ. Instead, God tells us what true salvation is:

***Isaiah 30:15 This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.***

By repentance and rest in Christ are we saved... not by our religious works... but just like the Jews of Isaiah's day, so many people want nothing to do with it.

Of all the predictions of wrath on the nations, perhaps none is more terrifying than this:

***Isaiah 34:1-10 Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! <sup>2</sup> The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their armies. He will totally destroy them, he will give them over to slaughter. <sup>3</sup> Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the mountains will be soaked with their blood. <sup>4</sup> All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree. <sup>5</sup> My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends in judgment on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed. <sup>6</sup> The sword of the LORD is bathed in blood, it is covered with fat-- the blood of lambs and goats, fat from the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in Edom. <sup>7</sup> And the wild oxen will fall with them, the bull calves and the great bulls. Their land will be drenched with blood, and the dust will be soaked with fat. <sup>8</sup> For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution, to uphold Zion's cause. <sup>9</sup> Edom's streams will be turned into pitch, her dust into burning sulfur; her land will become blazing pitch! <sup>10</sup> It will not be quenched night and day; its smoke will rise forever.***

God is fully able to carry out this wrath... as proven by what the angel of the Lord, the preincarnate Christ did to the Assyrian army that threatened his remnant of Jews in Jerusalem:

***Isaiah 37:36 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!***

Isaiah 40 is, along with Isaiah 53, the greatest chapter in the Book of Isaiah...

It speaks of the comfort God wants Isaiah to speak to the Jews:

***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.***

It speaks of the coming messenger of the Lord, who would be John the Baptist:

***Isaiah 40:3-5 A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. <sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."***

It speaks of the transient nature of all humanity, and the enduring nature of the Word of the Lord:

***Isaiah 40:6-8 A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "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."***

It speaks of the proclamation of the glory of the Lord... both infinitely majestic and amazingly meek and tender:

***Isaiah 40:9-11 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, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. <sup>11</sup> 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.***

It speaks of the power of God over all nations:



**Isaiah 40:12-15** *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? <sup>13</sup> Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? <sup>14</sup> Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding? <sup>15</sup> Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.*

**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.*

This is the immense, infinitely powerful, omniscient God who has come to earth in the person of Jesus Christ! He is the only Savior of the world...

Then comes the marvelous Suffering Servant passages:

**Isaiah 42:1-4** *"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. <sup>3</sup> A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; <sup>4</sup> he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope."*

Jesus' Kingdom will advance, not by military conquest, but by gentle, tender-hearted healing of sick sinners!!

This Servant of the Lord will be Savior, not merely of Israel, but also of all nations:

**Isaiah 49:5-6** *And now the LORD says-- he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength-- <sup>6</sup> 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."*

Jesus is the LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES... not merely the Savior of the Jewish nation, but of God's chosen people scattered among all the nations of the earth!

But the price tag for Christ would be infinite:

**Isaiah 50:4-10** *The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my*

*ear to listen like one being taught. <sup>5</sup> The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back. <sup>6</sup> I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. <sup>7</sup> Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. <sup>8</sup> He who vindicates me is near. Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other! Who is my accuser? Let him confront me! <sup>9</sup> It is the Sovereign LORD who helps me. Who is he that will condemn me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up. <sup>10</sup> Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.*

Jesus would speak words of counsel to anyone who would listen... words that the Father himself taught him morning by morning... but many enemies would rise up and attack Jesus, spit on him, pluck out his beard, seek to put him to shame... accuse him of sin... God would vindicate him in the end

Now, the single greatest chapter in the Old Testament... really starts in Isaiah 52:13

*Isaiah 52:13-15 Behold, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. <sup>14</sup> Just as there were many who were appalled at him--his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness-- <sup>15</sup> 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.*

This is the Savior of the world... whose APPEARANCE would be disfigured to the point he would be barely recognizable as a human being... but whose BLOOD would SPRINKLE many nations!

Then Isaiah 53 teaches plainly the lessons of **SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT**:

*Isaiah 53:1-6 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup> He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. <sup>4</sup> 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.*

This is the clear prediction of the Cross of Jesus Christ... how the transfer of guilt from sinners like you and me is affected by faith, and how we are forgiven and healed by his bloody death:

***Isaiah 53:7-12 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup> 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, and he will bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.***

This is the centerpiece of the gospel of Jesus Christ... and all that must happen is that we hear God call to us and accept this free gift... so Isaiah 55 gives this majestic invitation:

***Isaiah 55:1-3 "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. <sup>3</sup> Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live.***

God also tells us that this window of opportunity will not be open forever:

***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.***

And God tells us that his word will most certainly succeed:

***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.***

So the missionaries that bring the message of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth will succeed:

***Isaiah 55:12-13 You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. <sup>13</sup> Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed."***

This gospel comes as an invitation from the high, holy God:

***Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says-- he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."***

So, people who hear the message of Christ WORLDWIDE are repent humbly of their sins will be accepted by God in his HIGH, HOLY PLACE

Therefore, the glory of Zion, the New Jerusalem, will be made up of people all over the world:

***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."***

Jesus is ANOINTED to bring this glorious message... this is the very passage that Jesus read to begin his preaching ministry in Galilee:

***Isaiah 61:1-3 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, <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, <sup>3</sup> and provide for those who grieve in Zion***

The final outcome of this worldwide proclamation is the establishment of Zion as a radiant bride, the New Jerusalem as the object of God's affection and glory forever:

***Isaiah 62:1-3 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. <sup>2</sup> The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. <sup>3</sup> You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.***

It will result in a New Heavens and New Earth of astonishing beauty and glory:

***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.***

***Isaiah 65:25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD.***

This radiant New Jerusalem could not have been constructed by HUMAN SKILL:

***Isaiah 66:1-2 This is what the LORD says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? <sup>2</sup> Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.***

Only the humble believers in Christ will enter it. So the gospel will spread to the ends of the earth:

***Isaiah 66:19-20 "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. <sup>20</sup> And they will bring all your brothers, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD***

These elect from every nation will spend eternity in God's presence worshipping him:

***Isaiah 66:22-23 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. <sup>23</sup> From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me," says the LORD.***

But the rebels will be destroyed by God's righteous wrath forever:

***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."***