

Isaiah: Jesus Messiah

Kory Cunningham



Some time back, my sister brought a new boyfriend by the house. So as a brother, I have to size the guy up, right? I made sure I knew his name and checked him out on Facebook first, but now I am meeting him for the first time. I am looking at him and checking everything about him out. This is my sister we are talking about and I know this could get serious, so I'm trying to make sure this guy is a good guy and I don't need to run him off. As we got to know each other, I noticed a bracelet on his wrist that said WWJD; what would Jesus do. My first impression was if this guy lives out what his bracelet says, he would be ok with me.

I have been tasked with preaching the whole book of Isaiah in one sermon. That is a huge, daunting task! I am thinking there is no way I can do it. So I asked myself, WWJD. What would Jesus do with the book of Isaiah? If He was standing here in the middle of our Route 66 series and asked Him to preach Isaiah, what would He do with Isaiah? Let's look at Luke 4:16-21, where we will hear a sermon that Jesus preached from Isaiah. This is how Jesus handled Isaiah's message while He was here on the earth. Jesus was preaching from Isaiah in the synagogue.

Scripture

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, '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, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." 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. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

We Need a Messiah

When Jesus teaches from the prophet Isaiah, He goes to a Messianic Scripture. It is one that would have been read frequently in the synagogue. Many of the scribes would have read this passage and talked about the coming Messiah. They couldn't wait for the Messiah to come because they believed He would set them free. He would help them and save them. This would have been something all the kids would have memorized. All the people knew this text. So Jesus stands up and begins to preach it, and they were probably yawning a little because they had heard it so many times before. But they hadn't heard this sermon. Jesus said, "*Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled...*" The whole message of Isaiah is we need a Savior, we need a Messiah; we need an Anointed One. Israel was in trouble during the time of the kings. They were trusting other super powers, like Assyria and Babylon and Egypt. They were trusting in false gods. They were running from God rather than to God. The message of Isaiah is you need a Messiah and the Messiah is coming. In Luke, the rabbis have been telling the people the Messiah is coming for hundreds of years. On this day, Jesus stands up and says you are looking at the Messiah. He is telling them they are looking at the Spirit filled Messiah who has come to redeem His people.

I want to talk that scroll of Isaiah and unroll it a little bit further. I want to look at some more things that would tell us that Jesus is the Messiah, why He is the Messiah, and why we need the Messiah. I want to look at how we should respond to the Messiah, and what the end will look like when the Messiah returns again. We aren't going to look at a lot of the historical

aspects of Isaiah, though there are many. But Isaiah is also pointing towards the future and Jesus. So we are going to preach Jesus from Isaiah because that is what the New Testament does. Isaiah, more than any other prophet and all in the context of Jesus, is quoted over twenty times in the New Testament.

Why Do We Need a Messiah?

- **We are Sinful**

The first thing I want to ask is why do we need a Messiah? Why did a Messiah have to come? It is because we are sinful. In Isaiah 1:2-4, God speaks through him, *"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken: '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 the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged."* In the very beginning, he says you are sinful, Israel. Even an ox knows its master, but you have forgotten you have a master. They were a people who had lost their identity. They had forgotten they were the people of God. God had created them and redeemed them, but they were rebelling against Him. They were chasing after other gods, trying to get their identity from somewhere other than God. They were an owned people who forgot their owner. We are like that in much the same way, being born in Adam. We are born into this world thinking life is about us. We are free, independent, and we can do whatever we want. We forget we were created by God, for His glory. We were created for a relationship with Him. But from birth, we have no idea we have a master. We are just living life for our own self, our own pleasure, and we live a life of rebellion and sin, just like the people of Israel. So right in the beginning of Isaiah, the answer of why we need a Messiah is because we are sinful, and that is a big problem.

- **God is Holy**

You see, not only are we sinful, but God is holy. In Isaiah chapter 6, Isaiah goes into the temple in the year that King Uzziah died. He saw the Lord,

high and lifted up. His train fills the whole temple, which speaks of His wealth and glory. He is on the throne, which means He is the sovereign King of kings. There are seraphim, creatures that are flying around the Lord, calling back to one another, "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory.*" They are speaking of how God is not like us. He is other, He is separate, He is Created, He is pure; He is holy, holy, holy. That is who God is! Isaiah gets that picture of who God is, and if you look at John chapter 12, John said that Isaiah was looking at Jesus in that temple. Then Isaiah sees himself and says woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips! So he sees a vision of the Lord, then himself, and then he sees a vision of the people. He says I live among a people of unclean lips. In other words, we are all completely sinful, compared to a holy God.

- **We are separated from God**

So there is a huge problem between the people of Israel and God, and that is they are sinful and God is holy. The same is true for us. We are sinful and God is holy, which brings the third point. That brings separation. There is separation between God and us. Isaiah 59:2 says, "*But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.*" It is the picture that God is not even looking at us; He's not even hearing us because He can't look at our sinfulness. There is separation; we cannot fellowship with a holy God in our sin. We need a Messiah because we need someone to fix this estranged relationship. We need someone to deal with our sin problem so we can fellowship with a holy God.

Who is the Messiah?

The next question I want to ask is who is the Messiah? In Luke chapter 4, Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. But I want to see if there is more evidence if we unroll the scroll even further. Is there more evidence that Jesus is the true Messiah? I would say absolutely yes. I want to give you ten reasons from Isaiah why Jesus is the Messiah.

1. Isaiah chapter 40:3 says the Messiah will be preceded by a voice crying in the wilderness saying prepare the way of the Lord, and the glory of the Lord is going to be revealed. All four gospels say that John the

Baptist is the voice crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord. And he prepared the way for Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Christ. He said Jesus is the One coming behind me.

2. Isaiah 7:14 says the Messiah will be virgin born. The Lord will give a sign that the virgin shall bear a son and His name shall be Immanuel. A virgin will give birth to a son. Automatically, that is strange to us. That is not natural; it is supernatural. Something miraculous is going to happen, and that baby will be called Immanuel, which means his identity is "God with us." In Matthew 1, when Gabriel shows up, he identifies Mary as that virgin. Her baby is the One who doesn't have an earthly father. His only has a heavenly Father, because He is God who became a man to dwell among us. Gabriel says His identity is Immanuel, "God with us." Jesus is the One born of a virgin.

3. His name will be Mighty God and forever King. Isaiah 9 says to us a child will be born and the government will be on His shoulders. His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God. That is His name! We can say You are Mighty God. Isaiah says He will reign on the throne forever. In Luke 1:32, Gabriel says that Jesus is the Son of the Most High God. Thomas says my Lord and my God. Jesus is called in the New Testament. That is His name, and we see in Isaiah that He is the forever King who will reign on David's throne. Jesus is that One prophesied in Isaiah chapter 9.

4. He is a Righteous Branch according to Isaiah chapter 11. He will come from the stump of Jesse, the line of David. He will be righteous and He will not sin. In 1 Peter 2:22, it says that Jesus has committed no sin and no deceit is found in His mouth. Jesus is that Righteous Branch.

5. Isaiah chapter 28 says that He will be a Cornerstone. God will build a Kingdom and the Messiah will be the Cornerstone. In Acts 4:11, the apostles say that Jesus is the Cornerstone that Isaiah prophesied. He is the One rejected by men, yet in His rejection, God is building a new foundation upon Him. He is building His church and His Kingdom and Jesus is the centerpiece of this new Kingdom.

6. Isaiah chapter 40 says that He will be a Good Shepherd. He will shepherd His people well and they will be taken care of. In John chapter 10, Jesus said I am the Good Shepherd who lays down My life for the sheep.

7. Isaiah chapter 35 says that He will be a Healer. He will heal the blind, the deaf, the mute, and the lame. In Luke chapter 7, John the Baptist sends a messenger to Jesus asking if He is the Messiah. Is it really You, or do we need to look for another? Jesus says go tell John that the blind see, the deaf hear, the mute speak, the lame walk, and the gospel is preached to the poor. He tells him that everything Isaiah spoke about the Messiah is being completed in Him. Jesus is saying I am the Messiah and I'm doing the business of the Messiah.

8. Isaiah chapter 25 says that the Messiah will swallow up death. In 1 Corinthians chapter 15, Jesus is the One who swallows up death in His death, burial, and resurrection. Death, where is your victory? Death, where is you sting? It is no more because Jesus has defeated it through His resurrection.

9. In the Messiah, even the Gentiles will put their hope in Him. He is not just Israel's Messiah; He is the nation's Messiah. In Matthew chapter 12, when Jesus starts ministering to the Gentiles, Matthew quotes Isaiah to say this is the reason the Gentiles are coming to Jesus. Because in Jesus, even the Gentiles have salvation and can hope in Him.

10. Isaiah chapter 61 says He will be a Spirit filled Messiah. In Luke 4, he Jesus was filled with the Spirit at His baptism. Jesus says I am He.

As we unroll the scroll, we come to the conclusion that Jesus is the Messiah. There is no question in the New Testament that He is the Messiah prophesied in the prophecy of Isaiah! Remember that all of these things were written 700 years before Jesus Christ was born. God speaks through the prophet Isaiah 700 years before and said there is someone coming and He is the Messiah. He will make all wrongs right and even the Gentiles will put their hope in Him. Jesus is the Spirit filled Messiah.

How Will the Messiah Save Us?

The shocker of Isaiah, the big twist in the plot, is that the Messiah King is the Suffering Servant. We have seen this picture of a Messiah King. There is a King coming and He will reign forever on the throne of David. He will fix all of our problems and reign in righteous. So they are looking for a King, but we also get this picture in the latter part of Isaiah of a Suffering

Servant. Someone will suffer on behalf of the whole world. He will suffer in our place for our sins. So the idea was would there be two people coming. Who will this Suffering Servant going to be? Who will this King be? We find out the Messiah King is also the Suffering Servant. Jesus, who is the King, Lord over all, sovereign over the universe, is also the One who humbled Himself and became a man to suffer in our place for our sins. That should blow us away. What love is that; that our God would become a man to die for us? That is the message of Isaiah. A Messianic King, who is God, is going to die as a Suffering Servant. We see this in its fullness in Isaiah 53:5-6. This is how the Messiah saves us. He takes our place and dies for our sins. *"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. 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."* That is how Jesus saves us. On the cross, He took all of our sin upon Himself. The chastisement that we deserved, the punishment that we deserved, that we earned was paid. The wages of sin is death and Jesus paid that wage. He died in our place to take our sins away from us and forgive us of our sins.

Not only that, it says in verse 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, and he will bear their iniquities."* When you believe in the Lord Jesus, not only does He take your sin, He gives you His righteousness. That is the full gospel. It is an exchange; you give Jesus your sin, He takes them and deals with them, and He gives you His righteousness. He imputes His righteousness into your account so that you are made righteous. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall become clean like wool.

In Acts 8, Phillip runs into this Ethiopian eunuch coming out of the city. He is reading the prophet Isaiah. He is reading it out loud, and it happens to be Isaiah 53. Phillip says hey man, do you know what you are reading? The eunuch says I don't have a clue. I'm just reading I and I don't know what's going on, but I have a question. Who is Isaiah talking about? Who is the Suffering Servant? Is it Isaiah, or is it someone else? It says that

Phillip, from that text of Scripture, preaches the good news of Jesus. He shows that Suffering Servant is Jesus Christ. He is the Suffering Servant who dies in your place for your sins.

This is the heart of the gospel! This is the bullseye, where everything comes together for Christianity: God became a man, did in our place for our sins, rose from the grave, and gives us His righteousness if we will believe in Him. That is the heartbeat that is the most important concept for you to understand. Christ has died for you, and He rose from the grave. He offers you His righteousness in exchange for your sin. This is the glorious gospel. That is how the Messiah saves us. Have you looked upon the Lord and believed in His death, burial, and resurrection? Have you received His righteousness? Have you traded your rags for His robe? Have you traded your sin for His righteousness? Have you been made new? Have you been cleansed? Have you been washed whiter than snow, as Isaiah would say? Have you believed in the gospel? Has the Messiah save you? Has that happened in your life?

How Should We Respond?

How should we respond to the fact that Jesus died in our place for our sins? Isaiah tells us in chapter 45:22-23, *"Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. By Myself I have sworn; from My mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'"*

Our proper response to the gospel and the fact that Jesus is the Messiah is to turn to Him. We have a trust problem just as the Israelites did. God is speaking to the Israelites and says to stop trusting in Egypt and start trusting in Me. Stop trusting in the false gods and start trusting in Me. But we are the same way. We trust in all kinds of other false gods, whether it's money, security, popularity, pleasure, or relationships. We kind of make our own gods and we exalt them, trust them, and turn to them. We think life is about them. But God is saying to stop trusting in your own self. Stop trusting in your own righteousness, and instead, completely abandon yourself and the gods of this world, and turn to Him for salvation. It is only in God that you will be saved. That is what Jesus says in Mark 1:15, "The

time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Repent means to turn from your gods and your reliance, and trust in Him. Completely run wholeheartedly toward Him; trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is how we should respond to the Messiah.

Notice that Isaiah said every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear allegiance to God. Look at what Paul says in Philippians 2, that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father. Isaiah is saying every bow shall bow to God and Paul is saying every knee shall bow to Jesus. The reason is because Jesus is the second person of the Trinity. Jesus is fully God; He is the God-man! So our response to Christ is knees bowed and allegiance to Him. With our hearts, we say that Jesus is Lord. Before we become a believer, we are our own lords. We do what we want, when we want to do it, and how we want to do it. We make our whole life about us, we plan our own dreams, our own success, and we think little of the God who created us. But God is saying salvation happens when you understand your sinfulness and God’s holiness, and the cross which bridges those two together, and your response is that life is no longer about you, it is about Christ. Then you turn from yourself and put your whole trust in Christ. You bow your knee to your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Life is now about Him, His Kingdom, and His glory, and you live for Him the rest of your life. That is what it means to become a believer. It means to follow after Christ, to submit to Him, and to say that He is Lord over you. That is the only proper response to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yes Lord, you are Lord. I’m committing my whole life to You! I am turning to You and putting my faith and trust in You.

What Will Happen at the End of Time?

What about when the Messiah returns? What will happen? The Bible says the Messiah is coming back; Jesus is coming back. I want to go back to Luke chapter 4 where Jesus quoted Isaiah chapter 61. This might shock some, but Jesus actually stopped in the middle of a sentence during His sermon. He only read half of a verse and then rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant. He didn’t read the whole verse! Jesus read, “*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, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor..." Then He closed the deal. He gave it back to them and said, today, that has been fulfilled. That is not how the verse ends in Isaiah 61. There is an "and" after the word, "favor." An "and" says there is more to come. He didn't finish the sentence. So why did He not finish? Why did He stop mid-sermon, midsentence, and just close and give the invitation? Let me give you the rest of the verse from Isaiah 61, *"...and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn..."* It is the day of wrath, the day of retribution, the day when God will make all wrongs right. He will punish all rebellion and all sin. Why did Jesus not finish that sentence? I think it is because in His first coming, He fulfilled the first part of the sentence. Jesus is saying today, the year of the Lord's favor is at hand. Jesus is bringing grace, mercy, salvation, and love. He is crying out to us today is the day for salvation! I am bringing grace and mercy, and I am begging you to come to Me to be saved. He is the Humble Servant who is coming to rescue us from our sins.

- **The Second Coming**

The rest of the sentence says I am going to come back. The second time, I will not be the Humble Servant, full of grace and mercy. I am full of justice and wrath. I am coming as the King with swords coming out of My mouth to deal with all of the sin on the earth. I am here to deal with all of those who have been rebellious. I am here to deal with innocent journalist getting their heads chopped off. I am here to deal with those murderers. I am here to deal with the husband who is bitter towards his wife. I am here to deal with all of those sins. It will be wrath, and fury, and people will run and hide. They will be so scared because He will not look like the flannel graph Jesus; He is going to look like the sovereign King who is coming to do justice on the earth. He is coming back to do that!

Jesus is saying, in My first coming, I am here to save and redeem you. I died in your place so you don't have to incur God's wrath! But if you don't come to Me, there will be no place to flee. Jesus is coming back in full wrath and fury a second time. Are you ready? Are you hidden in Christ?

When He comes back, there will be a future Kingdom that will take place. In the last chapter, Isaiah says with these words, *"For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD."* In the future Kingdom when Christ comes back, there is going to be a new heaven and a new earth, and as God's people, we are going to worship Him forevermore! That is going to be a glorious day! There will be rejoicing. It will be pleasure forever at the right hand of God. Where in the presence of the Lord, every day will be better than a thousand days anywhere else you could ever imagine. That is the future Kingdom to come! It will be glorious for those who have come to the Messiah for salvation. That bridge between sinful man and a holy God will have been met, and we will worship God forever.

That is not the last word in Isaiah. Isaiah 66:24 says, *"And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."* We are going to get a new heaven, a new Kingdom, and glory. But at the end, there is also going to be the reality of Hell. That verse sounds familiar; *"For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched."* It sounds familiar because it was often on the lips of Jesus. Jesus spoke frequently about the reality of Hell. Why would a Humble Servant who is going to die for us talk a lot about Hell? It is because He really doesn't want us to go there. He really wants us to live with Him forever. That is why He did what He did! He came to rescue us.

But the reality is that justice must be paid. Sin must be dealt with and there are two places where He deals with it. The first is the cross of Jesus. For those who trust in Christ, that is where the wrath of God for you will fall, on the cross of Christ. You will not suffer harm because Christ suffered harm for you. You will be forgiven and free. The other place God's wrath will fall will be in Hell for eternity, forevermore. For those who continue to rebel against Christ and believe life is about you, your sin, your world, and your kingdom, there will be a separation when Christ comes back. In a new heaven and a new earth, there will be glory forever. But there is also going

to be Hell, a place designed for Satan and his angels. Those who follow after him will join his company.

The main point of Isaiah is that Israel is in big trouble. People of Israel, you are in big trouble! But guess what? God still relentlessly loves you and He is sending a Messiah to redeem you from your sins! Isaiah's message to us is we are in big trouble. We are dead in our sins and those sins incur the wrath of God, but a Messiah has come! God's wrath has fallen on the cross, and if you will run to Him and embrace Him, you can be saved. The message of Isaiah is that a Messiah has come. So the question of Isaiah is; have you come to the Messiah? Have you come to Christ? Have you run to Him so that He can forgive you of your sins and give you a new life in Him?

A Messiah has come. He was born of a virgin, He is Mighty God, and He is righteous. He died in your place for your sins. He is the Good Shepherd, He swallowed up death, and He did all those things for you. When He comes back, there is a new Kingdom. What part of the Kingdom will you reside in forever? Will you be in the presence of God or away from the presence of the God?