

Isaiah - Talk 9

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[0 : 00] There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, a branch from his root shall bear fruit, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what he sees or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

And he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze, the young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the whole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

[1 : 23] They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples, of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time, to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

He will raise a signal for the nations, and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and those who harass Judah shall be cut off.

Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not harass Ephraim. But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west, and together they shall plunder the people of the east.

[2 : 34] They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them. And the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt, and will wave his hand over the river with his scorching breath, and strike it into seven channels, and he will lead people across in sandals.

And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt. You will say in that day, I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. You will say in that day, Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.

Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously, that this be made known in all the earth. Shout and sing for joy, O inhabitants of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

[4 : 05] Do you actually teach that to people? How do you mean? Do you actually teach that God hates homosexuals and that women should be stoned to death?

I'm not sure that's what the Bible teaches. It is. How can you deny that? It's in the Old Testament, plain as day. Are you actually telling me that you teach that?

Now, this was a conversation between me and my podiatrist about a month ago. To say I was flustered would be an understatement. I was angry and I was hurt.

I was flustered because of the sheer boldness of calling me and the God I love a homophobe and a misogynist. And I was angry and hurt because I know that my God and the absolute love of my life is not what this man was saying of him.

I didn't really know how to answer, to be honest. If you're wondering if I came up with some kind of pithy, well-thought-through reply, the answer is no. And I think I probably gave a really poor showing for God and my love of him, of which I've repented.

[5 : 14] But I was just so angry. But what really stuck with me was the sheer outrage on his face and the kind of self-righteous way in which he looked at me as though, frankly, I was dirt on the bottom of his shoe.

I couldn't believe it, to be honest. I certainly couldn't believe it when he tried to make me sign up for a really expensive, unnecessary appointment straight after. But then he did joke that the Church of England was incredibly rich, so I should be able to afford it.

It's worse, though, isn't it, than just an offhand, ignorant comment on his part. Because this man is speaking about his creator. And this man owes everything to the God that he is insulting.

God could call into judgment in a breath if he wanted to. In fact, the very breath he used to make that comment about me, my job, and my God was given to him by God.

The irony is obvious. Now, all of us here will be able to insert our own story in that place, maybe not quite so bold. But it might be it's the hostile relative at the family dinner calling you stupid or ignorant for believing in God.

[6 : 24] It could be at another impartial BBC report taking easy potshot Christians, potshots they would never dare take at another religion like Islam or Hinduism. It could be friends at school stealing your Bible from your bag and throwing it around shouting, God, loser, as what happened to me during my school years.

It could be the diversity team at work telling you to stop talking about the gospel because this is a place of tolerance and religious freedom. Or it could just be the sheer weight, couldn't it?

That overwhelming weight of seeing person after person at the school gate live their lives out in complete denial of the God who made them and loved them.

I would challenge you, if you ever have a spare moment, this is the kind of thing I like to do, just stand in a crowded spot in London and watch. Chances are, everyone you see is someone happily and ignorantly walking in complete rejection of the God who loves them and gave himself for them.

And so it begs the question, and this is the question I want us to think about this morning, and it's the question we're going to be thinking about for the whole sermon. What would it take? And when will the world recognize the one true God?

[7 : 40] When will the world recognize the one true God? Now, I'm going to need you to concentrate with me this morning. Apologies. Because we're at the climax of our section 7 to 12, and these verses are, without doubt, some of the most beautiful, precious, and absolutely stunning verses in the whole Bible.

But if we don't concentrate together, then we're going to miss the weight of them, and that would be a tragedy. So do some deep breathing, star jumps, or whatever you need to focus, and we'll dive in. But to help us, I only have one goal for us from this talk this morning, and it's to answer that question. When will the world recognize the one true God?

Here's the answer. When the world sees Jesus. It is the Sunday school answer, but I want to show us the magnificence, power, glory, and might of the Lord Jesus.

I want us to leave this morning seeing that our king is far bigger than we ever dared imagine, and to go away praising him as our risen and reigning king.

[8 : 52] But you see, this question that we're trying to answer, this is the exact same question the Israelites had. The Israelites, our initial readers, had the same problem as my podiatrist.

They do not recognize the one true God either. The big question that 7 to 12 is answering was set up for us in chapter 1. And that question is, when will God's children recognize him as the one true God?

Have a look with me at chapter 1, verse 2, just so I can show that to us together. Isaiah chapter 1, verse 2. And this is how the whole book opens. This is the problem that Isaiah presents us with that he then sets out to answer.

Chapter 1, verse 2. 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. God wants children who recognize him.

[10:01] And just to show you why we're meant to hold chapter 1 and 7 to 12 together, the theme of children, children is all over this section 7 to 12. Now we saw already in this verse how the book opens with a reference to children.

And here in 7 to 12 we have an overwhelming number of references to children. There are over 14 that I counted. Don't worry, I'm not going to bring us through every single one. The famous passage of the virgin birth, to name the most obvious one.

But we have even two in our reading. Have a look with me at 11, verse 6. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together and a little child shall lead them.

Or 11, verse 8. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. The language of children is all over this section.

So where does it leave us? I told you you might need to concentrate. To summarise, chapter 1 is asking the question, how will God get children who recognise him as Lord?

[11:13] And here in chapter 11 and 12 we're finally going to get the answer. And it's an answer we should really care about because it's the same answer to the question we have up here.

When will the world recognise the one true God? Now I struggled when prepping this passage because as I said this is without doubt one of the absolute climaxes of scripture.

If the Bible was a mountain this is Everest. We are at the peak and themes that began right back in Genesis all come together in what I think can only be described as a symphony of scripture.

And I thought I tried really hard about how do I get this into three points that alliterate and condense it into one pithy thing that I can repeat throughout. But then I realised that that would be a tragedy.

I do not want us to miss the sheer depth and beauty and majesty of these verses. In other words I want us to delight in the sheer weight of glory that we see here.

[12:21] So please ready yourself. I promise you this is a journey worth taking. And as I said if you get lost I only have one goal for us today. Blow our minds with the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we're going to do this by looking at three themes. So these are the three themes that we're going to trace right through Isaiah to John to Revelation. And the three themes are as follows.

when will the world recognise the one true God when the king finally comes that's one king two to bring about a new Eden that's two Eden and three to bring about a new exodus.

So point number one when will the world finally recognise God well when we get a new spirit filled king. Have a look with me at chapter 11 verses 1 to 5 chapter 11 verses 1 to 5 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him the spirit of wisdom and understanding the spirit of counsel and might the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord and his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord he shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide disputes by what his ears hear but with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked righteousness shall be the belt of his waist and faithfulness the belt of his loins Now I'll confess with you I puzzled so much over verse 1 which is a great place to struggle isn't it as soon as you start

I really didn't understand to begin with why we're talking about Jesse do you notice that there shall come forth the shoot from the stump of Jesse Now Jesse was King David's father and he gets very little mention in the Old Testament basically none so why isn't this the stump of David well I think it's because God is saying we need a new David we need to go back to before David in other words we need to chop down the tree to before David is born right back to Jesse so we can have another David-like king another king who is a man after God's own heart God's people need another David when will the world recognise the one true God well when we get a new David do you see the image the tree is Jesse's line and all the people that come after him and Isaiah is saying cut it all down we need another shoot to come from Jesse's stump another king just like the one

[15:06] Jesse produced and this king is radically unlike what Israel has ever seen before the spirit of wisdom shall rest on him his delight will be in the fear of the Lord he will not judge by what his eyes see in other words this is a king who is the exact opposite of Judah's current king Ahaz that we've been seeing in our series in Isaiah Ahaz was not wise because he refused God's sign in

chapter 7 Ahaz feared the world because he feared Assyria instead of God Ahaz judged by what his eyes saw because he thought Assyria looked more powerful than God whoever this new David king is he is the opposite of Ahaz so we're beginning to answer that question aren't we when will the world recognise the one true God when will God's children finally trust God for themselves well when the spirit filled David king comes we need a new king when will our world recognise the one true God when a new king comes and this brings me on to my second point when will the world recognise the one true God well when the new king comes and brings about a new Eden have a look with me at verse 6 to 11 the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together and a little child shall lead them the cow and the bear shall graze their young shall lie down together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox the nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the lord as the waters cover the sea do you see the garden and animal language the wolf will lie with the lamb leopard will lie down with the young goat and a little child shall lead the lion and fattened calf this is a picture of complete safety and bliss but it goes one step further because this is a garden that is better than Eden this is a garden that was better than the first have a look with me at verse 8 and 9 again the nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra and the weaned child shall put his hand in the adder's den there will be no threat of the snake

I wonder if you noticed that a child can happily play over the adder's den because there is no threat anymore of the snake coming and deceiving them like in Genesis 3 the devil will not hurt or destroy in all of God's holy mountain this is a perfect and better Eden this is a place that will be so safe that I could go across the road now gather up the children in the kids work and take them merrily to an adder's den I wonder how you're feeling about this and we can play whack-a-mole okay with the snake den hands right down in the hole jumping merrily about making as much noise in a racket as we possibly can and there will be no danger whatsoever of them being bitten or deceived or falling this is a new and better Eden and this is an Eden that is for everyone verse 10 in that day the root of Jesse whoever this king is this root of Jesse shall stand as a signal for the peoples of him shall the nations inquire and his resting place will be glorious a new and better

Eden this brings me on to my third and final point the final of our three themes when will the world recognise the one true God well when the new king brings a new Eden and a new exodus rescue I hope you're starting to see why I said this passage is really symphonic all of these stunning Old Testament promises coming together around a new Davidic king have a look with me at verse 15 and 16 and the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt and will wave his hand over the river with his scorching breath and strike it into seven channels and he will lead people across in sandals and there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt do you see the Exodus language except this time it's better still than the Exodus from Egypt

God will once more destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt and God once more will bring his people back to his Eden but have a look with me at this detail in verse 15 the final clause and he will strike it into seven channels and he will lead his people across in sandals why seven well in the first Exodus Moses parted the Red Sea with just one channel right through the middle here though this Exodus will be through seven channels seven the number of biblical perfection seven the number of God's rest seven the number of a new creation God is going to prepare and make a better and perfect Exodus and do you see the wonderful outcome of this King Eden and Exodus in chapter 12 verses 1 to 2 have a look with me you will say in that day

I will give thanks to you O Lord for though you were angry with me your anger turned away that you might comfort me behold God is my salvation I will trust and will not be afraid for the Lord God is my strength and my song and he has become my salvation finally finally we get the solution to the sinful children of chapter 1 finally Isaiah gets his answer to when will God get the children he so desires God's people will recognize the one true God we've finally gone from the rebellious children of chapter 1 to the children of God who sing the song of Isaiah in 12 verse 3 to 6 with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation and you will say in that day give thanks to the Lord call upon his name make known his deeds among the peoples proclaim that his name is exalted sing praises to the Lord for he has done gloriously let this be made known in all the earth shout and sing for joy oh inhabitants of Zion for great in your midst is the holy one of

[22 : 00] Israel praises upon praises finally the people see God and his king all because whoever this king is and we don't know who it is has finally brought about a new Eden through a new exodus so to summarize the big hope for Isaiah's initial readers was this coming king that is their big hope this new and better David will bring all the things that Isaiah hoped for so when will the world God's children recognize the one true God well when this king comes so this begs the question for us doesn't it who is this king who is this king who is spirit filled can bring about a new Eden and a new exodus rescue well there are hundreds of places I could take you in the new testament and to be honest with you when I was prepping this I got way too excited about this I think

I found about 40 different references sadly I then realized this sermon would be completely unintelligible if I included them all so very late on Friday night I called poor Denny up and begged him to help me make this material understandable and I have to say you're about to see an absolute clinic in powerpoint it was it was almost musical watching him put these together so I commend these slides to you but what I want to do is take our three themes king Eden exodus king Eden exodus and I want to trace them through John right through to Revelation so those are the two steps we're going to do I'm going to show you that John tells us this king is Jesus and then we'll also look at Revelation so we're going to be turning to John together now don't worry you don't need to look it up it's all going to be as I said on the powerpoints so have a look with me at John 1 32 to 33 but I need to get there

John 1 32 and John bore witness I saw the spirit descend from heaven like a dove and it remained on him but for this purpose I came baptizing with water oh no I'm just completely yeah sorry verse 33 I myself did not know him but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me he on whom you see the spirit descend and remain this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit so Isaiah promised us a spirit filled king will come and John is saying well here he is and then have a look with me at John chapter 9 verse 5 to 7 John 9 verse 5 to 7 bear with me as long as I am in the world I am the light of the world having said these things he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him go wash in the pool of

Siloam which means sent so he went and washed and came back seeing Jesus is the creation light the light that was there in the beginning in Genesis 1 and just as God formed man out of the ground and breathed in his nostrils so Jesus out of the ground through his spit forms a new man who goes from spiritual blindness to spiritual sight Jesus is the light of the world Jesus is the new Eden creator and finally have a look with me at John 6 verse 32 to 35 Jesus then said to them truly truly I say to you it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven but my father gives you the true bread from heaven for the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world they said to him sir give us this bread always Jesus said to them I am the bread of life whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believes in me shall never thirst just just as the Israelites in the wilderness receive bread from heaven in the exodus Jesus is the true bread from heaven Jesus is the true exodus rescuer the bread of life so Isaiah has given us these three big themes look for a king look for the new Eden look for the new exodus and here we see that John is saying Jesus is that king Jesus brings that Eden Jesus brings that exodus the king that Isaiah longed for well it is the Lord Jesus Christ when will the world finally see and recognize the one true God well in a sense they already are the king has come but it begs a question doesn't it Benji the whole world doesn't yet recognize God as king your podiatrist is a prime example when will that happen well the second half of Isaiah does give us an answer to this but in a sense for now

[27 : 16] I want us to grasp that we are in a very similar position to Isaiah initial readers they were waiting for a king to come they didn't realize that this king will come twice you see Jesus has already brought about a new Eden and a new exodus but he will come again to bring that Eden and exodus to complete fulfillment have a look with me at revelation 21 verse 1 to 4 then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying behold the dwelling place of God is with man he will dwell with them and they will be as people and God himself will be with them as their gods he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away revelation brings together all three themes that

Isaiah gave us in 11 and 12 I wonder if you notice all of those images coming up we see here speaks from the throne in verse three because God is now finally with his people this Eden verse four is one where there will be no death anymore where a child can play over the whole of the adder

and that interesting detail in verse one the sea was no more we don't need one channel anymore we don't need seven channels anymore because there is no sea because access to God we and the whole world recognize Jesus as king and king alone well it is when the spirit filled king brings his new Eden and new exodus rescue and comes again so for us I only have one point of application we've covered an immense amount of ground this morning you've done very very well but that is the point this is our

Jesus he is not small so I only have one point of application and it is praise it's where chapter 12 leaves us it's where I hope we are left praise the Lord Jesus the king because you see 12 was a prediction about how we can praise in the future when this king comes but we know this king this king has come he's brought a new Eden and a new exodus rescue and every believer sitting in this room is a recipient of that we can praise the king already and one day the whole world as revelation says will do the same this is this is our king he and he alone brings about everything that humanity longs for he brings perfect rule as a perfect king he brings a perfect dwelling place in Eden and he brings his people into it himself through his great exodus rescue this is our king this is your king there is only one thing left to do when we see a king such as this a king that the old testament longed for a king that

Isaiah told his people to wait for a king who died on a cross and was crowned king of the whole world and a king who will one day bring us home praise praise praise praise praise him when you wake and praise him when you sleep praise him in your work and in your relationships let your whole life be one of praise and praise alone for the king Jesus let me lead us in prayer Lord we thank you that all the promises of the old testament find their fulfillment in Jesus the King Lord forgive us for when we have such a small view of you and please would something from this morning have helped us see the majesty awesomeness and might of Lord Jesus the King and would our lives be ones of praise to him Amen