

THE PROPHET ISAIAH IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

LECTIONARY YEAR B



1

MARK 1.1-3

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way;

3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight"

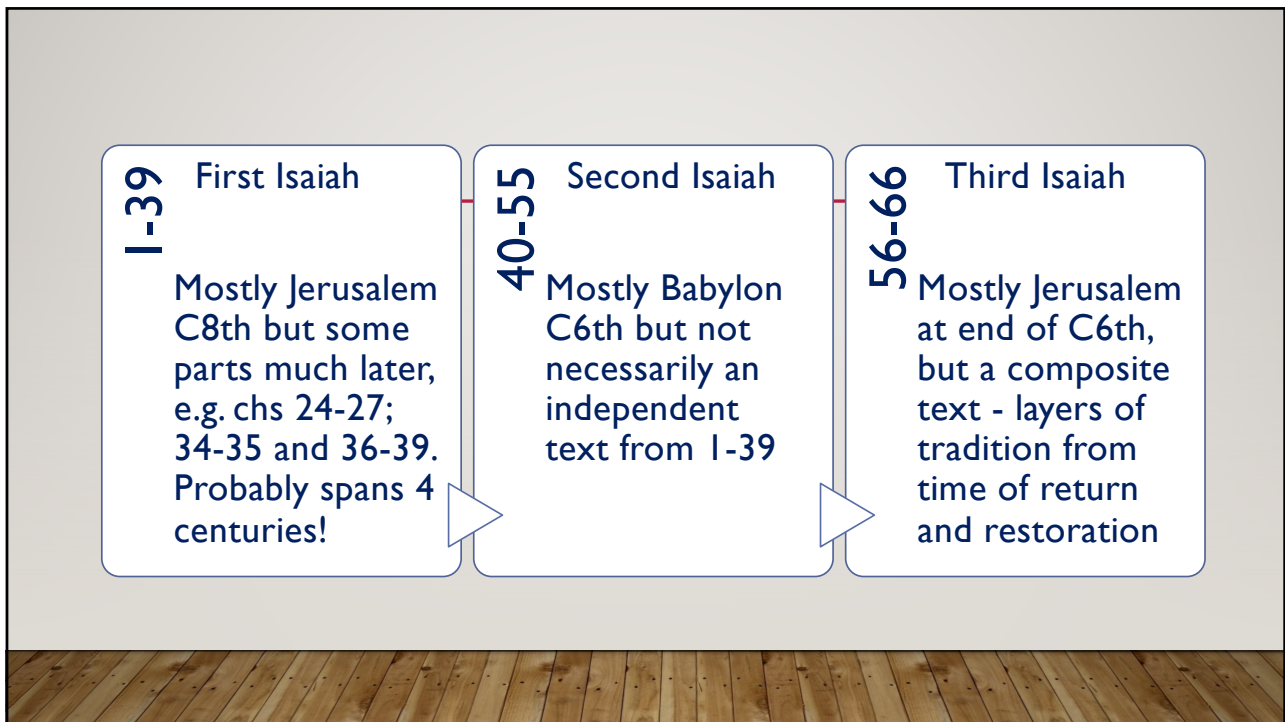
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3



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WHO? WHERE? WHEN?

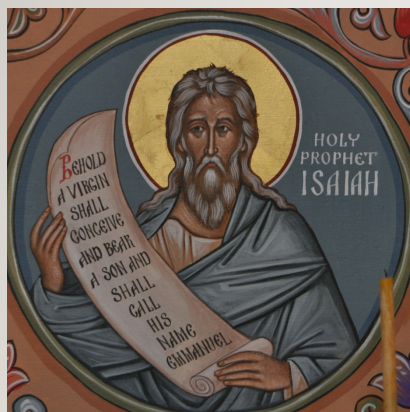


Foretelling?

Forth-telling?

6

MAJOR THEMES IN ISAIAH 40-66



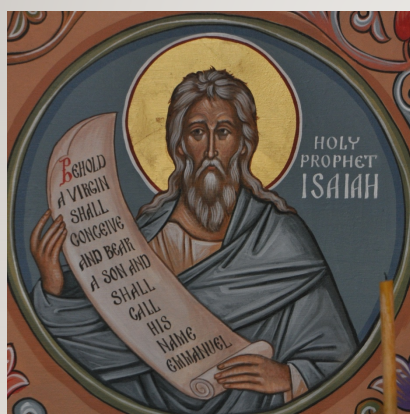
The Word of the Lord

Isa 40.8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Isa 55.1 I so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

7

MAJOR THEMES IN ISAIAH 40-66



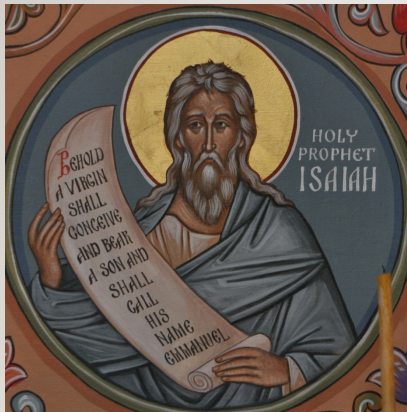
The Word of the Lord

“that is exactly what prophecy – true prophecy – is: an accomplishing word, landing again and again to speak a new word to a new generation from the vortex of lived experience with the Holy One of Israel, by God’s servants, the prophets.”

(Christopher Seitz, NIB commentary on Isaiah 40-66, p.400)

8

MAJOR THEMES IN ISAIAH 40-66



A New Exodus – God is doing a new thing!

This is what the Lord says—he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: 'Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 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.**' Isa 43.16-19

9



10

ISAIAH 40.3



A voice is calling out,
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord!
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!”

11

ISAIAH 35

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

3 Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

12

ISAIAH 35

5 Then **the eyes of the blind shall be opened**, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

6 then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

7 the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

13

ISAIAH 35

8 **A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way;**

the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people;

no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.

9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;

they shall not be found there, but **the redeemed shall walk there.**

10 **And the ransomed of the Lord shall return**, and come to Zion with singing;

everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;

they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

14

ISAIAH 40

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then **the glory of the LORD shall be revealed**, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”



15

ISAIAH 40

Vv.10-11 See, **the Lord God comes with might**, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.



16

WARRIOR-YHWH

²The Lord is my strength and my might, and he has become my salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

³The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name. Exodus 15.2-3

- Strong arm
- Lord of Hosts

17

WARRIOR-YHWH

- Exodus imagery
- Theophany: storm-god warrior (Psalm 18.8-16)
- Special revelation of God's presence **to judge and to save**
- **Power over water / sea**
- Isa 50.2 "By my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a desert".

18

CREATOR-WARRIOR-DELIVERER

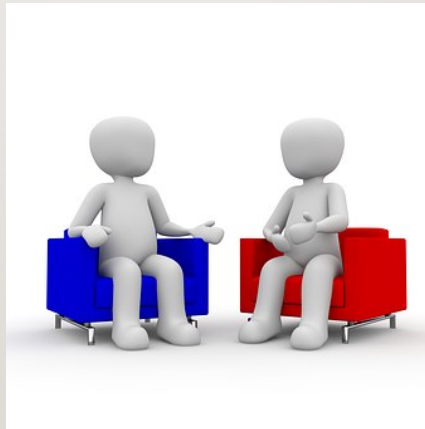
Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord! Awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago! **Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep; who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to cross over?** So the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isa 51.9-11

19



20

BREAKOUT GROUPS



21

SUMMARY OF THEMES IN MARK INFLUENCED BY ISAIAH

- The word of the Lord stands forever and will be fulfilled
- Jesus as liberator and judge
- Jesus has authority and power over creation and chaotic forces
- Jesus as shepherd, guide and provider
- Radical inversion of the warrior figure
- Jesus makes his way to Jerusalem, to the cross
- The way of the cross for disciples

22