

Isaiah: Revealing the Rescuer

Seeing Jesus in Isaiah: On Sin and Idolatry

? Did you have a blanket or stuffed animal you held onto when you were a child? How did that make you feel?

The Book of Isaiah reveals to us many things about a rescuer who will be sent from God to redeem, save, and restore lost people and religious hypocrites. The expectant words of Isaiah come into full bloom in the New Testament where it is clearly revealed that it is Jesus who has come on a mission from God to rescue humanity and restore all of creation. This series will help us behold the beauty of Jesus as he is revealed in the words of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah Jesus-sightings

Isaiah 46:1-5 (NIV)

Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low; their idols are borne by beasts of burden.

The images that are carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary.

² They stoop and bow down together; unable to rescue the burden, they themselves go off into captivity.

³ "Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob, all the remnant of the people of Israel, you whom I have upheld since your birth, and have carried since you were born.

⁴ Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you.

I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

⁵ "With whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?

⁶ Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it.

⁷ They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands.

From that spot it cannot move.

Even though someone cries out to it, it cannot answer; it cannot save them from their troubles.

⁸ "Remember this, keep it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come.

I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'

¹¹ From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose.

What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.

¹² Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are now far from my righteousness.

¹³ I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed.

I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel.

? A prophet's role was to pass along a message from God to his people. This could include an important message or sharing a vision about present and future events. The first couple verses talk about some of Babylon's gods of the time. (Bel: Baal, god over weather, storms & fertility; Nebo: god of science and learning) How are they described in this passage?

Possible answers: burdensome, unable to rescue, they go into captivity

? In contrast, verse 3 makes the switch - focusing on the promises of God instead. What are some of these describing phrases that stand out to you?

Possible answers: I have upheld, I will sustain, I will rescue you, there is none like me

? Why would people worship the gods described in the first couple verses when the God of the following verses seems so incomparable?

Possible answers: answers will vary

New Testament Isaiah-sightings

John 1:1-14 (NIV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was with God in the beginning.³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John.⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Romans 1:25 (NIV)

²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Roman 5:8 (NIV)

⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

? What do the passages tell us about Jesus and how the world responds to him?

Possible answers: He was there at the beginning, he is the light shining in the darkness, there are still idols in this world

? These passages remind us that God doesn't leave us - as sinners, we are the ones turning away from him and setting up our own idols beyond him. Why don't people recognize Jesus or want to acknowledge the true light?

Possible answers: we're sinners and need to consistently turn to him, the things of this world are enticing, we need each other to continually point us to him.

For Discussion and Accountability

? What things (idols - beasts of burden - childhood blankets) do you find yourself turning to? How can we come alongside you to take a step toward laying these things down this week?

? What does it look like to turn to the true light this week?