

Behold Our God
The Sustaining Power of Heaven
June 26, 2011

Text - Isaiah 11-12

Scripture Reading - Revelation 21:1-4

Have you ever noticed how having something to look forward to can keep you going, even when the going gets tough?

- Kids - Don't hard things like doing your homework, getting your chores done, and loving your brothers and sisters become a lot easier when you know you're going to be having a friend over, watching a movie, getting a treat, or going somewhere fun afterwards?
- Adults - Don't hard things like going to work, being a good parent, mowing the lawn, and paying the bills become a lot easier when you know it's Friday, it's almost bed time, you're going to be going on vacation, or you're going to be doing something you love to do afterwards?

Having something to look forward to sustains us, even through hard times, because it helps us to be able to see the finish line.

- I would think that's probably one of the reasons people love Grandma's Marathon.

The more regular and the more special the thing we have to look forward to is, the more power it has to sustain us.

- The more special - Hayes' cabin
- The more regular - Our problem

God has gifted those who have trusted in Him with two wonderful things to look forward to, one of which is very regular and the other of which is very, very special.

- **Exodus 20:8-11 (ESV) - The Sabbath Day**
⁸"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested

the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

- **Revelation 21:1-4 (ESV) - Heaven**

¹Then 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. ²And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And 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 his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He 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."

Nothing has more sustaining power than looking forward to Heaven.

- **Colossians 3:2 (ESV)**

²*Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*

- Why I'm memorizing Revelation 21:1-4

In chapters 11 and 12 Isaiah paints a magnificent picture of Heaven for God's people to look forward to.

- 11:1-5 - The Coming Savior
- 11:6-9 - The Coming Kingdom
- 11:10-16 - The Coming Exodus
- 12:1-6 - The Coming Response

Though most of Isaiah's original hearers were probably not blessed by his painting due to their hardness of heart, I'm certain that it was a blessing to him and to thousands of others, who with eyes of faith, have gazed upon it since.

So with that as introduction, let's take a closer look at Isaiah's portrait of Heaven.

The Coming Savior

In 11:1-5 Isaiah begins his picture with a beautiful outline of a Coming Savior. In his outline, Isaiah tells us four things about the Savior, all of which were perfectly fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 11:1-5 (ESV)

¹There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. ²And 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. ³And 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, ⁴but 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. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

4 things we learn about the Coming Savior from Isaiah's outline.

- 1) He would come forth from the stump of Jesse.
 - a. **Acts 13:22-23 (ESV) - Paul is preaching in the synagogue in Antioch**

²²...'I have found in David *the son of Jesse* a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'²³ *Of this man's offspring* God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.

- 2) The Spirit of the Lord would rest upon Him.
 - a. **John 1:32-34 (ESV) - John the Baptist bears witness about Jesus...**

³²...'I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.'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.'³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."
 - b. **Luke 4:16-21 (ESV)**

¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸"*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, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ 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. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "*Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.*"

i. Actually Isaiah 61:1-2

3) His delight would be in the fear of the Lord.

- a. One of the primary marks of someone who fears the Lord is obedience.
- b. If you have a healthy reverence and respect for God (which is what is meant by fear of the Lord in this context) then you are going to obey Him.
- c. This is exactly how Jesus felt about His Father and it manifested itself in His obedience. Jesus delighted to obey His Father because He loved, revered, and respected Him.

i. **John 4:34 (ESV)**

³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

4) He would be a righteous judge.

a. God the Father gave the job of judgment to His Son

i. **John 5:22-23 (ESV)**

²² The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son,...

b. Jesus was a righteous judge who was not swayed by appearances or hearsay

i. **Isaiah 11:3 (ESV)**

³ ...He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

ii. **John 7:24 (ESV) -Defends Himself for healing on the Sabbath**

²⁴ Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

c. Jesus was a righteous judge who was completely impartial and absolutely fair both to the weak and to the wicked

- i. **Isaiah 11:4 (ESV)**
⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
- ii. **Isaiah 11:4 (ESV)**
⁴ ...and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
 - 1. **Revelation 19:11-16 (ESV)**
¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.
- iii. **Isaiah 11:5 (ESV)**
⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
 - 1. No one will ever be more righteous than Jesus.

The Coming Kingdom

In verses 6-9 Isaiah begins to shade in his picture of Heaven with the wonderful hue of a Kingdom that was, and is, and is to come.

Isaiah 11:6-9 (ESV)

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. ⁷ The cow and the bear

shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. ⁹They 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.

What a Kingdom!!! – Perfect Peace

- **Isaiah 11:9 (ESV)**

⁹They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain;...

It is to come

- **Revelation 21:4 (ESV) - 800 yrs later John described it like this...**

⁴He 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."

It was

- **Isaiah 11:7 (ESV)**

⁷The cow *and the bear* shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and *the lion* shall eat straw like the ox.

- **Genesis 1:29-30 (ESV)**

²⁹And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. *You shall have them for food.* ³⁰And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every *green plant* for food." And it was so.

- **Genesis 9:1-3 (ESV)**

¹And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ²The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives *shall be food for you.* And as I *gave you* the green plants, I give you everything.

It is

- In Christ we can have perfect peace *today* even in the midst of the storms of life.
- Though the angry surges roar, on my tempest driven soul, I am peaceful for I know, wildly though the winds may blow, I've an anchor safe and sure, that can ever more endure. And it holds, my anchor holds, blow your wildest then O gale, on my bark so small and frail, by his grace I shall prevail, for my anchor holds, my anchor holds. (*Though the Angry Surges Role* W.C. Martin 1902)

Why did, does, and will this Kingdom come?

- Isaiah gives us the answer in 11:9
 - **Isaiah 11:9 (ESV)**
⁹They 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.*
- That's the way it was before Adam and Eve fell into sin.
- That's the way it is with those have been born again and filled with the Holy Spirit.
- And that's the way it will be.
 - **Revelation 21:3-4 (ESV)**
³And 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 his people, *and God himself will be with them as their God.* ⁴*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.*"

The Coming Exodus

In 11:10-16 Isaiah continues to fill out his picture of Heaven by adding the details of a Second Exodus, an Exodus to Come, that will be even more glorious than the first.

Isaiah 11:10-16 (ESV)

¹⁰In 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*...

- **Revelation 21:24 (ESV)**

²⁴By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it,

¹¹In 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. ¹²He 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*. ¹³The 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. ¹⁴*But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west*, and together they shall plunder the people of the east. They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them. ¹⁵And 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. ¹⁶And 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.

- **Matthew 24:29-31 (ESV)**

²⁹"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, *and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn*, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, *and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*.

The Coming Response

Finally, in 12:1-6, Isaiah completes his picture of Heaven by sealing it with the Coming Response of those who look so forward to it.

Isaiah 12:1-6 (ESV)

¹You 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.*" ²"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." ³ *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.* ⁴ 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." ⁵ "Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth." ⁶ Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great *in your midst* is the Holy One of Israel."

May all we have to look forward to in Heaven strengthen and sustain us today.

Closing Prayer

All that we have to look forward to in Heaven: The Coming Kingdom, The Coming Exodus, and The Coming Response, was made possible by The Coming Savior who *paid it all* for us on the cross 2,000 years ago.

Prayer Team = Greg and Denise Cooper