

ISAIAH

Outlined Bible

Introduction: With the book of Isaiah; we usher in a whole new section of scripture - the Prophets. Our English word "prophet" comes from the Greek word *prophētēs* (one who speaks for another and is used to translate the Hebrew word *nabi* (one who communicates the divine will). A prophet in Israel was regarded as a person through whom God would speak, (cf. Isaiah 45:11-13; Jeremiah 1:9; Amos 1:3-5). In the period of the kings, the prophets were not rulers or officials in government; they were bold-spirited, godly men who challenged kings and the people to follow the ways of the Lord. (cf. I Kings 18:17-18) The prophets prior to 850 BC are referred to as the "non-writing" prophets. Although certain of their writings are parts of the Bible (e.g. Moses, Samuel), they did not leave behind books of their collective prophecies.

The prophets after 850 BC are generally called the "writing" prophets. There are seventeen books in the Bible composed by God's Spirit through these men. Five of these seventeen books were written by the Major Prophets, and twelve by the Minor Prophets. (Note: The distinction between a Major and Minor Prophet is based on the length of the books) Isaiah isn't the first prophetic book written (see the chronological chart of the prophets), but it is the first we come to in our Bibles.

Name - The book is named for its author.

Arthur

1. The author of the book is Isaiah:
 - a. His name means "the Lord saves."
 - b. He lived and ministered in Jerusalem where he was the court preacher.
 - c. Isaiah was evidently well-educated, skilled in oration and writing, and known in the royal court.
 - d. Tradition holds that he was sawed in half during Manasseh's reign.
2. Liberal scholars question if Isaiah wrote chapters 40-66:
 - a. The book does change themes between chapters 39 and 40.
 - b. The primary reason for the challenge to the total authorship of Isaiah is a reluctance to validate predictive prophecy.
 - c. The New Testament treats the book as a unit. (Matthew 3:3; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14; 15:7; John 12:38-41)

Purpose – The book of Isaiah did three things:

1. Isaiah rebuked Judah's leadership for seeking political security rather than trusting the Lord.
2. It predicted the Babylonian captivity and Judah's return to their homeland.
3. Isaiah looked beyond immediate events and foretold of the coming, suffering and reign of the Messiah.

I. Background of the book.

A. Isaiah had a long ministry that began in the year King Uzziah died (740 BC) and continued into the reign of Manasseh (696-642 BC).

1. His ministry extended through the reign of four kings of Judah.
2. His work covered a span of at least fifty years.

B. Isaiah ministered during a critical time in the nation's history.

1. He began his work while there were still two kingdoms.
2. He saw the fall of Israel (721 BC) and warned Judah of the same fate.

3. Isaiah was a contemporary of Micah in the South (Judah) and Hosea in the North (Israel).
4. He was a great help and support to the godly King Hezekiah.

II. The Main Message of the book.

A. The main message of the book was one of a stern rebuke and a plea for repentance.

1. Social injustice was commonplace. (cf. Isaiah 5:8)
 2. The spiritual life of Judah was suffering. Priests and prophets were corrupt. (Isaiah 56:10-12)
- B. Isaiah 1 is the overview of the whole book.
 1. The prophet pleads for repentance and a transformed life.
 2. "Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow." (Isaiah 1:16-17)

III. Outline of the book.

- A. Prophecies of judgment against the nations. (Isaiah 1-35)
1. Judah and Jerusalem are arraigned for their sins. (1:1-31)
 2. The devastation Jerusalem will suffer is contrasted to the beauty of "Yahweh's Jerusalem" (i.e. - the reign of the Messiah). (2:1-5:30)
 3. Isaiah receives his call and commission from God. (6:1-13)
 4. The "book of Immanuel" follows, offering prophecies of the Messiah's coming against the background of the Syno-Ephraimitic War. (7:1 -12:6)
 5. A series of prophecies of judgment are given against:
 - a. Babylon. (13:1-14:23)
 - b. Assyria. (14:24-27)
 - c. Philistia. (14:28-32)
 - d. Moab. (15:1-16:14)
 - e. Damascus. (17:1-14)
 - f. Cush and Egypt. (18:1-20:6)
 - g. Babylon. (21:1-10)
 - h. Edom. (21:11-12)
 - i. Arabia. (21:13-17)
 - j. Jerusalem. (22:1-25)
 - k. Tyre. (23:1-18)
 6. General prophecies about judgment against the earth on "the day of the Lord" are given. (24:1-27:13)
 7. Warnings are given to:
 - a. The Northern Kingdom. (28:1-13)
 - b. The Southern Kingdom. (28:14-31:9)
 8. A promise of blessing and joy is offered to those who seek the Lord in righteousness. (32:1-35:10)
- B. The historical bridge (Isaiah 36-39):
1. These four chapters contain a historical parenthesis that discusses several events from the life of King Hezekiah. (36-39)
 - a. Sennacherib threatened to invade Jerusalem, and King Hezekiah calls for Isaiah. (36:1-37:5)
 - b. The prophet promised deliverance, and an angel destroyed the Assyrian army. (37:6-38)
 - c. During an illness, Hezekiah prayed fervently, and God extended his life 15 years. (38:1-22)
 - d. However, upon his recovery, Hezekiah foolishly boasted of the nation's wealth, and Isaiah predicted that Babylon would one day ransack Judah. (39:1-8)
 2. These chapters also serve to bridge the early part of the book, which relates to the domination of the Assyrians, to the latter section and its prophecy of the Babylonian conquest.
- C. Prophecies of the future (Isaiah 40-66):

1. Against the background of the Babylonian exile just predicted, God's gracious deliverance is foretold. (40:1-48:22)
2. Beyond restoration to their homeland, ultimate deliverance would come through the "Servant of the Lord." (49:1-53:12)
3. His work would be accompanied by glory. (54:1-57:12)
4. The book closes with pleas for repentance (58:1-59:15) and with the understanding that Judah's ultimate hope is found only through the coming Messiah. (59:16-66:24)

IV. Key themes of the book.

A. Prophecy

1. Many deny Isaiah's authorship of the entire book because of the predictive prophecies in the last section (chapters 40-66).
 - a. For example, Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1 specifically name Cyrus as the one God would use to rebuild the temple 150 years before it would take place!
 - b. Many specific messianic prophecies appear in this section as well.
2. It should be noted, however, that the first section of the book also contains predictive prophecies.
 - a. The futures of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, etc. are foretold.
 - b. Messianic prophecies are also included in the first section.
3. The real problem here is the assumption that no writer could know the future.
 - a. Such a premise negates the divine origin of the Word.
 - b. The presence of predictive prophecy is evidence of inspiration. (cf. Deuteronomy 18:21-22)

B. The Holiness of God.

1. In its root form (*qds* - holy) carries the idea of separate or set apart.
2. Isaiah's expression, "the Holy One of Israel" is found 25 times in the book. (In the rest of the Old Testament it appears only six times.)
3. In one of the great scenes of the Bible, Isaiah is allowed to see the throne of the Lord. (Isaiah 6:1-13)
 - a. The seraphs called out, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty." (Isaiah 6:3)
 - b. Isaiah's response is a shame and fear spawned by his personal iniquity.
 - c. God allowed and used Isaiah's experience to call Israel to be "set apart" from the attitudes and behavior of pagan nations.
4. The holiness of God does not negate His saving and redeeming spirit.
 - a. Remember the name Isaiah means "God will save."
 - b. Many times in the book Isaiah says, "your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." (cf. Isaiah 41:14; 43:14; 47:4; 48:17; 54:5)

C. The Servant of the Lord.

1. Beginning in Isaiah 40 we find the recurring figure of the "Servant of the Lord."
2. Sometimes the servant is clearly the nation of Israel (Isaiah 49:3), and at other times it isn't. (Isaiah 49:5-6)
3. Some scholars see the servant as a progression typified in this pyramid:
4. Isaiah 53 clearly offers a picture of the servant as being Jesus Christ. (cf. Acts 8:32-34; I Peter 2:22-25) 49 50

ISAIAH

Summarized Bible

After the death of King Jehoshaphat, the kingdom of Judah entered into a long period of decline in religion and morality. Joram, the son of Jehoshaphat, married the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, rulers of Israel. The daughter's influence in the Southern Kingdom was similar to that of her mother in the north, and it could be summed up in two words, all bad.

Years later Judah continued its sinking into a state of moral degradation during the reign of Ahaz, but she was lifted from her quagmire of defeatism by Hezekiah, able and pious son of Ahaz. Isaiah aided Hezekiah's reform program with enthusiasm and good sense. (from Dickson Bible] Isaiah prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Isaiah's Vision of Judah

I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me. A sinful nation loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers have forsaken the Lord; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him. Therefore, stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your hands are full of blood; so, wash and make yourselves clean. Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, and plead the case of the widow. The actions of Jerusalem and Judah are against the Lord, defying his glorious presence. The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. They have no regard or respect for Jehovah God. They have brought disaster upon themselves. Since they will not repent the Lord Almighty will take from Jerusalem and Judah both supply and support: all supplies of food and all supplies of water.

Isaiah saw another vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days (the time of Christ], the mountain of the Lord's house will be the highest of all—the most important place on earth. It will be raised above the other hills, and people from all over the world will stream there to worship. People from many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob's God. There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For the Lord's teaching will go out from Zion; his word will go out from Jerusalem.

In the days of Uzziah Isaiah saw the Lord seated on His Throne and heard a voice asking who will warn all the nations of coming disaster? Isaiah answered as all of God's children should answer, "Hear am I send me."

Isaiah Proclaiming God's Message

Judah

The king of Assyria will have plundered the wealth of Damascus and the riches of Samaria as a river in flood, bursting its banks, pouring into Judah, and sweeping everything before it.

Babylon

Listen, an uproar among the kingdoms, like nations massing together! The Lord Almighty is mustering an army for war. The Medes, who do not care for silver and have no delight in gold will strike down the young men; they will have no mercy on infants nor will they look with compassion on children. Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations.

Moab

Moab will be destroyed at night. A throne will be established a man from the house of David will sit on it judging the cause of righteousness.

Damascus

Damascus, representing the Northern Kingdom, will no longer be a city but will become a heap of ruins. You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress.

Cush

Woe to the land of whirring wings along the rivers of Cush (probably Ethiopia), which sends envoys by sea in papyrus boats over the water. Before the harvest, when the blossom is gone and the flower becomes a ripening grape, he will cut off the shoots with pruning knives, and cut down and take away the spreading branches. They will all be left to the mountain birds of prey and to the wild animals.

Egypt

The Lord rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt within them. "I will stir up Egyptian against Egyptian — brother will fight against brother, neighbor against neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom. The Egyptians will lose heart, and I will bring their plans to nothing; they will consult the idols and the spirits of the dead, the mediums and the spiritists. I will hand the Egyptians over to the power of a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them," declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty.

Tyre

Wail, O ships of Tarshish! For Tyre is destroyed and left without a house or harbor. From the land of Cyprus, word has come to them. The Lord has stretched out his hand over the sea and made its kingdoms tremble. He has given an order concerning Phoenicia that her fortresses be destroyed.

Jerusalem, the City of David

Your worship of me is nothing but made-up rules taught by men. You are full of revelry saying eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you may die. But you will all be captured and taken prisoner. The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Comment: Israel's focus was on pleasure rather than on God.

Hope for Redemption

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

Comment: They will receive salvation from Babylon and then when the Messiah comes in the last days the Covenant God gave through Moses will end. A new covenant will be established by the Messiah, Jesus, the Christ, the atoning sacrifice, with forgiveness of sins.

Speaking of the Messiah to come – "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope." This is what God the Lord says "I, the Lord, have called you in

righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles.”

To people God chose to bring the Messiah into the world, Isaiah recants many of the things God had done for them in making them a nation, things they had forgotten. In all of Isaiah’s proclaiming God’s message, he constantly mentions the coming Messiah who would sit on David’s throne forever.

Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are far from righteousness. I am bringing my righteousness and salvation sometime in the future and it will not be delayed.

Comment: “My righteousness and Salvation” – The Messiah, Jesus, Christ, the Atoning Sacrifice - was to come in the future. Forgiveness and salvation would be offered to everyone including the Gentiles.

“I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best and directs you in the way you should go. Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord - The law will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations. My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Isaiah 49)

My word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Isaiah’s Messianic Prophecies

Prophecy	Prophesied	Fulfilled
Was scourged and spit upon	Isa. 1:6	Mark 14:65; John 19:1
His law went forth from Zion and His word from Jerusalem	Isa 2:1-3	Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:1-40
Born of a virgin	Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:18; Luke 2:7
He was called Immanuel	Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:22-23
A stone of stumbling and rock of offense	Isa. 8:14	Rom. 9:32; 1 Pet. 2:8
He is the light to Zebulun and Naphtali	Isa. 9:1-3	Matt. 4:12-16
The righteousness of His reign	Isa. 9:6-7	John 5:30; Rev.19:11
The Gentiles should be admitted into His service	Isa. 11:10; 42:1;	John 10:16; Acts 10:44-48; Rom. 15:9-12
He was extended upon the cross and His hands and His feet were nailed to the wood	Isa. 25:10-11	John 19:18; 20-25
Introduced by John the Baptist	Isa. 40:3;	Matt. 3:1-3; Luke 1:17
His compassion	Isa. 40:11; 42:3	Matt. 12:15-20; Heb. 4:15
He was sent as a deliverer to the people	Isa. 41:1-3	Luke 4:16-21; Luke 4:43

He was meek and with ostentation	Isa. 42:1-2	Phil. 2:7-9
Hated by the Jews	Isa. 49:7	John 15:24-25
He shall suffer, abuse	Isa. 50:6	Matt. 26:67
His visage was greatly marred	Isa. 52:14; 53:3	John 19:1-5
Rejected by His brethren	Isa. 53:3	John 1:11; John 7:5
He suffered that He might bear away our sins	Isa. 53:4	Matt.20:28; 26:28
He shall be whipped	Isa. 53:5	Matt. 27:26,29
He was patient and silent in all His sufferings	Isa. 53:7	Matt.26:63; 27:12-14
Was without guile	Isa. 53:9	Pet. 2:22
He was buried with the rich	Isa. 53:9	Matt. 27:57-60
He made intercession for the murderers	Isa. 53:12	Luke 23:24
This agony was increased by being numbered among thieves	Isa. 53:12	Mark 15:28
He suffered alone; even the Father's presence was withdrawn	Isa. 63:1-3	Matt. 27:46

D. R. Duncan; Hermeneutics Cincinnati, n.d. pp. 395-99 and Dr. Hawley O. Taylor; Modern Science and Christian Faith pp. 179-183

Key points from Isaiah

- God expects reverence, respect, honor and obedience because of your love of Him.
- There is always disappointment and consequences as a result of sin and rebellion.
- Following sin, God is always ready to forgive after one's recognition of sin, repentance evidence by a change in lifestyle and a return to His loving care. It is man's choice.
- To those under the covenant given by God through Moses there was a promise of forgiveness. Forgiveness is in Christ.
- To those in the covenant of Christ, He offers forgiveness to those who put their trust and obedience in Him.