

ISAIAH

I. OBSERVATIONS

A. Isaiah the Man

1. Isaiah has been called the:
 - a. Messianic Prophet
 - b. Evangelical Prophet
 - c. Prophet of Redemption
 - d. Prince of the Old Testament Prophets
 - e. Dean of the Prophets
 - f. Paul of the Old Testament
 - g. Gospel According to Isaiah
2. "Never perhaps has there been another prophet like Isaiah, who stood with his head in the clouds and his feet on the solid earth, with his heart in the things of eternity and his mouth and hands in the things of time, with his spirit in the eternal counsel of God and his body in the very definite moment of history" (George Robinson, quoting Valetton).
3. Isaiah stands between the Old Order which is passing away and he can see a new one coming.
 - a. Isaiah is 700 years away from the new covenant coming.
 - b. He is beginning to see the Old Covenant fading and the new one on the horizon.
4. He was contemporary to Micah in Judah and of Amos and Hosea in Israel.
 - a. He lived and preached in Jerusalem (in Judah, "the prophet of the king's court").
 - b. Micah began preaching (in the surrounding areas of Jerusalem) around 30 years after Isaiah.
5. Tradition says that Isaiah was sawn asunder with a wooden saw by King Manasseh (c.f. Heb. 11:37).
 - a. Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, reproaches the Jews with the accusation "whom (Isaiah) you sawed asunder with a wooden saw." (Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 120, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1, p. 259)
6. He was a prophet of God who was:
 - a. A prophet of the future, even though he addressed himself to the Jews of his day.
 - 1) He constantly pointed to events to come.
 - 2) He prophesied of the future of Judah and the destruction of the heathen nations.
 - 3) He spoke of the coming of a King, the Messiah, who would rule in righteousness.
(cf. John 12:41)
 - b. A great statesman who had great insight into the affairs of his day.
 - c. An advisor to kings meeting them as their equal.
 - d. A great reformer.
 - 1) He condemned the errors of the people.
 - 2) He pointed to God as the source of all right conduct.
 - e. Without peer in relation to his insight into the true nature and character of God.
 - 1) He recognized the Lord's absolute holiness and righteousness.
 - 2) He emphasized God's control over the nations and their destiny.

B. Isaiah the Book

1. "Isaiah has been referred to as 'The Miniature Bible.'"
 - a. Isaiah has 66 chapters and the Bible has 66 books.
 - b. Isaiah is divided into two main sections as is the Bible.
 - 1) Condemnation (Isaiah 1-39) = Old Testament
 - 2) Comfort (Isaiah 40-66) = New Testament
2. Isaiah is the Epistle to the Romans of the Old Testament.
3. The book of Isaiah is quoted more in the New Testament than any other book except the Psalms.

- a. It is quoted around 50 times in reference to Christ.
- 4. The literary imagery is invaluable to a better understanding of the Old Testament, especially when studying apocalyptic texts such as Matthew 24 and Revelation.

II. NAME

- A. The name of the book is taken from its author, Isaiah.
 - 1. It means “salvation is of the Lord” or “the Lord is salvation.”
 - 2. It “indicates that his mission was to point the people to the Lord, the only source of salvation” (Homer Hailey, *A Commentary on Isaiah*, 26).

III. AUTHOR

- A. Isaiah the son of Amoz is the author of the book (Isaiah 1:1).
- B. Little is known of his personal life except for his family:
 - 1. He was married to a woman who was a prophetess (8:3).
 - 2. He had at least two sons who had prophetic names, the first a promise of mercy, the latter of judgment:
 - a. Shear-jashub: “a remnant shall return” (7:3)
 - b. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz: “The spoil speeds, the prey hastens” (8:1)
- C. Contention of Authorship
 - 1. Many people today dispute the authorship of Isaiah.
 - a. They believe that the book was written by three Isaiahs.
 - b. They believe that the first section of Isaiah was written by the Isaiah himself and Second Isaiah who lived in the Babylonian exile.
 - c. They believe that the second section was written by Third Isaiah who lived shortly after the return from exile.
 - 2. There are many problems with this view.
 - a. There is mention of only one Isaiah in the book not many.
 - b. The phraseology is the same in both sections of the book.
 - c. The New Testament writers only speak of one Isaiah.
 - d. Jesus quoted from the second section of Isaiah and attributed it to Isaiah (Luke 4:16-21; Isa. 61).

IV. DATE

- A. Isaiah dates his work during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, & Hezekiah kings of Judah (Isaiah 1:1).
 - 1. He was called to be a prophet in the year that king Uzziah died (Isaiah 6:1) which would place the date at 755 B.C.
 - 2. He was ordered to be killed by Manasseh the son of Hezekiah which would place the date of his death sometime after 693 B.C.
- B. The book of Isaiah would have been written sometime between these two dates in the life of Isaiah.
- C. “The book of Isaiah is basically a series of discourses by the prophet delivered at different times and on different occasions. The arrangement of these discourses is generally chronological whenever history is involved” (Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen’s Survey of the Old Testament*, 329).
- D. The book of Isaiah in relation to certain historical dates and events.
 - 1. 1:1 (740-690 B.C.). The scope of Isaiah’s ministry.
 - 2. 6:1 (740 B.C.). Isaiah’s call and commission as a prophet in the year king Uzziah died.
 - 3. 7:1 (734 B.C.). The Syro-Ephraimitic War. Syria and Israel formed an alliance against Assyria and when king Ahaz of Judah refused to join them, they conspired to kill him.
 - 4. 14:28 (727 B.C.). In the year king Ahaz died, Isaiah prophesied against the surrounding nations.

5. 20:1 (711 B.C.). Sargon invaded the region of Palestine and conquered Ashdod, a Philistine city which had revolted against Assyria.
 6. 36:1 (701 B.C.). Sennacherib invaded Palestine and besieged Jerusalem. After an angel slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in their camp, the Assyrians fled.
- E. See Gene Taylor, 25-26, "III. The Setting" – Politically, Religiously

V. PURPOSE

- A. The immediate purpose of Isaiah's work was to urge Judah to return to God (Isaiah 1:18).
 1. There was need for a faithful remnant to bring the Messiah into the world.
 2. Thus the purpose of the book centers around the Messiah.
- B. The ultimate purpose was to show that the Christ was coming!
- C. The prophets had multiple purposes:
 1. To FORTHTELL – To speak of the events of the day
 2. To FORETELL – To see things that would happen down the line

VI. OUTLINE

- A. The Purpose of Christ (1-39) – Laying out the sin problem
- B. The Promise of Christ (40-66) – He's coming to help us!

VII. KEY VERSES – (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)

- A. This section represents all that is here, the purpose and the promise of Christ.

VIII. REDEMPTION (There are TONS of allusions to redemption in the book)

- A. Coming Kingdom (Isaiah 2:1-4; Acts 2)
- B. Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22, 23)
- C. A Son is Given (Isaiah 9:6-7)
- D. Rod from the Stem of Jesse (Isaiah 11)
- E. Precious Cornerstone (Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9:33; 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6)
- F. Mission of Christ (Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:16-21)
- G. Servant Songs
 1. Song One – Law Giver (Isaiah 42:1-4)
 2. Song Two – Laborer of God (Isaiah 49:1-6)
 3. Song Three – Legal Proceeding (Isaiah 50:4-9)
 4. Song Four – Life Giving Sacrifice (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)