

# The Book of Isaiah

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# Introduction to Isaiah

## I. Biography

### A. Childhood

1. In Isaiah 1:1, he is identified as Isaiah, the son of Amoz. Tradition states that Isaiah was the cousin of King Uzziah (Talmud Meg. 10b). This would mean that Isaiah's father and Uzziah's father, King Amaziah, were brothers. If true, Isaiah would have grown up in the royal court, with his cousin, the future king Uzziah.
2. The ease with which Isaiah served in the royal court, and his ability to counsel on the foreign affairs of the day suggest, at the least, he was from an influential, upper class family. (See Isa. 7:3-4; 8:2 30:1-7; 36:1-38:8, 21f; cf. 2 Kings 18:3-20:19).

### B. Adulthood

1. He probably lived most of his life in and around Jerusalem.
2. He was married to a "prophetess" (Isa. 8:1), a term which either meant she was also a prophet or married to a prophet. They had at least two children. The first, Shearjashub (Isa. 7:3) means "a remnant shall return" and refers to the hope for Israel. The second, Mahershalalhashbaz (Isa. 8:1f) means "hurry spoil, hasten booty" and refers to judgment upon Israel.
3. He apparently served as a court scribe, keeping the official chronicle for King Uzziah (2 Chr. 26:22). If this is so, he also may have been involved in training the king's children. If true, it is a possible explanation for why the people accused him of prophesying to them "line upon line" like a tutor would do in teaching small children (Isa. 28:9-13).
4. It is widely believed that Isaiah wrote about his call to prophetic ministry in Isaiah 6 which he states was the year King Uzziah died. So, his prophetic ministry would have been roughly 40 years from 740 BC, the year King Uzziah died to 700 BC, near the end of Hezekiah's reign. His active public life would have been roughly 65 years from serving as a Uzziah's scribe to the reign of Manasseh, Hezekiah's son.
5. Isaiah was a contemporary of Amos, Hosea and Micah for at least part of his ministry.

### C. Death

1. Isaiah may have continued in his service until well into the reign of Manasseh, since he apparently recorded the death of Assyrian King Sennacherib in 681 BC (Isa. 37:38).
2. Jewish tradition states Isaiah was placed inside a hollow log and sawn in two during the reign of Manasseh. The author of Hebrews alluded to this in Hebrews 11:37.

## II. Historical Context

### A. First Period (745-735 BC): Isaiah 1-6. (See map 66)

#### 1. Kings

##### a. Judah

- 1) Uzziah (792-740 BC), 2 Ki. 15:1-7
- 2) Jotham (750-734 BC), 2 Ki. 15:32-38

##### b. Israel

- 1) Menahem (752-742 BC), 2 Ki. 15:16-22
- 2) Pekahiah (742-740 BC), 2 Ki. 15:23-26
- 3) Pekah (752-732 BC), 2 Ki. 15:27-31

##### c. Assyria: Tiglathpileser (Tilgathpileser) III (745-727 BC), 2 Ki. 15:29

##### d. Syria: Rezin (742?-732 BC), 2 Ki. 15:36f

#### 2. Summary

- a. While both Judah and Israel (under Jeroboam II) experienced an extended period of peace and prosperity during the early part of the 8th cent. BC, trouble was brewing in the east as Assyria regained its former power under Tiglathpileser III.
- b. The Assyrians conquered their way around the Fertile Crescent, taking all of northern Syria by 740 BC (the year of Uzziah's death), and putting both Israel and Judah under tribute by 735 BC.
- c. Syria, which had been an ongoing enemy of Israel, made a defensive alliance with them to fight the Assyrians, a pact which would prove dangerous to Judah later on.

#### 3. Isaiah's Ministry

Though nothing is mentioned specifically in Isaiah's prophecies about Uzziah or Jotham, some commentators suggest his introductory calls to repentance in Isa. 1-5 were preached then as the Lord sought to stop the trend of apostasy which had continued under their godly reigns (2 Chr. 27:2). Isaiah's vision and call (Isa. 6) occurred the year Uzziah died.

## B. Second Period (735-722 BC): Isaiah 7-12; 33-35? (See map 67)

### 1. Kings

a. Judah: Ahaz (735-715 BC), 2 Kings 16:1-20

b. Israel

1) Pekah (752-732 BC), 2 Ki. 16:1-20

2) Hoshea (732-723 BC), 2 Ki. 15:30; 17:1-41

c. Assyria

1) Tiglathpileser (Tilgathpileser) III (745-727 BC), 2 Ki. 16:7, 10; 2Chr. 28:19-20

2) Shalmaneser V (727-722 BC), 2 Ki. 17:3ff; 18:9ff

3) Sargon II (722-705 BC), Isa. 20:1

d. Syria: Rezin (742?-732 BC), 2 Ki. 16:5ff

### 2. Summary

- a. The alliance of Pekah and Rezin plotted an attack against Ahaz near the beginning of his reign (the Syro-Ephraimite war), intending to replace Ahaz with an anti-Assyrian puppet who would aid in their fight against Tiglathpileser.
- b. Ahaz, though warned by Isaiah against joining with Assyria instead of trusting the Lord, made a pact with the invaders, temporarily gaining protection from Israel and Syria.
- c. However, Assyria proved to be no help to Ahaz (2 Chr. 28:20), and in addition Judah was attacked by Edom and Philistia because of Ahaz' idolatry.

### 3. Isaiah's Ministry

Isaiah's first dated prophecies came to Ahaz (Isa. 7-12) during the Syro-Ephraimite war with Pekah and Remaliah. Further, it is generally believed the burdens against the Gentile nations (Isa 13-23) and the further messages regarding Judah judgment and future hope (Isa. 24-35) date from this period.

### C. Third Period (722-686 BC): Isaiah 36-39. (See map 74)

#### 1. Kings:

- a. Judah: Hezekiah (729-686 BC), 2 Ki. 18:1-20:21; Isa. 36-39
- b. Israel: Hoshea (732-723 BC), 2 Ki. 17:1-41
- c. Assyria
  - 1) Shalmaneser V (727-722), 2 Ki. 17:3ff; 18:9ff
  - 2) Sargon II (722-705), Isa. 20:1
  - 3) Sennacherib (705-681), 2 Ki. 18:13-19:36; Isa. 36-37
- d. Babylon: Berodachbaladan (721-703 BC), 2 Ki. 20:12
- e. Egypt: So (730-720 BC), 2 Ki. 17:4; Isa. 36:6

#### 2. Summary

- a. Numerous significant events occurred during this period, beginning with the overthrow and captivity of Israel by Shalmaneser and Sargon in 722 BC.
- b. The continual aggression of Assyria in its southward expansion toward Egypt, and Hezekiah's revolt against Assyrian servitude after the death of Sargon in 705 BC, led inevitably to a confrontation with Hezekiah and Judah at Jerusalem by Sennacherib in 701 BC (Isa. 36-37).
- c. By relying on the Lord rather than his own cunning, or heathen alliances, Hezekiah saw Assyria turned back and Sennacherib sent to his end, leaving Hezekiah to rule the Southern Kingdom in relative peace and prosperity for much of his reign.
- d. Meanwhile, another dark cloud was forming in the east: the Babylonians, starting to rise in power, sent a mission to Hezekiah to wish him well after his illness, and perhaps secretly to learn more about this formerly great nation's wealth and circumstances.

#### 3. Isaiah's ministry

The height of Isaiah's ministry is reached in Isa. 36-39 as he ministers with and to King Hezekiah as he battles Assyria, illness, and his own ego.

#### D. Fourth Period (686-680? BC): Isaiah 40-66. (See map 75)

1. Kings: Judah: Manasseh (697-642 BC), 2 Ki. 21:1-18

#### 2. Summary

A spiritually dark and violent period began with the ascension of Manasseh to the throne. His great wickedness, overturning his father Hezekiah's reforms and causing blood to flow in the streets of Jerusalem, no doubt rankled the aged prophet, and, when Isaiah's admonitions perhaps offended the king, led to the prophet's martyrdom around 680 BC.

#### 3. Isaiah's Ministry

While nothing is dated from this period, some commentators think, because Manasseh's gross wickedness would have driven the elderly Isaiah into seclusion, that the prophet turned his thoughts to Israel's future deliverance, first by Cyrus, and finally by the promised Messiah (Isa. 40-66).

### III. The "Problem" surrounding the book of Isaiah.

The unity of the book is questioned by those who don't believe the Bible and by well-meaning Christians who want to appear "scholarly." The basic argument is that, since there is such a great difference in style and content between Isaiah 1-39 and Isaiah 40-66, they couldn't have been written by the same man; thus, there had to be two "Isaias," one who lived during the Assyrian period (Isaiah I), and the other who lived during the Babylonian period (Isaiah II).

1. The harshest support for this theory says the latter half of Isaiah had to have been written during the time of Babylon (or even after the Exile) because the writer mentions the destruction of Babylon by Cyrus, which didn't occur until about 150 years after Isaiah was dead. The argument assumes that God can't use a man to predict the future.
2. The argument that there must be two authors because the two halves are so different implies that the same man can't write in two different styles.

If the first half of Isaiah was written before or shortly after Hezekiah's death, Isaiah would have had a more public ministry, and his prophecies would reflect the concerns of the day.

If the second half was written during the wicked reign of Manasseh, the elderly Isaiah would certainly have been far less active, and thus able to spend large amounts of time thinking and writing about the future under divine inspiration.

3. Finally, the New Testament writers quote from both halves of Isaiah and never once suggest that there were two different authors.

## Isaiah Summary Outline

- I. Prologue: Condition of Israel's Faith (Ch. 1-6) \* Isaiah's First Period \*
  - A. Israel's problem presented (Ch. 1-5)
  - B. Israel's prophet prepared (Ch. 6)
  
- II. Probing: Crisis of Israel's Faith (Ch. 7-39) \* Isaiah's Second and Third Period \*
  - A. Unfaithful Ahaz: The choice of faith (Ch. 7-12)
  - B. Israel's Enemies (Ch. 13-35)
    - 1. Gentiles (Ch. 13-27)
      - a. Enemies' sin (Ch. 13-23)
      - b. Israel's salvation (Ch. 24-27)
    - 2. Themselves (Ch. 28-35)
      - a. Enemies' sin (Ch. 28-33)
      - b. Israel's salvation (Ch. 34-35)
  - C. Faithful Hezekiah: The tests of faith (Ch. 36-39)
  
- III. Promise: Conclusion of Israel's Faith (Ch. 40-66) \* Isaiah's Fourth Period \*
  - A. God's servant, Cyrus: God's grace to Israel (Ch. 40-48)
  - B. God's Servant, Messiah: God's atonement for Israel (Ch. 49-55)
  - C. God's servant, Israel: God's transformation of Israel (Ch. 56-66)

# Outline of Isaiah

## I. Prologue: Condition of Israel's Faith (Ch. 1-6) \* Isaiah's First Period \*

### A. Israel's Problem Presented (Ch. 1-5) (See map 65)

Chapter 1 Summary: Isaiah prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. We read that Israel has rebelled against God and become a sinful nation - no soundness from head to foot. They have abandoned righteousness and are not protecting the orphans or widows. Because of their sin, their prayers and sacrifices have become meaningless to God. Unless they repent, God will bring judgement upon them through their enemies, and only a remnant will survive. During the millennial reign of Christ, Jerusalem's sin will be purged and it will become the city of righteousness once again.

#### 1. Israel's condition and God's solution (Ch. 1)

##### a. The title of the book (1:1)

- 1) Author: Isaiah, son of Amoz
- 2) Content: Vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem
- 3) Timeframe: Reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah

##### b. Israel's condition (1:2-9)

###### 1) God's charge against His people (1:2-3)

- a) They rebelled against the One Who raised them (1:2). Isaiah compared Israel to a rebellious child who, despite his good upbringing, ignorantly rebels against his parents, who gave him life.
- b) They are less mindful than cattle (1:3). The ox is considered a stupid animal, and the donkey is known for its stubbornness, but both manifest more sense than Israel did. Even an animal knows its owner, who feeds it. But Israel was ignorant of the God who created and sustained her. By comparison, Israel had less understanding than an animal known for its stupidity.

###### 2) Isaiah's comments on Israel's condition (1:4-9)

- a) They are a sinful nation (1:4). The people rejected God and turned from Him.
- b) They are a sick body (1:5-6). God tried to get Israel's attention through discipline, but she did not respond or makes attempts to correct herself.
- c) They are a stricken land (1:7-9). Sennacherib was the Assyrian king who devastated the land of Judah 701 BC. They did not conquer Judah, but they did attack and even threatening the city of Jerusalem (Hezekiah – Isaiah 36, 37). Some of the outlying towns fell to Assyria, and only the had of God kept the whole nation from being conquered.

c. God's solution (1:10-20)

- 1) The ridiculing call (1:10)
- 2) Ritual or reality? (1:11-17)
  - a) Ritual is not righteousness (1:11-15)
    - i. Pointless sacrifices (1:11-12)
    - ii. Wearisome assemblies (1:13-14)
    - iii. Guilty prayers (1:15)

The Jews of Isaiah's day probably felt they didn't deserve God's punishment. After all, they were still quite religious even though they abandoned Him in their hearts. Judah's worship had become a mere matter of form, just going through the motions with no sincerity of heart.

Take away: It is possible to do the right thing the wrong way. It is right to attend worship services, witness, tithe, visit the sick, but these things can be done with the wrong motive. If the heart is wrong—if it is only an outward exhibition without a corresponding inner conviction and commitment—it is spiritually without value.

- b) The reality of righteousness (1:16-17)
  - i. Remove your sin (1:16)
  - ii. Renew godly living (1:17). Judah needed to do more than just stop sinning, they also needed to be doing good.
- 3) The reasonable response (1:18-20)
  - a) God's reasonable call (1:18). The word "reason" is a law term used to indicate coming to a conclusion about a court case. God wanted to convince the people that He was right and they were wrong.
  - b) Israel's responsible choices (1:19-20)

d. Israel's response (1:21-31) - What had happened despite God's call.

- 1) Judah's deep apostasy (1:21-23)
  - a) Righteousness is replaced with faithlessness and murder (1:21)
  - b) Prosperity is replaced with pale imitation (1:22)
  - c) Justice is replaced with thievery, bribery and cruelty (1:23).

The decline of the nation was evident. Their corrupt leaders ignored the orphans and widows. Furthermore, bribery was rampant, justice was only for those who could afford to pay the bribes.

- 2) God's announcement of judgment (1:24-26)
  - a) He will remove His enemies (1:24). Judgement was sure to come.
  - b) He will purge His people (1:25). Judgement was to purify His people.
  - c) He will restore His righteousness in Judah (1:26)

### 3) The fate of the wicked (1:27-31)

- a) Zion will be redeemed with judgment and righteousness (1:27). Some repent.
- b) Idolaters will be consumed (1:28-30) - Oaks and gardens were places of idolatry.
- c) The end of the wicked will be complete (1:31). Rebels will be purged from the kingdom, leaving only the faithful remnant.

## 2. The problem with Israel (Ch. 2-4)

Chapter 2 Summary: Isaiah 2 is a prophecy concerning the end times and the millennial reign of Jesus, when He will rule all the nations from Jerusalem. The temple (the Lord's house) shall be established on Mt. Zion. It will be a time of peace as nation shall not lift up sword against nation. The pride and arrogance of man will be humbled, and God will be exalted.

### a. God's desire for Israel (2:1-4) - What God intended for Israel.

Vss 1-4 - The "mountain" refers to Mt. Moriah, the Temple mount in Jerusalem, and it is prominent in Isaiah. This is where Solomon's Temple was built (1 Kings 6) and this is also where the millennial temple would be built (Ezek. 40-43).

- 1) A second superscription (2:1). This introduces a more detailed analysis of God's relationship with His people (ch. 2-5).
- 2) A certain future (2:2-4)
  - a) The Lord's worldwide kingdom (2:2)
  - b) The Lord's worldwide influence (2:3)
  - c) The Lord's worldwide justice and peace (2:4)

There is no peace without justice, and there is no justice without the Lord.

### b. God's discipline of Israel (2:5-4:1) - What Israel had become.

#### 1) Israel's misplaced trust (2:5-22)

- a) The call to walk with the Lord (2:5)
- b) Israel had chosen to trust in man (2:6-9)
  - i. Unholy alliances with the heathen led the Lord to forsake them (2:6)
  - ii. Untold wealth had made them proud (2:7)
  - iii. Unforgivable idolatry had infected every level of society (2:8-9)
- c) The Lord would be exalted (2:10-21) - Repetition in each section
  - i. He will be exalted over man (2:10-17)
  - ii. He will be exalted over idols (2:18-21)
- d) The call to cease trusting man (2:22)

Chapter 3 Summary: Isaiah 3 is a prophecy about what is going to happen to Judah and Jerusalem. Their leaders and skilled craftsmen will be taken away. Law and order will fail as “babes” will rule. The wicked will be judged. The proud women will be humbled, and the armies defeated in battle.

2) Israel’s miserable prospects (3:1-4:1)

a) Among the men, a lack of leadership (3:1-15)

- i. The Lord would replace Israel’s leaders with incompetents (3:1-7)
- ii. The Lord would do this because of Israel’s pride (3:8-11)
- iii. The Lord would remove even the replacements for His people’s sake (3:12-15)

\*\*\* Isaiah 3:12

b) Among the women, a lack of piety (3:16-4:1)

- i. Their proud attitudes (3:16-17)
- ii. Their preening attire (3:18-23)
- iii. Their promised abasement (3:24-4:1)

Chapter 4 Summary: Having said what will happen to Judah and Jerusalem because of her sinfulness and pride, in Isaiah Chapter 3, Isaiah Chapter 4 now gives hope concerning the restoration which will eventually follow. The branch of the Lord (the Messiah) will be glorified in Jerusalem. There will be a cleansing from sin and bloodshed, and Jerusalem will become a place of shelter and refuge.

c. God's determination for Israel (4:2-6) - What God intends for Israel.

1) His future provision (4:2)

- a) The Branch refers to Jesus Christ. He is a branch or sprout that comes from the line of David. It is also a messianic title.
- b) Renewed fruitfulness of the land

2) His future purification (4:3-4)

- a) He will make His people holy (4:3)
- b) He will do this by removing their sin and blood guiltiness (4:4)

3) His future protection (4:5-6)

- a) His presence will be in every house (4:5)
- b) His house will be a refuge for all His people (4:6)

### 3. The analogy of wild grapes (Ch. 5) - An ironic song of judgment.

Chapter 5 Summary: In Isaiah 5, Judah and Jerusalem are like a vineyard established by God. Instead of producing good fruit, it only brought forth wild grapes because of their sin. Because it has failed to produce good fruit, God is allowing the walls of the vineyard to collapse and will use other nations to bring judgement on the people, who have turned away from Him, and rejected His law. Judgement will come upon all who reverse God's order by calling evil good, and darkness light.

#### a. The song of the vineyard (5:1-7) - A wedding song from a bride (vineyard) and groom (well-beloved)

##### 1) The vineyard presented (5:1-2)

- a) The expected prospects (5:1)
- b) The expended effort (5:2a)
- c) The unexpected result (5:2b)

Wild grapes - It is possible to become discouraged when we look at events in our society and the world. Unrighteousness appears to prevail. Yet God will write the last chapter; God will consummate this age precisely according to His sovereign plan. In that day, righteousness will prevail.

##### 2) The audience addressed (5:3-4)

- a) Judah and Jerusalem called to judge (5:3)
- b) The well-beloved questions his efforts (5:4a)
- c) The well-beloved asks why (5:4b)

##### 3) The well-beloved justified (5:5-6)

- a) Removal of protection (5:5)
- b) Removal of production (5:6a)
- c) Removal of provision (5:6b)

##### 4) The meaning revealed (5:7)

- a) The Lord is the well-beloved.
- b) The vineyard is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah.
- c) The expected fruit was justice and righteousness.

#### b. The wildness of the grapes (5:8-25)

##### 1) Misplaced values (5:8-17)

- a) The woes (5:8-12)
  - i. Greed (5:8-10)
  - ii. Hedonism (5:11-12)

- b) The results (5:13-17)
  - i. Israel's removal and poverty (5:13)
  - ii. Israel's humiliation (5:14-15).
    - \*\*\* 5:14 – hell hath enlarged herself (volcano)
  - iii. The Lord's exaltation and the land's renewal (5:16-17)
- 2) Misplaced faith (5:18-25)
  - a) The woes (5:18-23)
    - i. Lifestyles of blatant wickedness (5:18-19)
    - ii. Perverting truth and reality (5:20). Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; darkness – light; sweet – bitter.
    - iii. Self-righteousness (5:21)
    - iv. Corrupt values (5:22-23) - Drinking glorified while justice is ignored.
  - b) The results (5:24-25)
    - i. The Lord would destroy their prosperity because they forsook His law (5:24)
    - ii. The Lord Himself would be involved in Israel's destruction (5:25)
  - c. The coming destruction (5:26-30) - Prophecy of Assyria, and possibly Babylon or Rome?
    - 1) The enemy will be called from afar (5:26)
    - 2) The enemy will be prepared for action (5:27-29)
    - 3) The enemy will destroy Israel (5:30)

God had uniquely blessed Israel: He brought them into the Promised Land, provided for them, and gave them victory over their enemies. Now God looked for the fruit of righteousness, but there was none. Instead, the nation scorned God's word, indulging in every form of sin. As a result, God would judge them by bringing a pagan nation against them.

B. Israel's Prophet Prepared (Ch. 6) - May have occurred before the prophecies of ch. 1-5, but those chapters may have been made a prologue as the reason for Isaiah's call. (See map 65)

Chapter 6 Summary: Isaiah 6 records Isaiah's commissioning as a prophet. He has a vision of God in His holiness, seated on His throne and surrounded by angels. In the presence of God's holiness, he becomes acutely aware of his own sinfulness. His lips are touched with coals from the fire of God, and he is appointed to bring God's word to the people. He is warned that they will harden their hearts and not understand the message, until destruction has come upon them. He ends with hope that a remnant of the people, a tenth (10%), will return.

## 1. The prophet's cleansing (6:1-7)

### a. The vision of the Lord (6:1-4)

- 1) The time of the vision: the year King Uzziah died (6:1a). Isaiah also wrote about the death of Sennacherib (27:37, 38), which occurred in 681 BC, about 58 years later. So, Isaiah's response to the call was a lifetime commitment.
- 2) The content of the vision (6:1b-3)
  - a) The Lord's throne in the Temple (6:1b)
  - b) The seraphim (6:2-3).

Seraphim, meaning "burning ones," are celestial beings, generally resembling human beings. Each having six wings, they are pictured above the throne of God (cp. Rev. 4:8). In humility they cover their faces and in respect they cover their feet before God. Their purpose is to praise the holiness and power of God (v. 3) and bring communication from heaven to earth (v. 6).

### c) The aftermath (6:4)

### b. The purifying of the prophet (6:5-7)

- 1) His conviction (6:5). He saw and confessed his own sinfulness.
- 2) His cleansing (6:6-7). Cleansing came after sin confessed.

## 2. The prophet's commission (6:8-13)

### a. The call (6:8)

- 1) The Lord's question (6:8a). God is still looking for people who will "go" for Him.
- 2) Isaiah's response (6:8b). He responded immediately.

### b. The command (6:9-10)

- 1) God's plan: Make Israel's heart dull through preaching (6:9-10a)
- 2) God's purpose: Keep Israel from hearing, conversion and healing (6:10b)

### c. The culmination (6:11-13)

- 1) The promised judgment (6:11-12). How long? Until no one is left. The captivity did not occur in Isaiah's day; it was not until a 100 years later that the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and carried off the captive Jews.
- 2) The promised remnant (6:13)

## II. Probing: Crisis of Israel's Faith (Ch. 7-39) \* Isaiah's Second and Third Period \*

### A. Unfaithful Ahaz: The choice between trusting God or Assyria (Ch. 7-12) (Maps 66-70)

Chapter 7 Summary: Isaiah 7 records a prophecy to King Ahaz of Judah when invaded by Israel and Syria. The Lord tells Ahaz not to fear, for the attack will not succeed and Isaiah counsels the king against making an alliance with Assyria. The king did not trust in God but made a treaty with the Assyrians. Syria and Israel will be defeated; however, God will use the Assyrians to lay waste the land of Judah. The Lord will give a sign: a virgin will conceive, called Immanuel, God with us which is a messianic prophecy of a virgin giving birth that will be ultimately fulfilled in Jesus.

#### 1. Signs to the Southern Kingdom of God's presence (7:1-9:7)

##### a. The command to trust God (7:1-9) During Ahaz' reign, 735-715 BC

##### 1) Ahaz' fear (7:1-2) (cf. 2 Kings 15:37; 16:5, 10-18; 2 Chron. 28:22-24)

a) Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, wanted Judah to join their coalition to form a stronger resistance against Assyria. However, Ahaz, the king of Judah, had already decided to align himself with the Assyrians (2 Kings 16:7, 8; 2 Chron. 28:16–21). Not wishing to have an enemy on both sides of them, Rezin and Pekah attacked Judah (Isaiah 7:1) in order to depose Ahaz and install a puppet king who would join their confederacy (v. 6).

b) Though God was keeping Judah from falling to them (7:1), King Ahaz, and all Judah, were terrified at the prospect (7:2)

##### 2) Isaiah's mission (7:3-9)

a) The meeting (7:3): Isaiah was to meet Ahaz with his son at the conduit of the upper pool, in the valley east of the City of David in Jerusalem

b) The command not to fear the attackers (7:4-6)

c) The promise of the enemies' failure, and Israel's fall (7:7-9). Contains a final call for Ahaz to believe, or else.

This was historically fulfilled: In 722 B.C. the Assyrians took Israel captive into Assyria (2 Kings 17:24) and in 669 B.C. — sixty-five years after this prophecy — Ashurba ni-pal, king of Assyria (669–626), repopulated Israel with foreigners who intermarried with the remaining Israelites left in the land (which resulted in the Samaritan people).

##### b. Ahaz and Judah's test (7:10-8:10)

##### 1) The sign of Immanuel (7:10-16)

- a) Isaiah commands Ahaz to ask for a sign of God's protection, but Ahaz refuses (7:10-12), because he has already decided to seek an alliance with Assyria (cf. 2 Ki. 16:5f)
- b) Isaiah promises God will give him a sign anyway, the sign of a virgin giving birth to a son named Immanuel (7:13-16). He would live in poverty once he was of age ("eat milk and honey,"), but before he was of age the two hated kings (Syria and Israel) would be defeated (which they were, by Assyria about two years after this prophecy, in 732 and 722 BC, respectively)

It is usual for prophecies to have both a near and a far fulfillment, the near fulfillment being a type, or picture, of the ultimate and greater fulfillment.

The immediate fulfillment in Ahaz's day came through a woman who was a virgin at the time of the prophecy. She then married and had a child named Immanuel. The Immanuel of Ahaz's day would have still been young when the alliance of Israel and Syria was defeated. The mention of the child eating curds (butter) and honey (v. 15, also vv. 21, 22) would fit the setting of Ahaz' day. It describes a devastated land, one with no agriculture and only curds from the milk of a few roving cattle and honey from wild bees available for the people to eat.

The far term fulfillment is the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. The Hebrew word *almah*, translated "virgin," means a young, unmarried woman; it is never used of a married woman. When Matthew quoted Isaiah 7:14 he used the Greek word *parthenos*, which clearly means "virgin" (Matt. 1:23).

Conclusion: Isaiah 7:14 is a prophecy of the virgin birth of Christ.

## 2) The threat of Assyria (7:17-25)

- a) Isaiah promises Assyria will turn on her "ally" Judah, and make it worse than when the kingdom was divided (7:17)
- b) Both the Assyrians and the Egyptians would invade Judah, and swarm over the land like insects (7:18-19). Assyria would serve as a razor to humiliatingly to "shave the beard" off of Judah (7:20). Shaving the hair and beard was a symbol of humiliation
- c) So few people will be left in the land that one cow and two sheep will provide more than enough milk for a man (7:21-22)
- d) The land will become so wild that it will be good only for hunting and pasturing cattle (7:23-25)

Application: Frequently when we are faced with a dilemma, we are tempted to seek a human way out of the problem. We may manipulate or seek erroneous resolutions instead of trusting the Lord. The Lord may put difficulties in our paths to determine the sincerity of our trust in Him.

Chapter 8 Summary: In Isaiah 8, Isaiah has a son named Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, which means 'quick to plunder'. He prophesies that Israel and Syria will be defeated by the Assyrians within one or two years, and that Judah too will be invaded, but God will deliver them. The people should fear God, and not the Assyrians. They should seek God, and not fortune tellers or those with "familiar" spirits (witchdoctors). If they do not do this, the people will enter into spiritual darkness.

- 3) The sign of Mahershalalhashbaz (8:1-4).
  - a) God commands Isaiah to announce his coming son, Mahershalalhashbaz ("speeding to the plunder, hurrying to the spoil") (8:1-3a)
  - b) His birth and infancy would signal the imminent spoiling of Syria and Israel by Assyria (8:3b-4)
- 4) The danger of Assyria (8:5-10)
  - a) Isaiah told Judah they had forsaken the still waters of Shiloah (God's provision) for the destruction and spoil of Syria and Israel (8:5-6)
  - b) Because of this God would indeed bring Assyria like a flood over all Judah's enemies, and even over all of Immanuel's land (8:7-8)
  - c) Isaiah gives a final warning to all those nations who stood against God (including Judah) that Assyria was coming to break their pride (8:9-10)
- c. Clarification of the issue (8:11-9:7) Isaiah's personal testimony to Judah regarding what God had told him.
  - 1) The importance of listening to God (8:11-22)
    - a) Isaiah had decided, based upon God's promise, to not fear the enemies, but to trust the Lord as a stronghold, even as Judah itself was falling away from the Lord (8:11-17)
    - b) Since the Lord had already used Isaiah's family as a testimony of what would come, he would continue faithful to God's Word, even while Judah was turning to the occult, and suffering in the darkness for their decision (8:18-22)  
\*\*\* 8:20 – If they speak not according to this word... no light in them.

Isaiah's son, Mahershalalhashbaz was a testimony that God would destroy Syria and Israel, Judah's enemies, within two years. But Assyria, the instrument of God's judgment, would also be felt in Judah by Sennacherib's invasion in 701 B.C. Nonetheless, Judah would be spared, because God was with them. So the people should trust the Lord, seeking truth and encouragement from His Word.

Chapter 9 Summary: Isaiah 9 continues to warn about the future for the northern kingdom of Israel. Because the people will not turn to Him, God will remove their leaders, and the false prophets, who lie and mislead them. The people will face famine and distress, and will turn against each other, and Judah. Amid this prophecy of doom there is still hope for the future. God will give them a Messiah, who will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- 2) The faithful King to come (9:1-7) The deliverance of Israel is ultimately dependent on the coming of her King
  - a) Isaiah's foresaw the people who were in darkness walking in great light (9:1-2). Matthew's record of the public ministry of Jesus begins in Galilee. Jesus' travels fulfilled the prophecy recorded in Isaiah 9:1.
  - b) Isaiah foresaw Israel increasing in size but not able to increase its great joy because had delivered them from their enemies (9:3-4)
  - c) While battles were usually won in chaos and blood, Israel's deliverance would be won through fire by their greatest King, the mighty God and Prince of Peace, Who would establish an everlasting reign of righteousness over them (9:5-7)

Vs 6 – "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given", could be a Hebrew poetic parallel or some think "a child is born" refers to Jesus' humanity, and "a son is given" refers to His divine nature.

2. Measurement of the Northern Kingdom by God's standards (9:8-10:4) Each section ends with the phrase, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still." Israel would be destroyed by the Lord, not by Ahaz' alliance with Assyria.
  - a. The pride of Ephraim (9:8-12)
    - 1) Israel will know God's judgment has come, despite their proud drive to rebuild what is torn down (9:8-10)
    - 2) Israel will be destroyed from the north by Syria and from the west by Philistia, but will still not repent, and will still suffer the anger of the Lord (9:11-12)
  - b. The corruption of Ephraim's leaders (9:13-17)
    - 1) Because of Israel's impenitence, the Lord will remove their leaders, both civil and religious (9:13-15)
    - 2) Because Israel's leaders corrupted the people, the Lord will not have pity even on the weakest of them (9:16-17)
  - c. The selfishness of everyone (9:18-21)
    - 1) Wickedness is like a consuming fire devouring everything in its path, and the Lord will use this to consume the people of Israel (9:18-19)
    - 2) The Lord's strategy is to allow the northern tribes to consume each other while they are plotting to consume Judah (9:20-21)

Chapter 10 Summary: Isaiah 10 records that, although God will use the Assyrians to overthrow Israel and invade Judah, He will punish them for their pride, because they will boast that they have done everything in their own strength and defeated the God of Judah. Because there is a remnant in the land who seek God, God will stay the hand of the Assyrians and defeat their invading army.

d. The oppression of the helpless (10:1-4)

1) The Lord pronounces woe against those who oppress the poor and helpless (10:1-2)

2) The Lord declares the oppressors will be without any hope in that day (10:3-4)

3. Hope for Judah of God's deliverance from Assyria (10:5-12:6) Fulfilled under Hezekiah (cf. Isa. 36-37)

a. The destruction of the destroyer (10:5-34)

1) The instrument of destruction (10:5-11)

a) Assyria was God's instrument in bringing His judgment on His people, and paying the Assyrians with the spoil (10:5-6)

b) Sadly, Assyria assumed they were control of their destiny, and assumed they would continue to conquer even places God had not appointed for them (10:7-11)

2) The object of destruction (10:12-19)

a) The Lord would destroy Assyria once they had completed their appointed task, because, like an ax which boasts against the woodsman, the Assyrians boasted they were the cause of their success (10:12-15)

b) The Lord would consume Assyria like fire consumes a forest (10:16-19)

3) The promise of restoration to Judah (10:20-27)

a) Isaiah foresees the remnant returning to the Lord after the one they have relied on is destroyed (10:20-23)

"Lord of hosts" is a title of the Lord meaning "to wage war." It pictures the Lord as a victorious warrior surrounded by the heavenly armies in battle against Israel's enemies

b) The Lord asks Judah not to fear the Assyrians (or the Egyptians) since they are merely His instrument for chastising His people, and they will be removed from Judah once His purpose is finished (10:24-27). Allusions to the deliverance of Gideon against the Midianites and Moses from the Egyptians as patterns.

4) A description of Assyria's attack and restoration (10:28-34)

a) Assyria's attack is detailed as they head south toward Jerusalem (10:28-32)

b) The Lord, however, would bring the Assyrians down like a lumberjack cuts down a mighty forest (10:33-34)

b. Deliverance from Jesse's Branch (Ch. 11-12)

Chapter 11 and 12 Summary: Isaiah 11 and 12 are a messianic prophecy describing the character of the Messiah and the nature of His kingdom. He will gather the exiles of Israel and Judah from the four quarters of the earth. His kingdom will be based on righteousness and justice. This prophecy paints a glorious picture of the millennial reign of Jesus, when there will be peace throughout the world, and great rejoicing in what God has done.

- 1) The rule of the Branch (11:1-9)
  - a) His qualifications: He would be perfectly filled with the Spirit of God (11:1-3a). It would be 600 years between the last king of Judah, Zedekiah and Jesus Christ. The throne was lost, like a tree that had been chopped down, but that still had a live root waiting for the opportunity to shoot up – in the millennial reign.
  - b) His rule: He will reign over the earth with absolute justice and righteousness (11:3b-5)
  - c) The result: The lifting of the curse, and the restoration of peace throughout the world (11:6-9)
- 2) The return under the Branch (11:10-16) Not the return from Exile, but the return of the “last days,” in anticipation of the millennium.
  - a) The Gentile nations will seek the Branch (11:10)
  - b) The remnant of all Israel will be gathered from all Gentile nations in which they had been scattered (11:11-12)
  - c) The northern and southern kingdoms will be reunited, and will subdue their common enemies (11:13-14)
  - d) The Lord will bring Israel’s greatest enemies, Egypt and Babylon, and bring them into a subordinate fellowship with His people (11:15-16)
- 3) Rejoicing in the Branch (Ch. 12)
  - a) Israel will thank the Lord for delivering them after chastising them for their wickedness (12:1-2)
  - b) Israel will joyfully partake of God’s salvation (12:3)
  - c) Israel will call all nations to worship and praise their God (12:4-6)

## B. Israel’s Enemies (Ch. 13-35)

### 1. Gentiles (Ch. 13-27)

#### a. The enemies’ sins (Ch. 13-23)

- 1) First series of five burdens (Ch. 13-20). Israel’s centrality in God’s dealings with the Gentiles during Isaiah’s day (Ahaz?)

Chapter 13 Summary: Isaiah 13 is a prophecy concerning Babylon. God will raise up the Medes to invade Assyria, and completely destroy her splendor and devastate the land. The invading army will be cruel and merciless and will have no compassion on those living in Babylonia. This prophecy was fulfilled in about 540 BC, when the Medes invaded Babylon.

- a) Babylon: Political overthrow (13:1-14:27) North of Israel
  - i. God's declaration of anger against the nations, especially the once and future enemy, Babylon (13:1-16; cf. Gen. 11:1-9)
  - ii. God's future destruction of Babylon (13:17-22)

Chapter 14 Summary: In Isaiah 14, God says He will reunite Israel and Judah, and restore them in the land. They will ultimately rule over the nations which oppressed them. The prophecy against Babylon continues, with a taunt against its king. The taunt is not so much against the earthly king, but against the spiritual power beyond his kingdom. This power (Satan) wanted to exalt itself above God but has been brought down to the pit (Hell).

- iii. God promises Israel's return from Babylon (14:1-2). Return under Zerubbabel (cf. Ezra and Nehemiah)
  - iv. God promises the end of Babylon's king (14:3-23). Babylonian king a type of Satan (14:12ff)
  - v. Postscript: God promises the destruction of Assyria (14:24-27)
- b) Philistia: Premature rejoicing at Israel's plight (14:28-32). West of Israel (preached in the year Ahaz died, 715 BC)
  - i. Philistia rejoiced at the death of Ahaz, one of David's descendants (14:28-29a)
  - ii. Their rejoicing would turn to sorrow as another enemy would grind them into poverty (14:29b-30)
  - iii. Their destruction would come from the north (Assyria) (14:31). Fulfilled in 712 BC by Sargon, and in 701 BC by Sennacherib
  - iv. While the Philistines attempted an alliance with Judah for mutual protection against the northern invaders, God's people would trust in Him instead of other nations (14:32)
- c) Moab: The needy destroyed for their pride despite sheltered by Israel (Ch. 15-16) East of Israel

Chapter 15 Summary: In Is. 15, we read a prophecy concerning Moab, (a land bordering the eastern side of the dead sea). It speaks of the wealth of the nation being carried away, and the land becoming desolate. There will be much loss of life, and great mourning by the people. The fugitives from Moab, and those remaining in the land, will face further trials, symbolized by a lion coming upon them.

- i. Moab's grief at being destroyed (15:1-4)
- ii. God's sorrow at destroying Moab (15:5-9) Moab had been friendly with David and his descendants, though there had been ongoing disputes of land along the Arnon River

Chapter 16 Summary: Isaiah 16 is a continuation of the prophecy against Moab. Because of her pride and arrogance, Moab's vineyards will be trampled down, and the Moabites will lose their joy. Fugitives from Moab will seek shelter in Israel to escape from their oppressors. It is prophesied that this initial devastation will come upon Moab within three years. (Fulfilled by the Assyrian invasion of Moab in about 715 BC.)

- iii. Moab seeks, and gains, refuge in Israel (16:1-5) Verse 5 may refer to the millennial reign of Christ
- iv. Pride is the reason for Moab's destruction (16:6-8)
- v. God's sorrow at Moab's destruction (16:9-12)
- vi. Postscript: The certain coming of Moab's destruction (16:13-14). Assyria invaded Moab sometime between 715 and 713 BC, and also in 701 BC.

d) Damascus/Ephraim: Strong cities forsaken, the rock forgotten (Ch. 17) The Northern Kingdom (Syria and Ephraim had joined to fight the Assyrians, and to take over Judah as a southern puppet stronghold)

Chapter 17 Summary: Isaiah 17 is a prophecy addressed to Damascus, the capital city of Syria, (a country located to the north of Israel). The city will be destroyed (fulfilled in about 732BC, following a siege by Assyria). However, there will be a remnant who will turn back to God and abandon pagan worship. The invading armies will be like a raging river until God rebukes them.

- i. Both Damascus and Samaria (the capitals) would be destroyed, primarily because, under Ahaz, Judah had chosen to trust in man (Assyria) rather than the Lord (17:1-6)
- ii. At the day of destruction God's people for idolatry, they would turn back to Him and forsake their idols (17:7-11)
- iii. While the nations would gather against God's people, God Himself would throw them down, and, in the end, see them turn to Him in worship (17:12-18:7) Millennium?

Chapter 18 and 19 Summary: Isaiah 18 is a prophecy addressed to Cush (thought to be Ethiopia or southern Egypt), and Isaiah 19 is addressed to Egypt. (Judah was looking to Egypt to defend them against Syria and Assyria.) Both countries will be overrun by a cruel foreign power. The Nile River will be dried causing their economy to be devastated. (fulfilled with the Assyrians' invasion in about 675 BC). The prophecy concludes by saying that eventually Egypt will return to the Lord along with Assyria. There will be a peace between the three former enemies of Egypt, Assyria and Israel.

- e) Egypt: Equality among Israel, Egypt and Assyria (Ch. 18/19, 20) South of Israel
  - i. God promises the destruction of Egypt (19:1-15)
  - ii. God promises Egypt's future repentance and restoration (19:16-25)  
Millennium?

Chapter 20 Summary: In Isaiah 20, following the capture of the city of Ashdod by the Assyrians in about 710 BC, we read how Isaiah went around stripped and bare footed like the Egyptians and Ethiopians were led away naked as captives by Assyria This action by Isaiah was to symbolize that Israel's strategy of forming an alliance with Egypt to protect herself from the Assyrians would ultimately fail.

- iii. While Egypt had been promising aid to Judah when Assyria arrived, Egypt did nothing when Sargon took Ashdod in 713 BC, and, as God promised through Isaiah's three-year "nakedness prophecy," Egypt and her southern ally Cush were captured by Assyria in 711 BC (20:1-4)  
  
Wearing only his undergarment in public would have been a great humiliation, being considered "naked" (vv. 2-3). Walking barefoot was a further picture of humility without protection against the stony ground. Isaiah was a sign against Cush (ch. 18) and Egypt (ch. 19).
- iv. The capture of Egypt proved to be a deep disappointment to the people of Judah who had counted on them for protection against Assyria (20:5-6)

2) Second series of five burdens (Ch. 21-23). Future dealings of God toward the nations

Chapter 21 Summary: Isaiah 21 begins with a prophecy that Babylonia, one of Israel's main enemies at that time, will itself be invaded and defeated by a fierce enemy from the south, who will come upon them like a whirlwind. This was fulfilled when the Medes and Persians (Elam), invaded in about 540 BC. Fugitives from this invasion will flee into Arabia, inhabited by the tribe of Kedar (a descendant of Ishmael), but they too will be decimated by the invasion.

- a) Desert of the Sea (Babylon): Religious overthrow (21:1-10) North of Israel
  - i. Apparently a prophecy of the destruction of Babylon at the hand of the Medes in 538 BC (21:1-5; cf. Dan. 5)
 

The Medo-Persian Empire was an alliance of the Medes and the Persians (Elam was an ancient name for Persia, referring to the land east of Babylon, beyond the Euphrates River). In 612 B.C. the Medes helped the Chaldeans (Babylonians) capture Nineveh and destroy the Assyrian empire. Cyrus conquered the mighty Babylonian Empire.
  - ii. There may also be a peek into the future destruction of Babylon during the Tribulation (21:6-10; cf. Rev. 17-18)
- b) Dumah (Edom): Things continue as they are (21:11-12) East of Israel
  - i. Isaiah saw in a vision the nation of Edom coming to ask about their future (21:11)
  - ii. The answer: Day was coming (relief), but so was the night (more hardship at the hand of their enemies). If Edom wanted to hear about it, Isaiah would be willing to tell them (21:12). Dumah means “silence;” God was silent toward Edom in this prophecy.
- c) Arabia: Needy despite mutual security (21:13-17). South of Israel
  - i. The Arabians south and east of Israel had gathered together for mutual aid in the face of Assyrian attack (21:13-15)
  - ii. God promised they would be destroyed by Him, not the Assyrians, within one year (21:14-15), suggesting, as above, some of God’s people had been trusting on the Arabians for aid against Assyria.

d) Valley of Vision (Jerusalem): The city torn down (Ch. 22) The Southern Kingdom

Chapter 22 Summary: Isaiah 22 is a prophecy addressed to the Valley of Vision (Jerusalem), and vividly portrays the fall of Jerusalem. The people have trusted in their own defense, and not in God, and thought they were safe. However, their leaders have fled, and the walls of the city are breached. Shebna, the self-exalting steward in charge of the palace, will be replaced by the godly Eliakim, but he too will be unable to save Jerusalem.

- i. God’s people would trust in themselves to save themselves from their enemies but would be torn down and carried away (22:1-14). Fulfilled by the Babylonians in 586 BC
- ii. God promised the overthrow of Shebna, one of Hezekiah’s officers, because he had tried to exalt himself through the construction of an enormous burial monument (22:15-19).

- iii. God promised to replace Shebna with Eliakim, a humble man who would serve God's people in Judah and help hold David's throne and nation stable during the turbulent days under Assyrian attack. Eventually, though, he would prove unworthy, and be taken away by the Lord, another example of God's people trusting in something other than the Lord for their safety and blessing (22:20-25).

e) Tyre: Holiness to the Lord (Ch. 23). North of Israel

Chapter 23 Summary: Isaiah 23 is a prophecy that the mighty city of Tyre will be destroyed, (fulfilled in about 570 BC, following a siege by Nebuchadnezzar). Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years but eventually restored.

- i. Because of their pride and materialism, Tyre will face destruction at the Lord's command (23:1-14)

Tyre had established itself as a world class trader, the "queen of the seas," with its phenomenal harbor. Its merchants traded far and wide, establishing numerous colonies. The city was in two parts, one on the mainland, and the other on a protected island one-half mile from shore. Nebuchadnezzar captured the mainland city in 572 B.C., and Alexander finally conquered the island city in 332 B.C. by building a causeway to the city and besieging it—a venture that lasted seven months.

- ii. After seventy years the Lord will restore Tyre, which will go back to its hedonistic and materialistic ways, though with a difference: their goods will belong to the Lord and His people (23:15-18) and may point to a future repentance of Tyre during the Millennium (cf. Ps. 87:4).

b. Israel's salvation (Ch. 24-27) (Five sections corresponding to the two sets of five burdens in ch. 13-23) Final dealings of God with the nations (Messianic reign)

Chapter 24 Summary: Isaiah 24 talks about the devastation which will come upon the whole earth at the end of the age, because the people have disobeyed God's laws, and broken covenant with Him. Ultimately, however, the spiritual powers will be bound like prisoners in a dungeon, and the Lord Almighty will reign gloriously in Jerusalem.

- 1) The "city of emptiness:" Broken laws and gates (The preservation of God's people within a world under divine judgment) (24:1-20) Tribulation?
  - a) The world's inhabitants are left desolate in judgment (24:1-12)
  - b) A gleaned remnant will praise the Lord (24:13-16)
  - c) The world will fall, and not rise again (24:17-20)

- 2) Zion's King: "After many days" (The coming King) (24:21-23) 2nd Coming?
  - a) The coming King will overthrow the world's wicked rulers (24:21-22)
  - b) The Lord will then reign gloriously from Jerusalem over His people (24:23)
- 3) The great banquet: All nations feasted in Zion except Moab, excluded by pride (The world rejoicing in Messiah's reign) (Ch. 25)

Chapter 25 Summary: In Isaiah 25, the prophet praises God for His faithfulness, as he looks forward to the fulfilment of history. He declares that God will swallow up death, and will wipe away every tear, and take away all shame. He will destroy all that stands in opposition to Him, and He will prepare a banquet for His people to enjoy. On that day, all those who have put their trust in the Lord will rejoice.

- a) The Lord is praised for His great victory (25:1-5)
- b) The Lord will restore His people (25:6-8)
  - \*\*\* 25:8 – swallow up death in victory – quoted in NT 1 Cor 15:54
- c) The Lord will put down His enemies for His people's sake (25:9-12)
- 4) The city of God: The strong city; the everlasting rock (The future rejoicing of God's people (Ch. 26)

Chapter 26 Summary: Isaiah 26 is a continuation of end times prophecy, when peace will be established in the world. The prophet acknowledges that the Israelites have failed to be a light for the world and have become idolatrous. Judgement will come upon the unrighteous, but we can take encouragement that there will be resurrection and joy for the righteous. In the meantime, we can know God's peace when we put our trust in Him.

- a) A song (26:1-6)
  - i. God's people enter the city of God (26:1-2)
  - ii. God's people called to righteousness (26:3-4)

Gentiles worshiping God in the tribulation is a common theme. Gentiles will come to Jerusalem to worship and learn God's truth—the city where Christ is King (Isa. 2:2–3). Then Gentiles will have a knowledge of God (Isa. 11:9) and keep His word (Isa. 56:6). The nations that refuse to worship in Jerusalem will suffer deprivation (Zech. 14:17–19). God's name will be honored through the Gentile nations (Mal. 1:11).

26:3, 4 – good verses to memorize.

- iii. God humbles the proud city for His people (26:5-6)
- b) A prayer (26:7-19)
  - i. God's people waiting for God (26:7-10)
  - ii. God's people expecting from God (26:11-19)

- c) A warning (26:20-21)
  - i. God's people are to hide from God's judgment (26:20) Tribulation?
  - ii. God will bring the world's judgment to its conclusion (26:21)

5) The final gathering: The harvest from Egypt and Assyria (The future regathering of God's people) (Ch. 27)

Chapter 27 Summary: Isaiah 27 says that evil, (described here as Leviathan, or a serpent), will be finally overcome. The fortified cities and idolatrous practices of those who have rebelled against God will be brought down. God's kingdom will be established, and it will be like a fruitful vineyard, with God protecting it. Those who have been in exile will return to worship God in Jerusalem.

- a) The defeat of Israel's enemies (27:1)
- b) The future blessing and former discipline of Israel (27:2-11)
  - i. God's promise of blessing for Israel (27:2-6) Millennium?
  - ii. God's performance of chastisement for Israel (27:7-11) Tribulation?
- c) The gathering of Jewish and Gentile believers (27:12-13)
  - i. God's people will be gathered from all over (27:12)
  - ii. God's people will worship again in Jerusalem (27:13)

2. Themselves (Ch. 28-35). Woes during Isaiah's day (Hezekiah?)

a. The enemies' sins (Ch. 28-33)

1) The woe against Ephraim and Judah (Ch. 28)

Chapter 28 Summary: Isaiah 28 starts by saying that the northern Kingdom, (Ephraim), will be trampled down, because of pride. Judah, and its religious leaders in Jerusalem, are behaving like drunks, and trusting in the treaty with Egypt to save them. They have turned God's covenant into a set of rules. They too will be swept away, until God acts to save them. Using an analogy from farming, Isaiah says that the time of discipline will come to an end, and that God will employ His methods to produce a harvest.

- a) Ephraim's promised end (28:1-6)
- b) Ephraim's and Judah's wicked practices (28:7-22)
  - \*\*\* 28:16 - Jesus
- c) The Lord would use judgment to draw Judah back to Him (28:23-29)

## 2) Two woes against Jerusalem (Ch. 29)

Chapter 29 Summary: Isaiah 29 is addressed to the city of Ariel (Jerusalem), which will be besieged by the nations of the earth. However, the Lord Almighty will intervene to save the city, and the people will be astonished. At that time spiritual eyes will be opened, and the people will acknowledge the holiness of God. The unrighteous, who think that God does not know what they do, and who treat God with no respect, will be cut down.

- a) The first woe (29:1-14)
  - i. Jerusalem's hypocrisy condemned (29:1-4)
  - ii. The Lord will restore His people (29:5-8)
  - iii. The reason for the Lord's judgment (29:9-14)
- b) The second woe (29:15-24)
  - i. Jerusalem's deception condemned (29:15-16).
  - ii. The Lord's justice (29:17-21)
  - iii. The reason for the Lord's judgment is restoration of His people (29:22-24)

## 3) The woe against rebellion by God's children (Ch. 30)

Chapter 30 Summary: Isaiah 30 begins with a rebuke to those who make their own plans, without consulting God. The people do not want seers to see and want prophets to prophesy deceits rather than right things. Judah will be broken like a potter's vessel. They are ignoring the warnings that God is speaking through the genuine prophets and are depending on Egypt to protect them from their enemies. Eventually (in the end times), when the people turn back to God and call upon Him, He will respond, and heal their wounds, and bring prosperity to their land. God will come like a consuming fire, and He will judge the nations.

- a) Human unfaithfulness (30:1-17)
  - i. Egypt is no help to God's people (30:1-7)
  - ii. By refusing God's counsel Israel will suffer defeat (30:8-17)
- b) Divine faithfulness (30:18-33)
  - i. God's patient justice will bring Israel's restoration (30:18-26)
  - ii. Assyria is no threat to God's people (30:27-33)

#### 4) The woe against rejecters of God's help (Ch. 31-32)

Chapter 31 and 32 Summary: In Isaiah 31 the prophet again brings a rebuke against those who put their trust in others (Egypt), rather than in God. He encourages them to turn back to God. God is faithful to His word, and, in the end times, will rise up to protect Jerusalem, and defeat the enemies of His chosen people. His enemies will recognize that it is the hand of God, which is against them, and will be terrified. Isaiah 32 looks forward to the day when the Messiah King will reign, and His kingdom will bring justice, and a place of refuge from the storm. People's eyes will be opened to understand the deception which has engulfed them. He warns that calamity will soon overtake Israel, but, in the end times, God will pour out His Spirit. There will then be a time of peace and prosperity.

- a) Pronouncement against those who trust Egypt (31:1-5)
- b) Promise of deliverance to those who repent (31:6-9)
- c) The coming of God's righteous reign (32:1-8)
- d) The call to prepare for God's reign (32:9-20)

#### 5) The woe against destroyers of God's people (Ch. 33)

Chapter 33 Summary: Isaiah 33 initially addresses Assyria, who will break the peace treaty it had with Judah and will invade and plunder the land of Israel. God will arise and destroy this enemy. This chapter concludes by looking forward to the day, when Jerusalem will be restored, and be inhabited by the righteous remnant. It will be a place of peace and freedom. There will be no sickness, and the people will know their sins have been forgiven.

- a) The deliverance of God's people (33:1-6)
- b) The destruction of God's enemy (Assyria?) (33:7-12)

The historical background to Isaiah 33 is 2 Kings 18:14–36. Upon invading Judah in 701 B.C., Sennacherib received tribute payments of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold from King Hezekiah. But despite the tribute payments, the Assyrians demanded unconditional surrender from Judah. This was treachery. (185,000 dead soldiers).

- c) The delight of God's kingdom (33:13-24)
  - i. His people (33:13-16)
  - ii. His King (33:17-24)

#### b. Israel's salvation (Ch. 34-35). The future reign of the Lord

- 1) The Lord's day of judgment (Ch. 34) Tribulation

Chapter 34 Summary: Isaiah 34 is a prophecy concerning all the nations of the world, as typified by Edom, which oppose Israel. Their armies, and the demonic powers behind them, will be totally defeated by God (the battle of Armageddon). These nations will become like desolate ground, only inhabited by wild animals, and will never rise to power again. This will all happen in accordance with God's word (His scroll).

- a) It's universal scope (34:1-4)
- b) A local example: Edom (34:5-17)

## 2) The Lord's day of blessing (Ch. 35) Millennium

Chapter 35 Summary: Isaiah 35 is a glorious prophecy concerning the restoration of Israel as the abode of the redeemed which will reflect the splendor of the Lord. It is described as a place with an abundance of vegetation and water, to be entered by the path of holiness. God will come to exercise His divine judgement and save His people. The redeemed of the Lord will be filled with joy, and there will be no sorrow, sadness or sickness.

- a) Restoration of the land after the judgment (35:1-2)
- b) Restoration of God's remnant (35:3-4). I like verse 4.
- c) Renewing of God's people and land (35:5-7)
- d) Return of God's people to the land (35:8-10). V. 10 - Song

## C. Faithful Hezekiah (Ch. 36-39) (Maps 72-73)

### 1. Hezekiah's rescue: The Assyrian threat (Ch. 36-37)

#### a. Assyrian assaults (Ch. 36)

Chapter 36 Summary: Isaiah 36 records how the Assyrians invaded Judah for the first time in about 700 BC, during the reign of King Hezekiah. The invading army comes to Jerusalem and arrogantly boasts that it is no good relying on Egypt for help or trusting in God. The Assyrian armies have defeated every nation, and their gods could not help them. The Assyrian army commander appeals to the people to not be misled by Hezekiah.

- 1) 1st Assyrian assault (36:1)
- 2) 2nd Assyrian assault (36:2-22)

#### b. God's deliverance (Ch. 37)

Chapter 37 Summary: In Isaiah 37, Hezekiah responds to the challenge and threat of the invading Assyrian army, by seeking God. God responds through a word from Isaiah that the Assyrians will not capture Jerusalem but will withdraw. Subsequently, an angel of the Lord went through the Assyrian camp, and 185,000 men died. The Assyrian army withdrew. Sennacherib is killed by his sons back in Assyria. It was another 120 years before Babylon (not Assyria) conquered Judah.

- 1) Round one (37:1-13)
    - a) Hezekiah's 1st prayer (37:1-5)
    - b) God's answer (37:6-7)
    - c) Assyria's response (37:8-13)
  - 2) Round two (37:14-38)
    - a) Hezekiah's 2nd prayer (37:14-20). I like verse 20.
    - b) God's answer (37:21-35). V. 31 and V. 35
    - c) Assyria's defeat (37:36-38)
2. Hezekiah's reckoning: The Babylonian threat (Ch. 38-39)
- a. Test of faith: Hezekiah's sickness (Ch. 38)

Chapter 38 Summary: In Isaiah 38 we read how Hezekiah became terminally ill but was granted a further fifteen years' life by God. God confirmed that He would extend Hezekiah's life by causing the shadow of the sun to go backwards. Hezekiah thanks the Lord for his deliverance.

- 1) Prophesied death (38:1)
  - 2) Desperate prayer (38:2-3)
  - 3) Promised recovery (38:4-8)
  - 4) Praise to God (38:9-22)
- b. Test of character: Hezekiah's sin (Ch. 39)

Chapter 39 Summary: Isaiah 39 records how Hezekiah shows an envoy from Babylonia all the treasures of Jerusalem. Isaiah prophesies that all these treasures and the descendants of Hezekiah will one day be taken to Babylon.

- 1) Hezekiah's pride (39:1-2)
- 2) Isaiah's prophecy (39:3-7)

The Babylonians eventually destroyed the Assyrian empire in 612 B.C. (during the reign of King Josiah who died in 609 B.C.) and followed that with three successive invasions against Judah, in 605, 597, and 586 B.C. In Babylon's final assault, Jerusalem was captured, plundered, and burned. All the wealth of Jerusalem was taken to Babylon along with most of the people of Judah. In 539 B.C. the Medo-Persians conquered Babylon and Cyrus issued a decree permitting the people to return to Judah.

- 3) Hezekiah's praise (39:8)

III. Promise: Conclusion of Israel's Faith (Ch. 40-66). God promised deliverance for Israel, a promise made to Hezekiah's generation, but looking forward 150 years to the end of the Babylonian captivity, and even beyond to the coming Servant Messiah and His righteous reign. (Maps 74-75)

A. God's Servant, Cyrus: God's grace to Israel (Ch. 40-48). God's promise to deliver Israel from Babylon by His servant Cyrus (Return from exile c. 516 BC)

1. The Lord of the servant (Ch. 40)

Chapter 40 Summary: Isaiah 40 is a chapter of comfort and hope. The prophet declares that God's glory will be revealed. He will come as both the gentle shepherd who comforts His people, and as the sovereign Lord, with power to judge and reward. Nothing is comparable to the everlasting God, who created, and sustains, the universe. He is able to encourage and strengthen all who put their trust and hope in Him.

a. The comforting Lord (40:1-11)

In previous chapters, Isaiah prophesied of the coming Babylonian captivity. But now he prophesies after God completed His disciplinary action and comforts her instead.

In verses 3-5, to illustrate Israel's return from Babylon, he makes an analogy to road building: hills cut down, low spots graded in, obstacles removed, curves straightened out. God showed his power and love when He brought them back to their land. The road was impossible until God intervened to make it happen. (John the Baptist – Mt. 3:1-3 – all 4)

Verse 8 – quoted in 1 Peter 1:24-25.

In verse 11 - The Lord is pictured as a shepherd. The shepherd provides for the sheep, and spiritually (Ps. 23:2). He protects the sheep from harm by attacking the enemy with His club and rescuing the sheep from precarious places with His staff (Ps. 23:4). The shepherd would protect the sheep with his life; the Good Shepherd dies for His sheep (John 10:11).

b. The incomparable Lord (40:12-26). We read of his power in that it was He who created the heaven and the earth. He needs no counselor. The mightiest nations with their wealth, political power and military might are to God no more than drops of water. He is Sovereign, controlling everything.

Verse 22 – circle of the earth, hundreds of years before science God told us.

c. The dependable Lord (40:27-31). Verse 31 is a popular verse.

2. The servant of the Lord (41:1-44:22)

Chapter 41 - 44 Summary: In Isaiah 41, the prophet reaffirms that God's purposes for Israel will be accomplished, and that He is able to orchestrate events to make this happen. Ultimately, it is God who is in control, and not worthless man-made idols. All who rage against Israel will be put to shame. God originally chose Israel and will re-establish Israel as a prosperous and fertile land, and all nations will become subject to her.

Isaiah 42 foretells of the character of the Messiah. He will be kind and gentle and will establish justice in the world. He will open blinded eyes and set the captives free. He will also march out like a mighty warrior and will triumph over all His enemies. Isaiah poses the question whether people will learn from their history and listen to Him.

In Isaiah 43, we find an assurance from God that Israel is precious in His sight, that God is both her creator and redeemer, and that He will be with her in times of difficulty and trial. Although Israel and Judah were being driven from the land of Israel because of their sin and disobedience, God says He will restore them back to the land. God will do this just as assuredly as He delivered Israel from Egypt, and the army of the Pharaoh.

Isaiah 44 starts with God continuing to declare that He will bless Israel and restore the land, because He is God, and there is no other god like Him. Man's futility in creating idols and worshipping them is satirically described. God is sovereign and overturns the learning of the wise. He will redeem Israel. During the reign of Cyrus, a decree will be made to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. (This prophecy was fulfilled in about 535 BC.)

a. God's promises to His servant (41:1-42:9)

- 1) The fearful servant, Israel (41:1-20)
- 2) The ministering Servant, Messiah (41:21-42:9)

b. God's purposes for His servants (42:10-44:22)

- 1) The certainty of redemption (42:10-43:7). Verse 43:2
- 2) The witness to redemption (43:8-44:20)

43:18 – good preaching

43:25 – God does not forget, He chooses not to remember our sins.

44:2 - The Lord calls the nation "Jeshurun," meaning "the upright one," a term of endearment

44:6 - Titles of God. God is revealed by several titles: He is LORD; this is His name in His covenant relationship with Israel (Exod. 6:2-3). He is King; He rules sovereignly over all humanity (Ps. 2). He is Redeemer; He rescued Israel from bondage in Egypt and He will spiritually redeem Israel (Jer. 31:31-34). He is eternal—"first" and "last" (Rev. 1:17; 22:13). The Lord alone is God; there is no other (Dt. 6:4).

- 3) The memory of redemption (44:21-22)

3. The Lord's redemption of His servant (44:23-47:15)

a. The announcement of redemption (44:23-28)

Chapter 45 - 47 Summary: In Isaiah 45, God continues to declare that He alone is the sovereign God, and that all that He decrees will come to pass. God will raise up Cyrus (the King of Persia, who, together with King Darius of the Medes, overthrew the Babylonian Empire in about 540 BC), who will release the exiles, and allow them to rebuild Jerusalem. Israel will be saved with an everlasting salvation. All those who worship idols will be put to shame, and every knee will bow to God.

Isaiah 46 continues to contrast the helplessness of idols (specifically mentioning two false gods of the Assyrians - Bel and Nebo), compared to the omnipotence of God. God's purposes will stand. God will provide a way of righteousness and salvation for Israel.

Chapter 47 of Isaiah is a prophecy against the Babylonians. God has used them to discipline Israel, but they are full of pride, and are trusting in witchcraft and wickedness to maintain their power. God declares that they will be suddenly, and quickly, overthrown. (Physically fulfilled when the Medes and Persians defeated the Babylonians in about 540 BC.) Spiritually, Babylon also represents Satan's demonic kingdom, which will ultimately be completely defeated and overthrown by God.

b. The instrument of redemption (45:1-13)

Cyrus is called "Shepherd" (44:28) and "Anointed" ("Messiah") (45:1). He is the only human king ever called "Anointed" or "Messiah." Cyrus was "anointed" by God to shepherd God's people Israel by permitting them to return to their land. Cyrus prefigures Jesus Christ, the Messiah at the end of the age who will regather believing Israel and return them to the land (Matt. 24:31).

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, destroyed and burned Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and took the Hebrew people captive to Babylon (2 Kings 25:1-12). But in 539 B.C. Cyrus of the Medo-Persian Empire conquered Babylon and issued a decree permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city—and Cyrus financed the project (Ezra 6:4)!

c. The God of redemption (45:14-46:13)

Bel is the Babylonian form of the Canaanite god, Baal, the god of storm and agriculture. His name is found in the name Belshazzar. Nebo was Bel's son, the god of learning, and is found in the name.

45:22 – good salvation passage

46:4 – good verse to comfort the aging.

d. The nation to be judged (Ch. 47)

In 539 B.C., Belshazzar held a great drinking feast for one thousand nobles (Dan. 5:1). He desecrated the vessels from Solomon's Temple by using them in his drunken state as he drank in praise of his pagan gods (Dan. 5:4). He felt secure in Babylon, a walled city, 14 miles square, surrounded by a moat and with outer walls 87 feet thick and 350 feet high.

#### 4. The servant's attention to his Lord (Ch. 48)

Chapter 48 Summary: Isaiah 48 is a rebuke to the Israelites, who claim to worship God, but do not operate in truth and righteousness. The Lord made sure that He was revealed rather than concealed, but Israel did not see or hear. For the sake of His own name, God had to discipline them. If they had followed God's instructions, they would have enjoyed righteousness and peace. Though undeserved, just as God redeemed them from Egypt, so He will redeem them from the Babylonians.

- a. The former failure (48:1-11)
- b. The present possibility (48:12-22)

B. God's Servant, Messiah: God's atonement for Israel (Ch. 49-55) God's promise to deliver Israel from sin by His Servant Messiah (Jesus Christ, c. 30 AD).

##### 1. Anticipation of salvation (49:1-52:12)

Chapter 49 Summary: Isaiah 49 speaks about the everlasting nature of God's covenants. Israel was chosen by God to display His splendor. Even though she has been unfaithful, He could not forget her, because she is engraved on the palms of His hands. God will have compassion on His chosen people and will restore them back to the land of Israel. She will become a light to the Gentiles. The whole world will witness what the Lord does and know that He alone is our Savior and Redeemer.

- a. Comfort through the Servant (49:1-13)
  - 1) The Servant's calling (49:1-7)
  - 2) The Servant's ministry (49:8-13)
- b. God's remembrance of Zion (49:14-50:3)
  - 1) Zion's prominence before God (49:14-26)

Chapter 50 Summary: In Isaiah 50, the Israelites are declared responsible for their captivity and separation from God. What is to happen to them is a consequence of their transgressions and sins. Isaiah, talking about himself and prophetically about Jesus, has put his trust in the Lord, who will be his shield and defender against all who accuse him. It is a reminder that those living in darkness need to turn to God and put their trust in Him, rather than themselves, which only leads to destruction.

- 2) God's will and power to deliver (50:1-3)
- c. The Servant's confidence (50:4-9). 50:4 – good prayer to pray
- d. Obedience to the Servant (50:10-51:8)
  - 1) Walking in light of darkness (50:10-11)

Chapter 51 Summary: In Isaiah 51, the Israelites are encouraged to return to their roots and the promises made to Abraham. God will bring an everlasting salvation and His righteousness will never fail. God delivered them from Egypt and He will act again to restore Jerusalem. The judgement, which has been poured out on them because of their sins and disobedience, will be poured out on the unrighteous, who torment and oppress God's chosen people. Rahab is a mythical sea monster that represents Egypt. Rahab being "cut to pieces" and "pierced" represents the armies of Egypt being destroyed in the Red Sea (Ex. 14:26–31).

- 2) Listening to the Servant (51:1-8). 51:1 is good to do sometimes.
- e. Awakening to deliverance (51:9-52:12)
  - 1) The Lord's arm (51:9-16)
  - 2) Drunken Jerusalem (51:17-23)

Chapter 52 Summary: Isaiah 52 proclaims the future glory of Jerusalem. The city, which has been defiled and made desolate, will, one day, be restored. God's servant (Jesus, the Messiah) will bring good news, and a message of peace and salvation. Although He will be disfigured, and many will be appalled by Him, He will be exalted, and the kings and nations of the earth will ultimately recognize and acknowledge who He really is.

- 3) Released Zion (52:1-12)
  - Vs. 7 – quoted in Romans 10:15
- 2. Announcement of salvation (52:13-53:12)
  - a. The Servant exalted (52:13-15). 52:14 – speaking of Jesus. It is a summary statement concerning the despicable suffering Christ experienced. He endured such punishment that onlookers were awestruck by His appearance. His "visage" or outward appearance was marred beyond recognition. It has been suggested that Christ suffered more on the cross than any other human being has ever suffered.

Chapter 53 Summary: Isaiah 53, written about 700 years before the birth of Jesus, prophetically speaks of how the Messiah will bring salvation and healing through His suffering. He will be despised and rejected, and will carry the punishment for our sins, even though He Himself will be sinless and blameless. He will be led like a lamb to the slaughter, and many will be justified and saved because of what He willingly endures on their behalf.

- b. The Servant despised (53:1-3)
  - Vs. 3 – He "IS" despised, not "was" ... He still is being despised today.
- c. The Servant wounded (53:4-6)

The doctrine of the substitutionary atonement of Christ is crucial to our belief. Jesus did not die as a martyr or as a supreme act of love; He died as a substitute for our sins. The substitutionary nature is emphasized in the pronouns: "our, He, Him, and us".

Vs 5 – “wounded” – piercings of hands and feet; “chastisement” – disciplinary punishment – the punishment due to us when He became our substitutionary sacrifice; “stripes” – wounds left by a whip; “afflicted” –beating.

Vs 5 – “bruised” – at first glance many think it refers to His physical suffering, but from other uses, we can see that Isaiah was speaking figuratively of oppressive mental and emotional suffering. ‘wounded’ -physical; ‘bruised’ – mental and emotional.

- d. The Servant cast off (53:7-9). He was to be buried with the thieves but instead he was buried with “the rich in His death” (v.9) – reference to a rich man, Joseph of Arimathaea, a secret disciple of Jesus, had him buried in his own tomb fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy.
- e. The Servant satisfied (53:10-12). For Christ, perhaps the most part of the entire crucifixion experience was most likely when God the Father “laid on him the iniquity of us all” (vs 6) and made His soul “an offering for sin” (vv. 10-12). The sins of the world were placed on Him and quite possible is what He meant when he, “let this cup pass from me” (Mt. 26:39). His cry of anguish, “My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?” (Mt. 27:46) further reflects the suffering of separation from God.

### 3. Invitation to salvation (Ch. 54-55)

#### a. The Lord’s everlasting love (Ch. 54)

Chapter 54 Summary: Isaiah 54 is a prophecy in which God affirms His commitment to Israel and declares that she will be restored. No matter what happens, God will have compassion on Israel, and His covenant of peace will not be removed. A time will come when Israel will be re-established, and no weapon forged against her will prevail.

##### 1) The restored wife (54:1-10)

Israel is pictured as a childless mother who now will have numerous children (v. 1). In Israel it was a shame and a calamity to be childless (Gen. 15:2; 29:31; 1 Sam. 1:2). But an abundance of children was evidence of the Lord’s blessing (Gen. 15:5; 17:5–6; 28:14).

##### 2) The rebuilt city (54:11-17). 54:17 – good verse

#### b. The Lord’s gracious invitation (Ch. 55)

Chapter 55 Summary: Isaiah 55 is an open invitation for all to seek and find spiritual fulfilment and life for their soul. It is a call for the wicked to forsake their ways and receive forgiveness. God declares that His ways are not our ways, and that His Word will go forth and accomplish His purposes. The redeemed of the Lord will be filled with joy, and the unproductive land completely restored, as an everlasting sign to the glory of God.

##### 1) Free salvation (55:1-5)

##### 2) Transforming salvation (55:6-13). Verses 6-11 is good to memorize.

C. God's servant, Israel: God's transformation of Israel (Ch. 56-66) God's promise of Israel's future righteousness under Messiah's reign (Millennium and New Jerusalem)

1. Recognition of human inability (Ch. 56-59)

a. The need for humility and holiness (Ch. 56-57)

Chapter 56 and 57 Summary: In Isaiah 56, God reminds the Israelites of the importance of being obedient to Him by observing the law and maintaining justice. God declares that salvation is not only for the Jews, but to all those who turn to Him, and hold fast to His covenant. This chapter finishes with a rebuke to the prophets of Israel, who are blind to what is happening. They are self-focused and are failing in their role as shepherds, to speak out God's truth, and to lead and guide the people.

Isaiah 57 is a continuation of the rebuke of the leaders in Israel. They have rebelled against God, and are worshipping false gods, both openly and in secret. Instead of turning to God for strength, they have turned to pagan idols and superstitious practices. Although God is angered by what they have done, He declares that He will bring restoration and healing to the repentant, but that He will punish the wicked.

1) The basis of acceptance and blessing (56:1-8)

2) The basis of rejection and cursing (56:9-57:13)

a) Wicked leadership (56:9-57:2)

b) Rampant apostasy (57:3-13)

3) The divine enablement (57:14-21)

b. The relationship of righteousness and ritual (Ch. 58-59)

1) What God wants (Ch. 58)

Chapter 58 Summary: Isaiah 58 is a rebuke to the spiritual leaders, who are being hypocritical. While appearing spiritual on the outside, their hearts are not committed to God. They fast, but they exploit their work force. They argue and fight with each other. God challenges them to seek justice for the oppressed, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and not talk maliciously about each other. When they do these things, they will know God's guidance and blessing.

a) False worship (58:1-5)

b) True worship (58:6-14)

Chapter 59 Summary: In Isaiah 59, the prophet declares that the difficulties they are facing are not because God is too weak to help them, but because their many sins and unrighteousness have separated them from God. They are walking in darkness; justice and truth is lacking in what they do and speak. God, however, will graciously intervene, and provide a means of salvation and redemption. He is faithful to his covenant and His words, and His Holy Spirit will not depart from those who accept this salvation.

- 2) What Israel did (59:1-15a)
  - a) Isaiah's evidence (59:1-8). 59:2 – good verse – sin separates
  - b) Israel's confession (59:9-15a)
- 3) What God would do (59:15b-21). 59:19 – good verse when overwhelmed by evil.

## 2. Revelation of future glory (Ch. 60-62)

### a. Israel among the nations (Ch. 60)

Chapter 60 Summary: Isaiah 60 is an end-times prophecy describing how Israel and Jerusalem will be restored and established as a light to all. The nations of the world, who oppose her, will be destroyed. There will be an end to devastation and destruction, and peace will exist within her borders. She will be blessed by the wealth of the world. All her inhabitants will be righteous, and God Himself will reign amongst them, as an everlasting light.

- 1) The nations drawn to Israel (60:1-9)
- 2) The nations serving Israel (60:10-16)
- 3) Contrasts with the present (60:17-22)

### b. Israel under the Lord (Ch. 61-62)

Chapter 61 and 62 Summary: Isaiah 61 is a wonderful prophecy about the Messiah. At the start of His ministry Jesus read this scripture and affirmed that it applied to Himself. It proclaims that the Messiah will bring both salvation and healing. Those who mourn will be comforted, and the captives will be set free. The recipients of this salvation and righteousness will themselves go on to bless others. In Isaiah 62, He declares that He will not rest until Jerusalem is established as a beacon of righteousness to the whole world. The city will be no longer called 'forsaken' or 'desolate', but will be called 'sought out', and its inhabitants called 'the redeemed of the Lord'.

- 1) The mission of the Anointed One (61:1-3). Quoted by Jesus in Luke 4:18, 19.
- 2) The benefits of the Anointed One's mission (61:4-11)
- 3) The certainty of these benefits (62:1-9)
- 4) The need for faith (62:10-12)

## 3. Recognition of divine ability (Ch. 63-66)

### a. God's faithfulness in spite of Israel's unfaithfulness (63:1-65:16)

Chapter 63 Summary: In Isaiah 63, we read that God, in His mercy and love, will become the Savior and Redeemer of His people, as well as the avenger and the judge of all the nations. The prophet reminds God of the way He brought the Israelites out of Egypt. The people, however, rebelled against God and grieved His Holy Spirit. Isaiah asks God to reveal His presence once more to the remnant, as they return to God, and to remember what He did for them in the past.

- 1) The solitary Warrior (63:1-6)
- 2) The delayed salvation (63:7-64:12)
  - a) The reminiscence (63:7-14)
  - b) The complaint (63:15-19)

Chapter 64 Summary: Isaiah 64 is a continuation of the prayer of confession and repentance to God. Isaiah, praying on behalf of the people, acknowledges that God is their father, and that they are like clay in the hand of the potter. He acknowledges that they have sinned against Him, and even their righteous acts are like filthy rags, compared to God's holiness. Isaiah, feeling as if God has turned His face away from them, asks Him to relent and to help them.

- c) The confession (64:1-7). 64:6 – good verse and so is verse 8
- d) The appeal (64:8-12)

Chapter 65 Summary: Isaiah 65 records God's response to the Israelites' prayer of repentance. Although He has revealed Himself to His people, they have rebelled. They have entered into idolatry and have broken His laws. They have not responded to His correction and will have to face the consequences. Those who turn to God, however, will be blessed. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, a place of peace, joy, prosperity and happiness in the presence of God.

- 3) The divine response (65:1-16)
  - a) Superficial righteousness (65:1-7)
  - b) Consistent faithfulness (65:8-16)
- b. The culmination of Israel's future (65:17-66:24)
  - 1) New heavens and a new earth (65:17-25)

Chapter 66 Summary: Isaiah 66 summarizes the main prophetic themes of the book of Isaiah. God is the creator, whose purposes will be accomplished. He reveals Himself to His creation, but the people rebel against Him. There will be a day of judgement, and they will be assigned to eternal punishment. Those who are contrite and humble in spirit, seeking and responding to God, will be rewarded. They will dwell in the new Jerusalem, established in the new heaven and earth, and they will see God's glory.

- 2) Humility rather than sacrifice (66:1-6)
- 3) The future glories of Jerusalem (66:7-14)
- 4) Worship or destruction (66:15-24)