

## 23 – Isaiah: Judgment and the Messiah

- Isaiah begins the five books of “**Major Prophets**” (major only due to length). With 66 chapters, it is one of the longest books in the Bible.
- As all scripture, it is inspired, written by God, through the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. His ministry lasted from about **740 to 680 BC**.
- Themes of Isaiah** include **judgment** (for **Israel** due to her disobedience and lack of loyalty, and to **nations against Israel**, the **restoration of Israel** (in spite of her judgment) and the **coming Messiah** (both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> comings). The Messiah is the major theme. Isaiah is called the “Messianic Prophet.”
- “**Telescoping**” prophecies common, near and far fulfillments.
- Isaiah’s **construction** very closely parallels the construction and message of the entire Bible (story of redemption). This similarity can be seen in the following comparison:



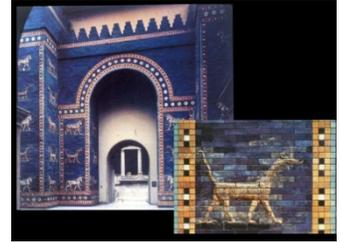
BIBLE	ISAIAH
66 Books	66 Chapters
39 Books—Old Testament	39 Chapters—Law, Government of God
27 Books—New Testament	27 Chapters—Grace, Salvation of God

- Isaiah is quoted more in New Testament than any other prophet. (66 direct quotations from Isaiah).
- Dead Sea Scrolls** discovered 1947, intact book of Isaiah, no changes. God preserves His Word!
- Very **difficult to summarize this book**, but it has some major distinguished chapters and themes. First, **above all else, it is a book of Messianic prophecies (the coming of Jesus)**.
- Some critics have fabricated the **false theory that there are several Isaiahs**, ghostwriters they have labeled "Deutero-Isaiah" and "Trito-Isaiah." This is impossible, for the New Testament quotes from all sections of the book and gives credit to one Isaiah.

### Highlights

I. Judgment (Poetry) Chapters 1-35	II. Historic Interlude (Prose) Chapters 36-39	III. Salvation (Poetry), Chapters 40-66
<p><i>Revelation of the sovereign on the throne</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call to hear God's charge against Israel, Ch 1</li> <li>Preview of future of Judah/ Jerusalem, Ch 2</li> <li>Present view of Judah/Jerusalem, Ch 3</li> <li>Another preview of the Future, Ch 4</li> <li>Vineyard parable, woes predicted (Israel) Ch 5</li> <li>Isaiah's personal call/commission, Ch 6</li> <li>Prediction of Local and Far Events, Chs 7-10 (<i>Hope of future in coming child</i>)</li> <li>Millennial Kingdom, Chs 11-12</li> <li>Burdens (Judgment) of Surrounding Nations (<i>Largely Fulfilled</i>), Chs 13-23: Babylon, (13-14), Moab (15-16), Damascus (17), Land beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia (18), Egypt (19-20), Babylon, Edom, Arabia (21), Valley of Vision (22), Tyre (23)</li> <li>Kingdom, Process, and Program by which the Throne is established on earth, Chs 24-34</li> <li>Kingdom, Blessings of the Millennium, Ch 35</li> </ul>	<p><i>(possibly a prophetic picture of how God will deliver His people in the Great Tribulation, see 2 Kings 18-19; 2 Chron. 29-30.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>King Hezekiah, invasion of Sennacherib, (Assyria), Ch 36</li> <li>Hezekiah's prayer, Assyrian army killed, Ch 37</li> <li>Hezekiah's sickness, prayer, healing, Ch 38</li> <li>King Hezekiah is a fool, Ch 39</li> </ul>	<p><i>Revelation of the Savior in the Place of Suffering (There is a threefold division marked by the concluding thought in each division, "There is no peace to the wicked.")</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comfort of God comes through Servant, Ch 40-48 (<i>against idolatry, Help and hope come only through Servant</i>)</li> <li>Salvation of God through Suffering Servant, Ch 49-57: Redeemer of whole world, who is God's servant, Ch 49-52:12; redemption by Suffering Servant, who is God's sheep (Lamb), Ch 52:13-53:12; results of redemption by Redeemer, who is God's Only Savior, Chs 54-57</li> <li>Glory of Jehovah through Suffering Servant, Ch 58-66: Sin Hinders manifestation of Glory of God, Ch 58-59; Redeemer is coming to Zion, Ch 60-66 (<i>Nothing can hinder God's progress —He will judge sin</i>)</li> </ul>

- **Chapter 5: God’s Vineyard.** A beautiful poem about the relationship of Israel and God, and Israel’s judgment for being a vine that produced “wild grapes.”
- **Chapter 6: The Throne of God.** Isaiah’s awesome vision of the throne room (similar to others in Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4) and his willingness to be “sent by God.”
- **Chapters 7 and 9: The Incarnation of God.** (*His presence among men in the flesh*), prophecies about Virgin Birth (7:14) and the “Christmas card” section 9:6-7 (“*For unto us a Child is born,....*”) about 1st and 2nd comings. Note, Angel Gabriel’s announcement to Mary (Luke 1:32-33) about her Son to sit on throne of David (non-existent at that time! This is in the future, during 2nd coming!)
- **Chapters 13 and 14: Prophecies against Babylon.** (*both near and far prophecies, the fall in 539 BC by Persia, then ultimate destruction, end of time*) 6 chapters in scripture dedicated solely to prophecies against Babylon: Isaiah 13 and 14, Jeremiah 50 and 51, Revelation 17 and 18. Babylon: “**Tale of Two Cities**” (Babylon, city of man, the enemy vs Jerusalem, city of God and God’s people) Babylon real place (Bab-el, Nimrod), but also symbolic of all in opposition to God. Revelation 17, “Harlot Babylon” – false religion. The Power behind Babylon: Isaiah 14:14-17, history of the enemy, why he fell, why all men fall: PRIDE! (All these prophecies at least 100 years before Babylon a world power!)
- **Chapter 45: God’s Amazing Letter to Cyrus.** Written by God to the king of Persia – 150 years before he was born!! Persia conquered Babylon 539 BC, Daniel showed this letter to Cyrus, Cyrus released the captives, exactly 70 years after they were taken into captivity – as God prophesied through Jeremiah. God is in control of EVERYTHING!! Note phrase, repeatedly in scripture, “*so that they may know....*”
- **Chapter 53: The Suffering Messiah, and His Atonement.** Actually begins at end of chapter 52. Very moving account of our Savior’s work. Difficult to understand, UNLESS applied to Jesus Christ. Jews have a hard time with this. Some have even explained it with 2 Messiahs – one a conquering king (*Messiah ben David*), one suffering (*Messiah ben Joseph*). They do not understand that there is ONE Messiah, but TWO comings! He came first to suffer and die. He will come again to conquer and rule, the King, the Lion of Judah. They have even tried to liken this to the nation of Israel, rather than to a man, but it is clear by the language that one particular person is being referred to here – and that one person is none other than Jesus the Messiah. Yeshua HaMashiach. The prophecies are astonishing. Jesus fulfilled each one. The Jews whose hearts are hardened and eyes are blinded cannot acknowledge that fact, though it is so obvious.
- **Chapter 61: Jesus’ Claim as Messiah.** These words spoken by Jesus, quoting Isaiah. Used to validate who He was. But the Jews accused Him of blasphemy – they KNEW what these verses meant, no one else but the Messiah. They did not believe Jesus was He. They tried to stone Him. Interesting to note where Jesus STOPPED in this quote. This contains both 1st and 2nd coming prophecies. When Jesus read it in Luke 4:16-22, He stopped before the references to His 2nd coming. He came, at that time, to fulfill the first part. He will fulfill the last part when He comes again. (see ch 63!)
- **Chapter 63: The Second Coming.** “*Why is your apparel red, and your garments like one who treads in the winepress...*” (Isaiah 63:2) Correlates perfectly with Revelation and other clear second coming prophecies. This is Jesus, fulfilling the second part of Isaiah 61 – the vengeance of God.
- **Chapters 65 and 66: The Millennium.** Beautiful promises about God’s rule on earth, and perfect conditions. Correlates with Revelation. About the restoration of Israel, and the Gentile participation in Israel’s glory.



#### HIGHLIGHTS OF ISAIAH 53

- Comes in absolute lowliness: “a root out of a dry ground”
- He was “Despised and rejected of men”
- Suffered for sins, and in the place of, others: for us!
- God Himself caused the suffering, on our behalf
- Absolute resignation: “He opened not his mouth.”
- Died as a felon, “from prison and judgment”
- Cut off prematurely, “out of the land of the living”
- Personally guiltless; “no violence nor deceit in his mouth”
- He was to live on after his sufferings: “prolong his days”
- YHWH’s “pleasure would prosper in his hand”
- Mighty triumph after his suffering: “Divide spoil...”
- By all this God “would justify many”