

Isaiah: The Prophet of Redemption

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction: Isaiah 6:1-8

A. Background

1. Isaiah - "Yah (Jehovah) is salvation" was a Jewish prophet who wrote the Book of Isaiah in two parts between 740 BC and 686 BC separated by 15 years
2. The book divides into two parts: 1-39 and 40-66; it includes prophetic declarations of Cyrus the Great to restore Judah from exile, the ends of evil nations, and the coming kingdom of God and the Messiah.
3. Isaiah was written as several prophecies and sermons compiled by post exile prophets. He is considered by Jews and Christians alike as chief among the writing prophets and one of the latter major prophets.
4. According to the Rabbinic literature, Isaiah was a descendant of the royal house of Judah and Tamar (Sotah 10b). He was the son of Amoz, who was the brother of King Amaziah of Judah, making Isaiah nephew to the king. (Talmud Tractate Megillah 15a).
5. He was married to a prophetess (Isa. 8:3) who bore him two sons, one of whom was given the longest name recorded in the Bible, Mahershalhashbaz, meaning "Spoil quickly, plunder speedily."
6. His ministry spanned 64 years and began near the end of the reign of Azariah and continued through Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, grandson of Hezekiah, who killed him with a wooden saw.

B. Historical setting: Shalmaneser V determined to defeat the northern kingdom of Israel, and Samaria was taken and destroyed in 722 BC. During Ahaz's reign, the southern kingdom of Judah was untouched by the Assyrians; but on his accession to the throne, Hezekiah, who was encouraged to rebel "against the king of Assyria" (2Kings 18:7), entered into an ill-advised alliance with the king of Egypt (Isa. 30:2-4). This led the king of Assyria to threaten Hezekiah, and eventually to invade the land. Sennacherib in 701 BC led a powerful army into Judah. Hezekiah was in despair and submitted to the Assyrians (2Kings 18:14-16). But after a while war broke out again. Sennacherib led an army into Judah and threatened to destroy Jerusalem (Isa. 36:2-22, 37:8). Isaiah encouraged Hezekiah to resist the Assyrians (37:1-7); Sennacherib answered with a threatening letter to Hezekiah, which he "spread before the LORD." Isa. 36:1-22, 37:8, 14, 21-23

1. 2Kings 19 - "The judgment of God fell on the Assyrian army and wiped out 185,000 of its men. "Like Xerxes in Greece, Sennacherib never recovered from the shock of the disaster in Judah. He made no more expeditions against either the Southern Palestine or Egypt." (Sayce, Archibald Henry. Ancient Empires of the East. Macmillan, 1884, p. 134.)
2. Historian Gregory of Nyssa (335-395 AD), said that Isaiah "knew more perfectly than all other prophets the mystery of the Gospel"
3. Jerome (342-420 AD) writes: "He was more of an Evangelist than a Prophet, because he described all of the Mysteries of the Church of

Christ so vividly that you would assume he was not prophesying about the future, but rather was composing a history of past events.”

4. Even Muslim scholars recognize him as a prophet.
5. John said it first - John 12:41 - “These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.” New Testament preachers and writers quoted Isaiah often; 85 times

I. ISAIAH WAS A PROPHET’S PROPHET

- A. His prophecies are quoted more than any other prophet
 1. His prophecies are used and interpreted by New Testament prophets
- B. His book has been called a microcosm of the whole Bible. That is actually an accident of chapter and verse divisions; the first 39 chapters address Old Testament nations; the last 27 chapters address New Testament matters, making a total of 66 chapters
- C. He was the official court scribe and prophet who recorded the works of the kings on a day to day basis - 2Chron. 26:22, 32:32
 1. Isa. 44:28, 45:1 names Cyrus as the king who would release Judah from captivity more than 70 years before he was born
 2. There are 129 distinct Messianic prophecies; Isaiah has 22. Every one of them came to pass. The odds of that happening by chance are astronomical. Copies of Isaiah predate the birth of Jesus by 200 years.
- D. Prophecies about Jesus (22 distinct prophecies)
 1. He will be born of a virgin - 7:14
 2. He will bring joy to Israel - 9:2
 3. He will govern the world - 9:6
 4. He will reign on David’s throne - 9:7
 5. He will be a descendant of Jesse and thus in the Davidic line - 49:1
 6. He will be empowered by the Holy Spirit - 11:2, 42:1
 7. He will restore the nations - 11:10
 8. He will judge in righteousness, justice, and faithfulness - 11:3-5, 42:1, 4
 9. He will be gentle toward the weak - 42:3
 10. He will make a New Covenant with Israel - 42:6, 49:8-9
 11. He will be a light to the Gentiles - 42:6, 49:6
 12. He will be called before His birth to be God’s Servant - 49:1
 13. He will manifest God’s glory - 49:3
 14. He will restore Israel spiritually to God and temporarily, physically to the land - 49:5, 8
 15. He will be worshiped by Gentiles - 49:7, 52:15
 16. He will be rejected by Israel - 49:7, 53:1, 3
 17. He will be obedient to the LORD in His mission - 50:6, 53:7-8
 18. He will voluntarily submit to suffering - 50:6, 53:7-8
 19. He will be exalted - 52:13; 53:12
 20. He will take on Himself the sins of the world - 53:4-6, 10-12
 21. He will triumph over death - 53:10
 22. He will comfort Israel and bring vengeance on the wicked - 61:1-3
- E. Isaiah is the prophet of redemption - Isa. 64:4-8, 65:17-18, 62:1-3