

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Series: the Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Week 3

Tonight, we will begin with #9 on the bottom of page 4

Our orientation to the book of Isaiah

1. Why are we studying this book?

In my opinion, Isaiah is the greatest Old Testament prophet.

Isaiah has more to say about our Lord Jesus Christ the Jewish Messiah than any other Old Testament prophet.

The book of Isaiah is cited in the New Testament more times than any other book in the Old Testament besides the Psalms.

His prophetic vision is majestic in scope and specific in detail.

2. What kind of a book is Isaiah?

Isaiah is a book of prophecy.

3. What are some key things to know about the Old Testament prophets?

See “Interpreting Biblical Prophecy” below.

See also attached document “Halley’s Table of Prophets”.

4. Who was Isaiah?

Isaiah the prophet. Son of Amoz. His name means "Jehovah is salvation" in Hebrew. He was born into an influential upper class family. He had access to the royal courts, and gave divinely-inspired advice concerning the foreign affairs of Judah. He warned against forming alliances with pagan nations. He was a trusted advisor of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:1-7, 20-36).

Commonly acknowledged as the "Prince of the Prophets" because of his exquisite literary style, Isaiah has also been called the "Paul of the Old Testament" because of his methodical presentation of humankind's problem of sin and God's answer of salvation. He is also known as the evangelical prophet because he says so much about the redemptive work of Messiah.

5. What was the time period of Isaiah's prophetic ministry?

Isaiah's ministry occurred between 740 – 687 BC

The history of this time period is recorded in 2 Kings chapters 15-21 as well as in 2 Chronicles chapters 28-33

6. Who was the audience for his prophetic message?

The general audience was the nation of Judah, the southern Kingdom. The specific audience was the leadership of Judah, particularly the kings. Much of Isaiah's prophecy is directed at Zion: the city of Jerusalem.

7. What was the situation with the Kingdom of Judah during his lifetime?

Faithlessness, idolatry, and disobedience.

The twelve tribes of Israel were divided into the Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes), and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

In the latter half of the 8th century BC, the Northern Kingdom suffered a catastrophic decline, ending in complete destruction by the Assyrian empire in 722 BC.

Judah was following in Israel’s footsteps: apostasy, idolatry, immorality, and looking to pagan nations (Egypt and Assyria) for protection rather than to God.

Throughout Isaiah’s ministry, Judah lived under the constant threat of attack by the Assyrian superpower.

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CONTEMPORARY KINGS OF JUDAH		
Uzziah	792 – 740 B.C.	A good king with a long and successful reign
Jotham	750 – 732	A good king; mostly coregent with Uzziah
Ahaz	735 – 716	Very wicked (see under 2 Chronicles 28)
Hezekiah	716 – 687	A good king (see under 2 Chronicles 29)
Manasseh	697 – 643	Very wicked (see under 2 Chronicles 33)
CONTEMPORARY KINGS OF ISRAEL		
Jeroboam II	793 – 753 B.C.	A long, prosperous, but idolatrous reign
Zechariah	753 – 752	Assassinated
Shallum	752	Assassinated
Menahem	752 – 742	Extremely brutal
Pekahiah	742 – 740	Assassinated by Pekah
Pekah	752 – 732	Under Pekah the northern part of Israel was taken into captivity (734 B.C.)
Hoshea	732 – 722	The last king of Israel; Samaria fell in 721 B.C.

8. Who were the key foreign nations mentioned in the book and what was Judah's relationship with them?

The Northern Kingdom (Israel, Ephraim)	ENEMY
Syria (Aram, Damascus)	ENEMY
Egypt	ALLIANCE (failed)
The Assyrian empire	ALLIANCE , then ENEMY
The Babylonian empire	ENEMY
The Persian empire	DELIVERER

Plus Israel's perennial enemies: Edom, Moab, Philistia.

See maps below.

9. What is the scope of Isaiah's prophetic vision?

His vision is telescopic.

It begins with the period of his lifetime,
extends next to the fall of Jerusalem
and the captivity of the Jews in Babylon,
then to their deliverance by Cyrus the king of Persia,
to the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ the Messiah,
all the way to the Tribulation period,
the Second Coming of Christ,
the Millennial kingdom,
and finally arriving at the eternal state.

Readings: Isaiah 1:1; 2:1-4;

13:9-13; chapter 24 (Tribulation period)

Chapter 34:1-10; 63:1-6; 66:7-21 (Second Coming/Armageddon)

11:1-9; 25:6-9; chapter 35 (Millennial Kingdom)

65:17-25; 66:22-24 (new heavens and a new earth)

10. What is a good outline to follow?

PART ONE: JUDGMENT	Chapters 1-39
Of Judah	Chapters 1-12
Of Gentile nations	Chapters 13-23
Future Tribulation and Kingdom	Chapters 24-27
Of Israel and Judah (woes and blessings)	Chapters 28-35
Deliverance of Hezekiah	Chapters 36-39
PART TWO: COMFORT	Chapters 40-66
The Greatness of God	Chapters 40-48
The Salvation of the Servant-Messiah	Chapters 49-57
The Program of God for Peace	Chapters 58-66

11. What does this book have to say about our Lord Jesus Christ?

“Christ” (Christos) is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew “Messiah” (Mashiyach). The book of Isaiah presents a series of “Messianic prophecies” concerning Christ’s person (God-man, King), birth, ministry, death on the cross, resurrection, return as conquering King, and eternal Kingdom.

We will study this in some detail. For now, here are a few readings to get started:

Readings: Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-7; 11:1-9; 42:1-7; 52:13-15; chapter 53

12. Who are a few other major figures in the book?

Hezekiah (king of Judah)

Sennacherib (Assyrian ruler)

Cyrus (Persian king)