

# Isaiah

**MEANING:** Isaiah means “Yahweh is Salvation.”

**AUTHOR:** Isaiah

**TIME WRITTEN:** Isaiah’s long ministry ranged from 740 B.C. to 680 B.C. (40 to 60 years)

**POSITION IN THE BIBLE:**

- 23rd Book in the Bible
- 23rd book in the Old Testament
- 1st of 17 books of Prophecy
- 1st of 5 Major Prophet Books
- 22 have preceded it. 43 to follow it.

**CHAPTERS:** 66

**VERSES:** 1,292

**WORDS:** 37,044

**KEY WORD:** Salvation is of the Lord

**TWO KEY PASSAGES:**

1. **Isaiah 9:6-7** - “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”
2. **Isaiah 53:6** - “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

**KEY CHAPTER:** Isaiah 53

1. Along with Psalm 22, Isaiah 53 lists the most remarkable and specific prophecies of the atonement of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
2. **Atonement — AT-ONE-MENT**

**OBSERVATIONS ABOUT ISAIAH:**

1. Isaiah is like a miniature Bible.
  - a. The first thirty-nine chapters (like the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament) are filled with judgment upon immoral and idolatrous men.
    1. Judah has sinned.
    2. The surrounding nations have sinned.
    3. The whole earth has sinned.
    4. Judgment must come , for God cannot allow such blatant sin to go unpunished for ever.

- b. The final twenty-seven chapters (like the twenty-seven books of the New Testament) declare a message of hope.
  - 1. The Messiah is coming as a Savior and a Sovereign.
    - a. As a Savior He will bear a cross.
    - b. As a Sovereign He will wear a crown.
- 2. Isaiah has been called the “Paul of the Old Testament.”
- 3. Isaiah
  - a. Was evidently from a distinguished Jewish family.
  - b. His education is evident in his impressive vocabulary and style.
  - c. His work is comprehensive in scope and beautifully communicated.
  - d. Isaiah maintained close contact with the royal court, but his exhortations against alliances with foreign powers were not always well received.
  - e. Isaiah was:
    - 1. Uncompromising
    - 2. Sincere
    - 3. Compassionate
  - f. His wife was prophetess.
  - g. He fathered at least two sons. (7:3; 8:3)
  - h. He spend most of his time in Jerusalem.
  - i. Talmudic tradition says his persecutors sawed him in two during the reign of Manasseh. **Hebrews 11:37** - “They were stoned, they were sawn in two . . . “
- 4. Isaiah’s long ministry ranged from about 740 B.C. to 680 B.C. (1:1)
  - a. He began his ministry near the end of Uzziah’s reign (790-739 B.C.) and continued through the reigns of:
    - 1. Jotham (739-731 B.C.)
    - 2. Ahaz (731-715 B.C.)
    - 3. Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.)
  - b. Assyria was growing in power under Tiglath-Pileser who turned toward the west after his conquests in the east.
    - 1. He plucked up the small nations that dotted the Mediterranean coast including Israel and much of Judah.
- 5. Isaiah lived during this time of military threat to Judah and warned its kings against trusting in alliances with other countries rather than the power of Yahweh.
- 6. As a contemporary of Hosea and Micah, he prophesied during the last years of the northern kingdom but ministered to the southern kingdom of Judah who was following the sins of her sister, Israel.
- 7. After Israel’s demise in 722 B.C., Isaiah warned Judah of judgment, not by Assyria, but by Babylon, even though Babylon had not yet risen in power and would not do so for another 96 years.

8. By way of Assyrian time, Isaiah ministered from the time of Tiglath-Pileser (747-727 B.C. to the time of Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.)
9. Hezekiah was succeeded by his wicked son Manasseh who overthrew the worship of Yahweh and no doubt opposed the work of Isaiah.
10. When Isaiah speaks about Christ, he sounds more like a new Testament writer than an Old Testament prophet.
  - a. It has been said that his messianic prophecies are clearer and more explicit than those in any other Old Testament book.
  - b. They describe many aspects of the Person and work of Christ.
11. The basic theme of Isaiah is found in the meaning of his name, “Salvation is of the Lord.”
  - a. The word “salvation” appears twenty-six times in Isaiah but only seven times in all the other prophets combined.
  - b. Chapters 1-39 portray man’s great need for salvation.

## **SUMMARY OF ISAIAH**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- A. Isaiah has been called:
  1. The “Paul of the Old Testament.”
  2. The “Shakespeare of the prophets.”
  3. The “evangelical prophet” because of his incredibly clear and detailed prophecies.
- B. The Book of Isaiah has been called “The gospel According to Isaiah.”
- C. There are three major divisions in the book:
  1. Prophecies of Condemnation. (1-35)
  2. Historical Parenthesis. (36-39)
  3. Prophecies of Comfort. (40-66)

### **PROPHECIES OF CONDEMNATION. (1-35)**

- A. Isaiah’s first message of condemnation is aimed at his own countrymen in Judah. (1-12).
  1. Chapter one is a capsulized message of the entire book.
    - a. Judah is riddled with moral and spiritual disease.
    - b. The people are neglecting God as they bow to ritualism and selfishness.
    - c. God invites them to repent and return to Him because this is their only hope of avoiding judgment.
  2. Isaiah’s call to proclaim God’s message is found in chapter 6.
  3. Chapters 7-12 repeatedly refer to the Messiah.
- B. Isaiah moves from local to regional judgment as he proclaims a series of oracles against the surrounding nations. (12-13)

1. Eleven nations are involved plus Jerusalem in Judah:
 

a. Babylon	e. Damascus (Syria)	i. Edom
b. Assyria	f. Ethiopia	j. Arabia
c. Philistia	g. Egypt	k. Jerusalem (Judah)
d. Moab	h. Babylon (again)	l. Tyre

C. Chapters 28-33 pronounce six woes on Israel and Judah for specific sins.

### **HISTORICAL PARENTHESIS. (36-39)**

- A. This historical parenthesis looks back to the Assyrian invasion of Judah in 701 B.C., and anticipates the coming Babylonian invasion of Judah.
1. Judah escapes captivity by Assyria (36-37; 2 Kings 18-19), but they will not escape from the hands of the Babylonians (38-39; 2 Kings 20).
  2. God answers Hezekiah's prayers and delivers Judah from Assyrian destruction by Sennacherib.
  3. Hezekiah also turns to the Lord in his illness and is granted a fifteen-year extension of his life.
  4. Hezekiah foolishly shows all his treasures to the Babylonian messengers, and Isaiah tells him that the Babylonians will one day carry his treasure and descendants to their land.

### **PROPHECIES OF COMFORT. (40-66)**

- A. Having pronounced Judah's divine condemnation, Isaiah comforts them with God's promises of hope and restoration.
1. The basis of this hope is the sovereignty and majesty of God (40-48).
  2. Of the 216 verses in these nine chapters, 115 speak of God's goodness and power.
  3. The Creator is contrasted with idols—the creations of men.
  4. His sovereign character is Judah's assurance of future restoration.
  5. Babylon will definitely carry them off, but Babylon will finally be judged and destroyed, and God's people will be released from captivity.
- B. Chapters 49-57 concentrate on the coming Messiah who will be their Savior and Suffering Servant.
1. This rejected but exalted One will do two major things:
    - a. He will pay for their iniquities.
    - b. He will usher in a kingdom of peace and righteousness throughout the earth. (Church)
  2. Marvelous things would be provided by such a marvelous Messiah.