

## INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

### 1. Time of writing and authorship:

- a. The Spirit of God spoke through the prophet Isaiah - Acts 28:25; Isa. 6:9-10
  - i. Undoubtedly included in the Hebrew canon
  - ii. Very often quoted in the New Testament
  - iii. II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:20-21 - Inspired writing
  - iv. I Pet. 1:10-12 - Difficult for us, sometimes difficult for them
- b. Isaiah worked as a prophet between 750 and 700 B.C. During the reigns of Kings of Judah: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah (Isa. 1:1; II Kin. 15 - 20; II Chron. 26-32). Isaiah worked closely with the kings, especially Ahaz and Hezekiah. Hosea (1:1), Amos (1:1), Zechariah (14:5), and Micah (1:1) also prophesied in these days.
- c. Critical schools of thought claim that Isaiah didn't write chapters 40-66.
  - i. The name of Isaiah is not mentioned in these chapters
  - ii. The material does not seem to fit the time period of Isaiah
  - iii. The style of Hebrew is different from the rest of Isaiah.
- d. The strongest argument for Isaiah authorship is that in the New Testament the Book of Isaiah is quoted more than any other prophet and these passages are all ascribed to Isaiah. (ex. Isa. 42:1-4 - Matt. 12:17-21; Rom. 15:12)
- e. Other notable points
  - i. The purpose of the chapters is to point to the Godly walk of the people of Israel and not to Isaiah.
  - ii. Isaiah uses the phrase "Holy One of Israel" twenty six times and fourteen of them are in the latter chapters. It is only used outside of Isaiah five times.

### 2. Isa. 1:1 - Background information on Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

- a. Uzziah
  - i. His calling at the death of King Uzziah - Isa. 6
  - ii. Called Azariah - II Kin. 14:21; 15:1
  - iii. Good King - II Kin. 15:3; II Chron. 26:4
  - iv. A builder and a warrior - II Chron. 26:2-15
  - v. He was penalized for pride - II Chron. 26:16-21
  - vi. Isaiah wrote the history - II Chron. 26:22
- b. Jotham
  - i. Good King - II Kin. 15:34
  - ii. Builder and warrior like father - II Chron. 27:3-6
- c. Ahaz
  - i. Evil King - II Kin. 16:2
  - ii. Sacrificed son and worshiped idols - II Kin. 16:3-4; II Chron. 28:2-4
  - iii. Taken captive by Israel and Syria, then returned - II Chron. 28:5-15
  - iv. Attempted alliance with King of Assyria - II Kin. 16:5-9; II Chron. 28:16-21
  - v. Had altar built after manner of Assyrians' - II Kin. 16:10-18
  - vi. Assyria took Syria and Israel, then fought Judah - Isa. 7-8; 10:24-25
- d. Hezekiah
  - i. Good King - II Kin. 18:3

- ii. Rebelled against Assyria - II Kin. 18:7
- iii. Sennacherib threatens the Jews - II Kin. 18:13-19:37
  - 1. Hezekiah prays to God
  - 2. Isaiah sends a message of assurance
- iv. God smote the Assyrians, 185,000 - II Kin. 19:35-37; II Chron. 32:20-23; Isa. 37:36-38
- v. Life extended 15 years - II Kin. 20:1-11; II Chron. 32:24; Isa. 38:1-22
- vi. Shows all the treasures to Babylonians - II Kin. 12-19; II Chron. 32:24-31; Isa. 39:1-8

### **3. Death of Isaiah**

- a. Tradition says he was sawn in half by Manasseh, King of Judah (plausible)
- b. II Kin. 21:16 - Manasseh shed innocent blood very much
- c. Heb. 11:37 - Speaks of some men of faith who were sawn in two

### **4. Brief Outline of the Book**

- a. PROPHECIES OF JUDGEMENT (CH. 1-35)
  - i. Judah and Jerusalem (Ch. 1-12)
  - ii. Gentile Nations (Ch. 13-24)
  - iii. Israel (Ch. 25-27)
  - iv. Judah and Assyria (Ch. 28-35)
- b. HISTORICAL SECTION (CH. 36-39)
  - i. Jerusalem Preserved (Ch. 36-37)
  - ii. Hezekiah's Life Prolonged (Ch. 38)
  - iii. Babylonian Exile Predicted (Ch. 39)
- c. PROPHECIES OF COMFORT (Ch. 40-66)
  - i. The Comfort of Israel (Ch. 40-48)
  - ii. The Suffering Servant (Ch. 49-57)
  - iii. Thy Kingdom Come (Ch. 58-66)

### **5. Old Testament in general and Isaiah in particular are very often quoted in New Testament**

- a. The use of the Old Testament by New Testament writers is abundant
  - i. 10% of the New Testament is made of citations or direct allusions to the Old Testament. - Roger Nicole
  - ii. The variation in use of the OT by NT writers ranges all the way from a distant allusion to a definite quotation.
  - iii. The New Testament writer might quote may not be precise.
    - 1. New Testament writers had to translate their quotes
    - 2. Writers did not have same rules for quotations as we do today (No punctuation signs, quotation marks, ellipsis marks, brackets or parentheses).
    - 3. Sometimes references were paraphrased or summarized.
  - iv. Old Testament references were views as authoritative and used in arguments to settle an issue or prove a point.

1. Heb. 1:5-13 - Christ is better than the angels as proven by various OT Scriptures (Ps. 2:7; II Sam. 7:14; Ps. 104:4).
  2. Matt. 22:31-33 - There is a spirit and a resurrection as Jesus shows by use of Exodus 3:6.
- b. In this study we will look at some of the quotations of the Book of Isaiah found in the New Testament.