

Expositional Notes on Isaiah

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INTRODUCTION

A general definition for prophet may be the following: “An appointed spokesman for God whose message of revelation carries divine authority with the urgency of holy living for the full blessing of Jehovah, including His coming Messiah and corresponding Kingdom.” The Scripture gives several terms for the prophet. For instance, the Bible states, “(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the *seer*: for he that is now called a **Prophet** was beforetime called a **Seer**)” (I Sam. 9:9). The first is *הַרְאָה* *haro’eh* (12x) and refers to the “seer” whose revelation had been received passively (II Ki. 6:17). The next is *נְבִיא* or *naviy’* (316x) referring to the “prophet” who was active in his role. The third term is *הַחֹזֶה* *hachozeh* (16x) or “seer” and occurs with the other two terms “seer” and “prophet” in I Chr. 29:29: “Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.” This latter term *הַחֹזֶה* seems to interchange with the first *הַרְאָה*. Several titles occur in Scripture for the prophet, including “the man of God” (Dt. 33:1), “my servant” (Josh. 1:1-2), “messenger” (Hag. 1:13), “watchman” (Ezk. 3:17), and “teachers” (Isa. 43:27).

There were several historical periods of the OT prophets. During the Pre-Mosaic Period Abel was the first (Lk. 11:49-51), along with Enoch (Jude 1:14), Noah (Heb. 11:7; I Pet. 3:20), Abraham (Gen. 20:7), and Jacob (Gen. 49:1-2). The Mosaic Period included Moses (Ex. 33:11; Dt. 18:15), Miriam (Ex. 15:20),¹ Aaron (Ex. 7:1), Deborah (Jdg. 4:4), and seventy elders (Num. 11:24). Next, there was Samuel and the Prophetic School Period, which included Samuel (I Sam. 3:20) and Saul and his prophets (I Sam. 10:5 ff.). “The sons of the prophets” (I Ki. 20:35; II Ki. 2:3, 5, 7, 15; 4:1, 38[2x]; 5:22; and 6:1) consisted of a group or band of “prophets in training” which identified with and unified around a major prophet such as Elijah (II Ki. 2-6) or Isaiah (Isa. 8:16) or Jeremiah (Jer. 45:1). The final period was the Writing Prophets Period including the Major Prophets Isaiah (8th century), Jeremiah and Ezekiel (7th century), and the Minor Prophets Obadiah and Joel (9th century), Hosea, Amos, Micah, and Jonah (8th century), Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah (7th century), Haggai and Zechariah (6th century), and Malachi (5th century).

¹Miriam was the first of the recorded prophetesses, along with Deborah (Jdg. 4:4), Huldah (II Ki. 22:14), Noadiah (Neh. 6:14), Isaiah’s wife (Isa. 8:3), Anna (Lk.2:36), Philip’s daughters (Acts 21:9), and Jezebel (Rev. 2:20).

The functions of the prophets were at least three-fold. They acted as divinely appointed moral and ethical preachers and teachers (Dt. 18:1 ff.). They predicted coming judgment in their messages (Joel 1:15). They behaved as watchmen standing on the walls of Zion to warn against apostasy (Ezk. 3:17). The Lord allowed for the existence of false prophets to determine if Israel would obey the written Scripture (Dt. 13:1-5; cf. also Mt. 24:11 ff.; II Pet. 2:1). He gave some tests for true prophets:

1. They spoke in the name of Jehovah (Dt. 18:20).
2. They spoke only by revelation or inspiration (Dt. 18:19-22).
3. They had a high moral character whereas the false prophet was wicked (Jer. 23:11), immoral (Jer. 23:15), a drunkard (Isa. 28:7), and lied from the heart (Ezk. 13:10-16).
4. They were conscious of a definite call experience (Jer. 1:4-10; Amos 7:14-15).
5. They demonstrated authentication by signs (I Sam. 12:16; Isa. 7:14).
6. They had a message in harmony with previous revelation (Dt. 13:1-5).
7. They had historical confirmation of their prophecy (Dt. 18:21-22).
8. They were recognized as true on basis of hearer's spiritual discernment (Dt. 13:1-5; Ezk. 2:3 ff.; I Cor. 14:29).

Balaam was an exceptional case. The Scripture depicts him as an apostate (II Pet. 2:15; Jude 1:11; Rev. 2:14). Yet he uttered inspired prophecy (even Messianic prophecy [Num. 24:17; Mt. 2:2, 7, 9, 10]) as the Lord blessed Israel when Balaam attempted to curse the chosen people (Num. 22:12 ff.). Obviously the prophets were not "inspired" but the words which came from Jehovah.

Scripture describes the prophetic consciousness of the man. The prophet acted as an extension of the Lord (Ex. 4:15-16). Sometimes the prophet's personality receded into the background and God spoke directly (Isa. 44:1; Hos. 14:4). The prophet received the divine influence upon him (Num. 24:2; II Sam. 23:2; Ezk. 8:1). The prophet was personally affected by his very message (Jon. 1-4; Dan. 7:15). As spokesmen for the LORD, the prophets were involved in the inspiration and preservation processes (Jer. 36:1 ff.).

Higher Criticism, such as the Wellhausen School of thought, has misunderstood the prophets, especially as they relate to the OT sacrificial system (the "cult" or *cultus*). Wellhausen maintained that the prophets rejected the sacrificial system on its very principle of existence. They have cited such passages as Isa. 1:10-17, Hos. 6:6, and Amos 5:25 as examples of doctrinal rejection. However, Jehovah gave Israel the sacrificial system and the prophets supported it in its original purpose and practice. The Lord's prophets however condemned the *cultus* not on principle but on abusive practices such as bribing deities, behaving immorally, worshipping vainly, and appeasing divine wrath.

The proper interpretation of prophecy must include interpreting literally, grammatically, historically, contextually, Christologically, harmonistically, and futuristically. Concerning the future, the prophets saw diverse event singularly (Isa. 61:1-2; Lk. 4:17-18). They often used the prophetic perfect (past) tense verb for future events (Isa. 9:6). They also used ancient

terminology because ancient tools and vehicles will be revived and utilized during the Tribulation and Millennium (Zech. 9:10).

THE MAN ISAIAH

The good king Uzziah (also named Azariah) died in 740 BC,² setting up the providential summons to “*the son of Amoz*”³ about his need to serve Jehovah (Isa. 6:1). Isaiah (יִשְׁעִיָּה)⁴ responded to the divine call with the famous and compelling answer “*Here am I; send me*” (הֲנִי שְׁלֵחָנִי).⁵ The Lord raised up this influential Judean prophet at a critical time in Israel’s history as the Northern Kingdom was collapsing and finally gave way to the Assyrians in 722 BC. By 701 BC, He used Isaiah to encourage Hezekiah and rebuke the Assyrian king Sennacherib who encroached upon the cities of Judah (Isa. 36-37). The Assyrian threat was eviscerated by the Angel of the LORD (Isa. 37:36). Except what is recorded in Isaiah 6-8 and 36-39, little is known about the prophet’s personal life other than he was married to “the prophetess” (Isa. 8:3) and that they had two sons named *Mahershalalhashbaz* (שָׁלַל חָשׁ בַּז) and *Shearjashub* (שָׁאֵר יָשׁוּב).⁷ [1x].⁸ He ministered unto the Lord from the time of Uzziah, through Jotham, and Hezekiah, and to Ahaz, over a span of approximately fifty-two years (c. 740-688 BC). He lived in Jerusalem (Isa. 5:3 ff.) and recognized ritual apostasy first hand (Isa. 1:11-15). He advised Jerusalem officials (Isa. 8:2; 22:15-19), he taught a group of disciples (Isa. 8:16), he was a friend and counselor to Hezekiah (Isa. 37:1 ff.), and he aided in the physical recovery of Hezekiah by recommending figs applied to his boil (Isa. 38:21). With great boldness Isaiah obeyed the Lord and walked naked and barefoot for three years, depicting symbolically the coming exile of Egypt and Ethiopia (Isa. 20:1-6). As a writing prophet, he wrote a separate history of Uzziah’s reign (II Chr. 26:22). He obviously was very knowledgeable in the Mosaic Law and about the biblically predicted future. Tradition states that he was sawn asunder by king Manasseh (cf. Heb. 11:37).

²Uzziah, or “*The strength of Jehovah*,” reigned from 791-740 BC, or for about 52 years.

³Since this expression occurs 13x in Scripture, it probably means that Isaiah’s father was a prominent individual.

⁴The Hebrew proper noun occurs 39x in the OT and means “Jehovah saves.” The NT counterpart is *Esaias* (Ἡσαΐας) and occurs 21x (Mt. 3:3-Rom. 15:12). He is quoted by name in the NT more than any other writing prophet. The precious Saviour began His public ministry at Nazareth after reading the great Servant passage from Isaiah’s sixty-first chapter (Lk. 4:17 ff.).

⁵He obviously became convicted that he did not want the seventh woe (אָוִי) to fall on him (cf. Isa. 6:5 with 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, and 22).

⁶His name means something like “hasten to the booty, speed to the spoil,” suggesting impending judgment (Isa. 8:1, 3).

⁷This son’s name means “a remnant shall return,” giving hope to believers (Isa. 7:3).

⁸“*Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion*” (Isa. 8:19).

THE TIMES OF ISAIAH

The aggressive Assyrians were the dreaded enemy to Israel and Judah, especially during the lifetime of Isaiah. For instance, the Assyrian king Tilgathpilneser (also Tiglathpileser) III, also known as Pul (745-727 BC) attacked northern cities in Israel after Menahem had paid tribute, and carried many Jews into captivity (II Ki. 15:14 ff.). Later, Shalmaneser V (727-722) besieged the capital Samaria for three years before taking it and deporting Israelites to Assyria in 722 BC (II Ki. 17:3-6). Sargon II (722-705) completed the captivity of Israel (cf. also Isa. 20:1). Sargon's son Sennacherib (705-681) threatened Judah in 701 BC, and took Lachish and other fenced cities but was stopped by the LORD with the enormous plague (Isa. 36:1-37:38). The growing Babylonian empire captured Assur in 614 BC, Nineveh in 612 BC, and defeated mighty Egypt in 605 BC.

The following chart will help give a graphic for the principals of Isaiah's era:

N. Kingdom	S. Kingdom	Prophet
Jehu (841-814 BC) ⁹	Joash (835-796)	
Jehoahaz (814-798)		
Jehoash (798-782)	Amaziah (796-767)	
Jeroboam II (793-753)	Azariah (791-740)	Amos (755) NK
Zechariah (753)		Isaiah (740) SK
Shallum (752)	Jotham (752-736)	
Menahem (751-742)		
Pekahiah (741-740)	Ahaz (743-720)	
Pekah (740-732)		
Hoshea (732-722)	Hezekiah (729-698)	Hosea (710) NK
FALL of NK (722)		Micah (700) SK
	FALL of SK (586)	

Isaiah not only lived through the age of Assyria's dominance, but he also predicted the ascendancy of Babylonians (Isa. 13, 21, 46-48),¹⁰ their fall to Media-Persia (13:17), and the accomplishments of Cyrus (Isa. 44:28-45:4). Cyrus was prompted by the LORD to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4).

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

⁹Most dates in the OT, especially regnal, are within the range of accuracy + or - one year.

¹⁰"Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD" (Isa. 39:6).

The Date

Obviously the prophet Isaiah wrote during his lifetime (740-688 BC), including during the reign of malevolent Manasseh (> 698 BC). Since there is no biblical evidence that anyone else wrote all or any part of the Book of Isaiah, the author must be the one to whom the writer of II Kings alluded, “*And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz*” (II Ki. 19:2).

The Authorship

There is no serious question from Bible believers concerning the truth that the prophet Isaiah wrote all of the Book of Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah has received over sixty citations from it in the NT, indicating that Christians regarded it as a significant theological book for Christology and eschatology. The Apostle Paul cited the book several times, using verbs for speech indicating that the scroll was the written words of the prophet (Rom. 9:27, 29; 10:16, 20; and 15:12). The precious Saviour referred to the prophet’s words recorded in Isa. 53:1 and 6:10 (Jn. 12:38-39),¹¹ declaring His infallible interpretation of the authorship and unity of the Book of Isaiah. The following is a list of passages from Isaiah cited by NT writers:

Isaiah	NT Reference
-“Proto-Isaiah”-	
1:9	Rom. 9:29
6:1-3	Jn.12:41
6:9-10	Mt. 13:14, Mk. 4:12, Lk. 8:10, Jn. 12:39, Acts 28:25-27
7:14	Mt. 1:23
8:12-13	1Pet. 3:14-15
8:14	1Pet. 2:8, Rom. 9:32-33
8:17-18	Heb. 2:13
9:1-2	Mt. 4:14-16
10:22-23	Rom. 9:27-28
11:4-5	Eph. 6:14; 2 Thes. 2:8
11:10	Rom. 15:12
22:13	1Cor. 15:32
22:22	Rev. 3:7
25:8	1Cor. 15:54; Rev.7:17
27:9	Rom. 11:27
28:11-12	1Cor. 14:21

¹¹The Lord’s simple but authoritative words succinctly destroyed many tons of rationalistic German literature which questioned or denied the single authorship of the Book of Isaiah.

28:16	1 Pet. 2:6, Rom. 9:33; 10:11
29:10	Rom. 11:8
29:13	Mt. 15:7-9, Mk. 7:6-7
29:14	1Cor. 1:19
29:16	Rom. 9:19-21
34:4, 10	Rev. 6:13-14
35:3	Heb. 12:12
-“Deutero-Isaiah”-	
40:3-6	Mt. 3:3, Mk. 1:2, Lk. 3:4, Jn. 1:23
40:6-8	1Pet. 1:24-25; Jam. 1:10-11
40:13	Rom. 11:34; 1 Cor. 2:16
41:4	Rev. 1:8, 11, 17; 21:6; 22:13
42:1-4	Mt.12:17-21; Rom. 15:12
42:6	Lk. 2:32
43:18-19	2 Cor. 5:17
45:9	Rom. 9:20
45:23	Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:10-11
49:6	Lk. 2:32; Acts 13:47
49:8	2 Cor. 6:2
49:10	Rev. 7:16
52:5	Rom. 2:24
52:7	Rom. 10:15
52:11	2Cor. 6:17
52:15	Rom. 15:21
53:1	Jn. 12:38, Rom. 10:16
53:4	Mt. 8:17
53:5	1Pet. 2:24-25
53:7-8	Acts 8:32-33
53:9	1Pet. 2:22
53:12	Mk. 15:28; Lk. 22:37
54:1	Gal. 4:27
54:13	Jn. 6:45
55:3	Acts 13:34
56:7	Mt. 21:13; Mk. 11:17; Lk. 19:46
57:19	Eph. 2:17; Rom. 3:15
59:7-8	Rom. 3:15-17
59:17	Eph. 6:14-17
59:20-21	Rom. 11:26-27

60:3, 10, 11	Rev. 21:24-26
61:1-2	Lk. 4:17-19
63:2-3	Rev. 19:13-15
64:4	1Cor. 2:9
65:1-2	Rom. 10:20-21
65:17	2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1
66:1-2	Acts 7:48-50; Mt. 5:34-35
66:24	Mk. 9:44, 46, 48

Literary Style

Jerome likened the writer Isaiah to Demosthenes. He used many writing styles and figures such as metaphors, similes, personifications, alliterations, hyperboles, paranomasia, inclusio, chiasmus, alliteration, assonance, and poetic devices. His symbolism included trees, grass, water, storms, light and darkness, rocks and stones, animals, marriage and childbirth, clothing, vineyards, occupations, and warfare. In chapter one alone, Isaiah used at least thirty-five different figures of speech.

Unity of Isaiah

Rationalistic German criticism, beginning with Johann Doederlein (1789) argued for an exilic date for chapters 40-66 because he denied the supernatural predictive prophecy of the Fall of Jerusalem and the rise of Cyrus. This led to the hypothesis that there were at least two authors, namely Isaiah and deuterio-Isaiah for chapters 1-39 and 40-66, respectively. Soon, some speculated that chapters 55-66 were written by another, trito-Isaiah. Critics cited different vocabulary in the two or three sections, intimating that one author could not have written all. Furthermore, the specific reference to Cyrus by name at least 150 years in advance was too much for the “scholarly” un-regenerates. The Lord Jesus Christ mentioned Isaiah as the author of both sections in the Book (Jn. 12:38-41), and many have pointed out that the expression “*the Holy One of Israel*” (קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) occurs 12 times in chapters 1-39 and 13 times in chapters 40-66, but only 6 times throughout the rest of the OT.¹²

Outline of Isaiah

I. Jehovah’s Judgment (1-39)

- A. Introductory Prophecies (1-6)
- B. The Book of Immanuel (7-12)

¹²See Gleason Archer, *A Survey of the Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), pp. 363 ff., for a thorough discussion of and defense for the unity of the Book of Isaiah.

- C. The Burden of the Nations (13-23)
- D. The Little Apocalypse (24-27)
- E. The Woes (28-33)
- F. The Judgment and the Blessing (34-35)
- G. Hezekiah's History (36-39)

II. God's Glory (40-66)

- A. The Providence of God (40-48)
- B. The Suffering Servant (49-57)
- C. The Final Consummation (58-66)

EXEGESIS

Jehovah's Judgments (Isaiah 1-39)

I. Introductory Prophecies (Isaiah 1-6)

Chapter One

After the introduction (v. 1), Isaiah allowed the LORD to indict Judah for her rebellion, by describing her wickedness (vv. 2-9).¹³ He then denounced the people for empty worship,¹⁴ including their bloody hands which caused murder (vv. 10-15; also v. 21). There will be an ultimate deliverance of the Jews, even if it includes only a remnant (vv. 16-31).¹⁵

Chapter Two

As with a great deal of OT prophecy, Isaiah combined future events as a whole and without chronological delineation. For instance, he prophesied about the glorious Millennial blessings (vv. 1-5)¹⁶ before warning about the Tribulation judgments (vv. 6-22).¹⁷ “*The last days*” (אַחֲרֵי־יְמֵי־הַיָּמִים) will begin with the coming of the Messiah (I Jn. 2:18) and culminate with the “*day of the LORD*” (יּוֹם־יְהוָה), which day will include the seven-year Tribulation and the thousand-year Millennium (cf. Isa. 13:19; 19:18; 24:21; 26:1; Zeph. 1:14; Zech. 14:1 ff.).

¹³The Lord called creation to the heavenly court room for His formal charge against Judah: guilty of sin.

¹⁴The sacrificial system was established by the LORD God (Lev. 1:2 ff.), but the Israelites degraded it with such emptiness of heart, that Jehovah denounced every aspect of the system. Amos succinctly expressed God's disdain for empty worship with irony, stating, “*Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years:*” (Amos 4:4; cf. also Zech. 7:5-6).

¹⁵Cf. v. 27.

¹⁶The great geographical changes which will occur during the Tribulation from the world-wide earthquakes will redistribute the physical features with Mt. Zion being the highest mountain upon which the Millennial Temple will be built (Mic. 4:1-5; cf. also Rev. 6:12-13).

¹⁷Isaiah predicted (v. 10) that earthlings will desire to hide from the face of God Whom they will see when the first and second heavens depart and allow a glimpse into the Throne Room in the third heaven (Rev. 6:14-16).

Chapter Three

Because of the valid indictment for sin, the Lord will deal severely with Jerusalem (vv. 1-15), mainly by removing godly leadership (v. 1) and replacing with children (v. 4)¹⁸ and women (v. 12).¹⁹ Society became so perverse that “*the daughters of Zion*” (בְּנוֹת צִיּוֹן)²⁰ embraced heathen fashions²¹ and manifested their rebellious hearts by external garb to usurp husbands, seduce men, and reject the Lord (vv. 16-20).²²

Chapter Four

In future wars, ultimately during the Tribulation, women will desire the security and blessing of marriage and children, since men will be scarce, Isaiah predicted (v. 1). Following these wars will be the blessing of the Millennium because of the presence of “*the branch of the LORD*” (צֶמַח יְהוָה). Jeremiah identified the “*branch,*” saying, “*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth*” (Jer. 23:5; 33:15; also Zech. 3:8; and 6:12). He will purge Jerusalem (3x) and create (סִלְוָה) shelter for His people, the prophet declared (vv. 2-6).

Chapter Five

The Lord pictured the Jewish nation as a vineyard which was given all of the care and concern of a loving husbandman, and yet she produced “*wild grapes*” (vv. 1-7). He punned on His expectation and their rebellion, saying, “*he looked for judgment (מִשְׁפָּט), but behold oppression (מִשְׁפָּח); for righteousness (צְדָקָה), but behold a cry (צַעֲקָה)*” (Isa. 5:7). Because of

¹⁸Manasseh began to rule at 12 years of age (II Ki. 21:1-2).

¹⁹This may refer to the wives/mothers of kings in an “*Athaliah*”-like manner of ruling and controlling kingdoms (II Ki. 11:1-16). Queen Athaliah (841-835 BC) was the evil and ruthless daughter of Ahab and Jezebel and the wife of Jehoram (II Chr. 22:10 ff.). Certainly Herodias ruled Herod and impacted the Jews of the first century, including the first Christian martyr, John the Baptist (cf. Mk. 6:17-28).

²⁰Cf. also Isa. 3:17; 4:4; and SOS 3:11.

²¹Reference to “*moon*” or crescent (שֶׁהָרֵוֶן) indicates the occultic nature of the symbols of their jewelry (*vide* Jdg. 8:21, 26).

²²Peter advised Christian women about how their spirituality will affect their dress, saying, “*Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price*” (I Pet. 3:3-4).

her wickedness, He indicted Israel with six “woe” (הוי)²³ judgments for social and moral sins (vv. 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, and 22), anticipating a seventh, under which Isaiah fell, and was relieved as he surrendered to the divine summons (cf. Isa. 6:6-8)

Chapter Six

The commissioning of Isaiah precedes the messages of Chapter 1-5, but is placed here to connect with the previous six woe judgments (cf. 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22 with 6:5), and to show a man with a willing heart to serve the Lord in the time of great apostasy. The year was 740 BC when Isaiah saw the LORD of Hosts (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)²⁴ and was convicted of uncleanness in the presence of the thrice holy God (vv. 1-7).²⁵ The query of the Triune Godhead “*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us*”²⁶ prompted a convicted response from Isaiah (v. 8). His unreserved commitment to go elicited the Lord’s acknowledgment about and timing for the great apostasy (vv. 9-13). Ultimately, in the Babylonian captivity, only a tenth would return and yet be consumed again (v. 13).

II. The Book of Immanuel (Isaiah 7-12)

Chapter Seven

This section focuses on the Messiah named Immanuel (Isa. 7:14), including His sign (Isa. 7-9), His judgment (Isa. 10), His rule (Isa. 11), and His praise (Isa. 12). The backdrop of this messianic hope was the calamity approaching Judah in 734 BC in the Syro-Ephraimite War. Assyrian aggression was on the ascendency as Tilgathpilneser III (745-727 BC) moved into Syria and Israel, threatening submission. Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel demanded that Ahaz help thwart this takeover (Isa. 7:1-2). Because of Judah’s resistance (II Ki. 16:5), these united enemies besieged Jerusalem in an attempt to overthrow Ahaz and place the son of Tabeal on the

²³This particle interjection “woe” occurs 52x in the OT and its Greek counterpart *Oὐαί* occurs 49x. The particle interjection *אוי* (24x; cf. Isa. 6:5) is similar in form and is equivalent in meaning to *הוי* (52x).

²⁴The expression occurs 245x in the OT from I Sam. 1:11 to Mal. 3:21.

²⁵The seraphim (שֶׁרָפִיִּים) are angelic creatures, whose class is based on the verb “to burn” (שָׂרַף) for purification and cleansing (cf. Rev. 4:8).

²⁶The preposition לְ with the first person plural pronominal suffix נו translates לָנוּ “for us.” The “us” refers to the thrice Holy Godhead (v. 3), Jehovah the Father, Jehovah the Son, and Jehovah the Spirit.

throne (Isa. 7:6). Isaiah was called in to encourage Ahaz to trust the LORD²⁷ and not Assyria (Isa. 7:3-9). Ahaz rejected the Lord's sign (Isa. 7:10-16) and trusted Tilgathpilneser (II Ki. 16:7-9), contributed to the forfeiture of the northern cities of Israel, and ultimately worshipped the idols of Damascus (II Chr. 28:20-23).

The LORD gave the great virgin birth prophecy (Isa. 7:14) ultimately to the house of David (“*ye...you*”) since proud Ahaz (“*thee*”) rejected any divine signs (Isa. 7:10-13). The Lord God posited three truths in the sign (אִוֶּרֶת). 1) The mother would be moral—a technical “*virgin*” (הָעַלְמָה);²⁸ 2) the birth would be unusual—“*shall conceive*” (הָרָה [literally ‘pregnant’]); and 3) the miraculous event would bring God to man—“*Immanuel*” (עִמָּנוּ אֵל). According to Matthew, the obvious and only fulfillment of this prophecy was in the virgin conception of the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 1:23; Lk. 1:35).²⁹

Chapter Eight

Isaiah's second son *Mahershalalhashbaz* was symbolic for the fall of Syria and Israel just as his first son *Shearjashub* was symbolic for the future Jewish remnant (vv. 1-4 and 7:3, respectively). Likewise, Immanuel's land will fall to the Assyrian (vv. 5-8), but God is with those³⁰ who fear Him including Isaiah and his disciples and children³¹ (vv. 9-18). Those that follow idolatry and demonism, as Ahaz ultimately did, will suffer judgment (vv. 19-22), the prophet declared.

Chapter Nine

The Lord afflicted the region of Galilee by the Assyrians but hope was coming (vv. 1-7). The Messiah would come, dwell, and minister in Zebulun and Naphtali as the incarnate Son of God. The divine titles of the child/ruler are “*Wonderful* (פֶּלֶא), *Counsellor* (יֹעֵץ), *The mighty*

²⁷Isaiah employed the pun to encourage Ahaz, saying “*If ye will not believe (תִּאֱמִינוּ) [tha‘amiynu], surely ye shall not be established (תִּאֲמִנּוּ) [the‘amenu]*” (v. 9). The Hebrew is akin to the English expression “hold God in doubt and you will not hold out!”

²⁸The Hebrew noun עַלְמָה occurs 9x and unambiguously refers to a technical virgin (cf. Gen. 24:16, 43). The more common word for virgin בְּתוּלָה occurs 50x but allows for a non-technical status (Joel 1:8).

²⁹It is unnecessary and unbiblical to posit the notion that somehow Isaiah and his prophetess wife was the first of a double fulfillment of the prophecy. For instance, Wolf inately states, “Liberals have correctly looked for a historical fulfillment in Ahaz's day, but they have misused the translation ‘young woman’ by ignoring the messianic implications of the prophecy,” Herbert M. Wolf, *Interpreting Isaiah: The Suffering and Glory of the Messiah* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1985), p. 91.

³⁰“*God is with us*” (v. 10) translates the same Hebrew words for “*Immanuel*” (7:14 and 8:8).

³¹Isaiah's two sons were for “*signs*” (לְאִתּוֹת) and “*wonders*” (לְמוֹפְתִים).

God (אֱלֹהֵי גְבוּרָה),³² *The everlasting Father* (אֲבִיעֶד),³³ *The Prince of Peace* (שֶׁר־שָׁלוֹם).” He is the ultimate ruler of the Davidic Dynasty (cf. II Sam. 7:14). In spite of this coming blessing, Assyria would nevertheless inflict punishment on the northern tribes as God’s rod on Israel (vv. 8-21).

Chapter Ten

This chapter begins with a continuation of the Assyrian march over the northern tribes (vv. 1-4), then the Lord’s retribution on His chastening rod—the Assyrians (vv. 5-19),³⁴ and finally Jehovah’s promise that a Jewish remnant will survive the Assyrians’ victory (vv. 20-34).

Chapter Eleven

Messiah will reign as the “*Branch*” (נֹצֵר)³⁵ of Jesse, Isaiah predicted (vv. 1-5). Starting with His first coming, the Lord will come through the David lineage (cf. Mt. 1:1-17) and have the fulness of the Spirit (v. 2; cf. Isa. 61:1; Acts 10:38; Rev. 1:4), be omniscient (v. 3), and minister in righteousness (vv. 4-5). The Lord’s second coming will be to establish His Millennial kingdom, including the second re-gathering of His people (vv. 6-16).³⁶

Chapter Twelve

The messianic hope for Israel prompted the prophet to compose a hymn of praise to Jehovah. Verse three starts with salvation (יְשׁוּעָה)³⁷ and ends with the same noun, encapsulating the precious name LORD JEHOVAH (יְהוָה).³⁸

III. The Burden of the Nations (Isaiah 13-23)

Chapter Thirteen

Isaiah the prophet to Judah, began a series of “*burden*” (בְּשָׁרָה)³⁹ messages against the heathen nations surrounding Jerusalem, indicating that Jehovah judges not only His people but

³²This verse demands that the virgin born Son is God (I Tim. 3:16).

³³Apparently the Son is considered “father” because He gives life (eternal).

³⁴Appropriately, Jehovah is “*the light of Israel*” (v. 17) who will consume His enemies (cf. Isa. 30:33; Heb. 12:29).

³⁵The Lord is both root and branch of the Davidic lineage (cf. Isa. 53:2; 60:21; Jn. 15:1 ff.; Rev. 5:5; 22:16).

³⁶The first re-gathering was from the Babylonian exile (i.e., Zech. 1:16).

³⁷This Hebrew noun is the basis for the names Joshua and Jesus.

³⁸Cf. Isa. 26:4 for the other reference.

the pagans as well. These were oracles of heavy judgment on the enemies of God's people and would ultimately be fulfilled during the Tribulation. The first burden message fell upon the city of Babylon⁴⁰ (vv. 1-22), the coming enemy of Judah, and would include Jehovah's judgment upon her through the Media-Persian Empire (vv. 3-5, 17) and ultimately in the day of the LORD (v. 6).

Chapter Fourteen

This chapter continues the burden upon Babylon, indicating that His remnant will outlast this enemy (vv. 1-3), that Isaiah's pronounced taunt song against Babylon would be fulfilled (vv. 4-11), that the evil personage behind the king of Babylon, Lucifer (לְהִילֵל),⁴¹ would suffer defeat (vv. 12-20), and that Babylon's defeat would be complete (21-23). In addition, the Lord promised judgment on the Assyrians (vv. 24-27) and on *Palestina* (cf. Joel 3:4) or the Philistines (vv. 28-32).⁴²

The biblical perspective that the spirit realm lurks immediately behind the physical realm has precedent in the Garden. Satan utilized the serpent (Gen. 3:1; Rev. 12:9), just as he manipulated the king of Tyre (Ezk. 28:12-17), Peter (Mt. 16:23), and the false teachers (I Jn. 4:1-3) for his deceptive purposes. Ultimately, Lucifer "*the anointed cherub*" (Ezk. 28:14) expressed his goal with his fifth prideful "*I will*" assertion, saying, "*I will be like the most High*" (Isa. 14:14; cf. I Tim. 3:6).

Chapter Fifteen

The Lord described his swift judgment on Moab by His rod the Assyrians. Isaiah referred to several key cities (Ar, Kir, Dibon, Heshbon, *et al*) which would fall in one night (vv. 1-9). The Moabites were the perpetual enemy of Israel, coming from the illicit relationship of Lot's daughter with him (Gen. 19:37).

³⁹The noun occurs 66x in the OT, and 11x in the section of Isaiah 13-23.

⁴⁰The city will be rebuilt during the Tribulation (Zech. 5:11) and then completely destroyed (Rev. 16:19), having no future existence during the Millennium (vv. 19-22).

⁴¹This *hapax legomena* means "light bearer" and comes from the 4th century Latin Vulgate as an accurate translation of the Hebrew. The KJV employed the accepted Latin title for Satan, albeit modern versions such as the NIV has obfuscated the identity of the evil personage with the same expression for the precious Saviour, "*the morning star*" (cf. II Pet. 1:19; Rev. 2:28; 22:16). The NIV has effectively removed from Christians' vocabulary terms such as 'luciferian' and 'luciferic.'

⁴²Ahaz died in 715 BC, having trusted in the doomed Assyrians.

Chapter Sixteen

Judgment on Moab continued in this chapter, as refugees in Sela (סֵלָע)⁴³ wanted resettlement in Judah but was denied (vv. 1-11). The glory of Moab will be brought low, the Lord promised (vv. 12-14).

Chapter Seventeen

Damascus, the capital of Syria, was the promised recipient of divine judgment as well as Ephraim, representative of the northern realm of Israel (vv. 1-6). Assyria afflicted Syria in 732 BC and captured and deported Israel in 722 BC. Isaiah described the thorough judgment on the idolatry of Syria (vv. 7-8) spread throughout her cities (vv. 9-14).

Chapter Eighteen

Next, the LORD directed His prophecy against the Ethiopian dynasty, which opposed Assyrian and became a temptation to Judah for an alliance relationship (vv. 1-6). During the Millennium the Ethiopians will be attracted to Mt. Zion for Jehovah worship (v. 7).

Chapter Nineteen

Egypt will receive the Lord's judgment via the Assyrians (671 BC)⁴⁴ and during the Tribulation (1-25). He will use civil war (v. 2) and drought (vv. 5-10) to contribute to Egypt's collapse, and her wise men will be confused and unable to help (vv. 11-14). As the Lord will bring world-wide Tribulation on Egypt, some Egyptians will receive Jehovah and then worship Him, speaking "*the language of Canaan*" (Hebrew), during the Millennium along with saved Assyrians (vv. 15-25).⁴⁵

Chapter Twenty

Apparently in 711 BC, Sargon's general Tartan defeated the Philistine city of Ashdod as a precursor to the defeat and humiliation of Egypt and Ethiopia (vv. 1-6). Since Isaiah was a sign and wonder in Israel (cf. Isa. 8:18), he enacted the role of a prisoner of war by his attire, or

⁴³Cf. the other reference in II Ki. 14:7. This is a different word from *selah* (סֵלָה) which the psalmists employed 74x (e.g., Ps. 3:2).

⁴⁴The "*cruel lord*" (v. 4) may refer to either of the Assyrian kings, Esarhaddon or Ashurbanipal.

⁴⁵The altar (מִזְבֵּיחַ) and the pillar (מַצֵּבָה) will testify to the Lord's presence in and ownership of Egypt during the Millennium, as prefigured by the memorial of the two and half tribes of Israel (Josh. 22:26-27).

lack of it. The Lord instructed the prophet, and he obeyed, by removing his sackcloth and shoes, and walking about for three years naked and barefoot (vv. 2-4). His nakedness was probably stark, exposing his “*buttocks*” (שִׁתָּה).⁴⁶

Chapter Twenty-One

Other enemies of Judah will receive judgment, namely Babylon (vv. 1-10), Edom (vv. 11-12), and Arabia (vv. 13-17). Babylon, “*the desert of the sea,*”⁴⁷ would fall to the Media-Persians in 539 (v. 2). Nevertheless, Babylon represents Babylonianism, the system of human rebellion manifested in the religious harlot and economic mammon of Rev. 17 and 18, respectively. The city of Babylon will be rebuilt and then destroyed during the Tribulation, as both aspects of Babylonianism will also be destroyed, predicted in the double expression “*is fallen, is fallen*” (Rev. 14:8; 18:2).

Chapter Twenty-Two

Isaiah was in “*the valley of vision*” (vv. 1, 5), perhaps in the Kidron, or Tyropoean, or Hinnom, and surrounded by the mountains (Ps. 125:2), when he received this burden upon Jerusalem. Jehovah did not neglect His righteous judgment on Jerusalem, which judgment would come in 588-586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 1-8). The leaders attempted to repair the city walls (II Chr. 32:5) but to no avail (vv. 9-14). Moreover, the Lord wanted Shebna the pro-Egypt party leader removed and replaced by Eliakim for city-wide authority (15-22),⁴⁸ the precursor of the “*nail*” (נִיטָה).

Chapter Twenty-Three

The final nation to fall under Jehovah’s judgment was the city-state Tyre which was on the Mediterranean coast (vv. 1-18). Tyre was wealthy and well-protected, being a land and island city. Nebuchadnezzar weakened the city during the Babylonian reign (605-539 BC; c. 70 years), and Alexander the Great eventually destroyed the island-city by making a crossway onto the island in 332 BC.

⁴⁶See II Sam. 10:4, for the other use of this *dis legomena*.

⁴⁷This may be a cryptic prophecy of the utter destruction of Babylon making it a waste land (Isa. 13:21-22), although she had access to the Persian Sea.

⁴⁸Whoever possessed the key to the city had full authority for entrance and exit. Eliakim replaced Shebna and pre-figured the Lord Jesus Christ (Isa. 9:6), the “*nail in a sure place.*” The Lord Jesus alluded to this passage as He gave apostolic authority to Peter with the keys of the Kingdom (Mt. 16:19; 18:18; Rev. 3:7-8). Eventually, the nail will “*be cut down*” (נִיטָה); either historically for Eliakim, or prophetically with Christ at the cross or Antichrist (Anti-nail) at the conclusion of Armageddon.

IV. The Little Apocalypse (Isaiah 24-27)

Chapter Twenty-Four

These chapters (24-27) deal with Jehovah's judgments and then His blessings on His people. This period is the Day of the Lord and encompasses the Tribulation and Millennium (approximately 1007 years). The majority of this section reveals the Tribulation judgment (therefore Isaiah's apocalypse) on the whole world (vv. 1, 4) with only a remnant surviving (vv. 6, 13). He will destroy all sinners during this time of judgment through many physical calamities including world-wide earthquakes (1, 3-6, 18, 20, and 23).⁴⁹ Isaiah employed the pun to emphasize divine judgment, summarizing with his alliteration of terror, "*fear, and the pit, and the snare*" (פַּחַד וּפְחַת וּפְחַת [pachad, {wa}pachath, pach]).⁵⁰

Chapter Twenty-Five

Isaiah rejoiced in the destruction of "*a defenced city,*" presumably Babylon (vv. 1-5), and in the triumph of Mt. Zion (vv. 6-12). Mt. Zion will be the center of Jehovah worship during the Millennium, the highest mountain (Isa. 4:2) upon which the saints will feast for a thousand years (v. 6). Believers will be resurrected⁵¹ and rejoice in the Lord's salvation (vv. 8-12).

Chapter Twenty-Six

The saved will sing this praise in the land of Judah, Isaiah predicted (vv. 1-21). They will sing of the blessedness of trusting Jehovah (vv. 1-13),⁵² the end of the wicked dead (14),⁵³ and expectation of resurrection following judgment (vv. 15-21). Along with Job 19:26 and Dan. 12:1-2, this is one of the clearest passages on the resurrection doctrine in the OT (v. 19). The OT saints had the revelatory truth that they would be resurrected after the Tribulation, which Tribulation is likened unto a woman in travail (vv. 17-18; cf. Isa. 13:8; Mt. 24:8).

⁴⁹If Jehovah will literally turn the earth upside down, the magnetic poles would be opposite and the sun would "set" in the east and "rise" in the west!

⁵⁰Cf. v. 19 for the three successive infinitive absolute conjugations ("*utterly, clean, exceedingly*").

⁵¹Paul cited Isa. 25:8a indicating that the resurrection of saints will end the victory of death (I Cor. 15:54), and John cited Isa. 25:b indicating that the tears of this life will be removed for resurrected saints (Rev. 21:4).

⁵²"*Perfect peace*" in v. 3 is literally "peace, peace" (שָׁלוֹם שָׁלוֹם). The LORD JEHOVAH (יְהוָה) is literally "the rock of ages" (צוּר עוֹלָמִים) in v. 4.

⁵³The "*deceased...shall not rise,*" Isaiah predicted, apparently referring to the רְפָאִים (= נְפִילִים) who will not participate in the resurrection program since they are not truly human (cf. Gen.6:4; Dt. 2:11; Num. 13:33).

Chapter Twenty-Seven

After the Lord punishes Israel's enemies,⁵⁴ He will bless His people in the land during the Millennium. His vineyard will be under His watchful care and blossom, while those of the surrounding nations will worship Jehovah (vv. 1-13).

V. The Woes (Isaiah 28-33)

Chapter Twenty-Eight

In this section, Isaiah described with six woes (וְשֵׁשׁ) the divine punishment on Israel and Judah, with an especial emphasis on the latter, since she would identify with Egypt, depending on foreign alliances as did Samaria rather than trusting in Jehovah. He leveled His woe judgments toward the northern kingdom Ephraim (Isa. 28:1), toward Ariel (Isa. 29:1, 15; 30:1; 31:1), and toward Assyria (Isa. 33:1).

Specifically, Ephraim fell under the Lord's woe for her pride (vv. 1-8) and rebellion toward the prophet Isaiah (vv. 9-15). The drunken leaders had a disdain for Isaiah's preaching, and mocked his presentation of the word of God in laying out precepts. Therefore Jehovah would speak to the Jews with the Assyrian language, rebuking them with "tongues" as unbelievers (I Cor. 14:21). God promised to send His "*precious corner stone*" (v. 16),⁵⁵ the true foundation for security rather than the pro-Assyrian party's trust in some occultic covenant (vv. 17-22). After all, the Lord God was an expert in chastisement just as a wise farmer, who would use the appropriate tools, to bring about his desired harvest (vv. 23-29).

Chapter Twenty-Nine

In His next woe, the Lord depicted "*Ariel*" (אֲרִיאֵל),⁵⁶ the city of David, as a sacrificial site in the days of Sennacherib (701 BC), before their national army vanished (vv. 1-8; Isa. 37:33-37). However, the Jews were in a spiritual stupor and involved in empty worship (vv. 9-14). Jehovah leveled another woe to the leaders who attempted to make secret alliances in the dark (vv. 15-16). The Lord had the wonderful Millennium prepared for those who would trust Him (vv. 17-24).⁵⁷

⁵⁴The identity of "*leviathan the piercing serpent...crooked serpent*" refers to Satan (Rev. 12:9). The "*leviathan*" (לִיָּתָן) was an actually animal and also symbolized God's enemies under Satan's direction and control (Job 41:1; Pss. 74:14; and 104:26).

⁵⁵Christ was the predicted פְּנֵת יְקָרָת (cf. Isa. 8:14; Ps. 118:22; Rom. 9:33; Eph. 2:20; and I Pet. 2:6).

⁵⁶Literally, this means "*the lion of God.*"

⁵⁷There would be no deaf or blind during the Millennium (v. 18; 35:5).

Chapter Thirty

The LORD continued His woe upon Judah for making alliance with Egypt. Hezekiah sought counsel with the Egyptians rather than with the Lord (vv. 1-7; 36:6).⁵⁸ Isaiah was to write two messages from the Holy One of Israel: He will judge because they refused His word and His rest (vv. 8-17). In the midst of divine judgment, the Lord promised Millennial blessing to the remnant (vv. 18-26). In the meantime, the Lord God would deal with the Assyrian threat and their abominable Tophet⁵⁹ worship (vv. 27-33).

Chapter Thirty-One

Centuries ago the Lord had warned Judean kings not to go to Egypt for horses (Dt. 17:16), and now He reiterated the warning with this woe judgment (vv. 1-2). The only help the Israelites will receive is supernatural, coming from God not men with horses of flesh (v. 3). The Lord will deliver Hezekiah from the Assyrians (vv. 4-9).

Chapter Thirty-Two

To encourage His people, Jehovah again revealed truth about the coming King and His messianic kingdom (vv. 1-7). This was followed by His warning of the devastation by the Assyrian invasion (vv. 8-14). Then the Lord jumped from judgment to the Millennial blessings when the Spirit will be poured out as predicted elsewhere (Ezk. 39:29; Joel 2:28-32).

Chapter Thirty-Three

The divine woe fell upon the spoiler, Assyria, once again (vv. 1-4). The LORD will rise up and defeat Sennacherib and his army (vv. 5-16). Assyria will suffer shipwreck as the Lord delivers His city (vv. 17-24). This victory is revealed in II Ki. 18:13-17 and Isa. 37:36-38.

⁵⁸The Egyptian's "*strength*" was named "*rahab*" (רַהַב), who was to sit still (cf. Pss. 87:4; 89:10; Isa. 51:9).

⁵⁹The noun תַּפְתֵּה (taphteh) occurs only here and refers to Molech worship or infant sacrifice in the valley of Hinnom (cf. Jer. 7:31). The alternative spelling for "*Tophet*" תַּפֹּת occurs 10x. Job's use of Tophet as a tabret refers to a small hand-held drum (Job. 17:6), which in the case of Tophet worship may have been used to drown out the cries of babies being burned to death.

VI. The Judgment and the Blessing (Isaiah 34-35)

Chapter Thirty-Four

Isaiah had predicted Jehovah's judgments on the nations surrounding Jerusalem; now he expanded the judgments to the future Tribulation which will punish all nations (1-17). The judgments will fall on all mankind and affect the cosmos (vv. 3-4; Rev. 6:12-14) and be extremely bloody (vv. 5-6; Rev. 14:14-20). Everything will be reduced to rubble with animals as the only inhabitants (vv. 7-15). Everyone of Isaiah's prophecies from his "*book of the LORD*" (סֵפֶר יְהוָה)⁶⁰ would all have it mate (רְעוּת), just as the animals, because the Lord commanded the prophecies and His Spirit will accomplish them (vv. 16-17).

Chapter Thirty-Five

The day of the LORD is comprised of judgment and then blessing: the Tribulation and then the Millennium. Chapter 34 depicts the Tribulation and Chapter 35 describes the Millennium. Nature will be renewed (vv. 1-2), physical afflictions will be gone (vv. 4-6),⁶¹ and the land will return to Eden (v. 7),⁶² and spirituality will be restored (vv. 8-10).

VII. Hezekiah's History (Isaiah 36-39)

Chapter Thirty-Six

These four chapters prepare for the transition of power from Assyria to Babylon, although chapters 38 and 39 (712 BC) precede 36 and 37 (701 BC) chronologically. Isaiah had predicted the fall of Assyria which chapters 36 and 37 reveal (cf. II Ki. 18:13-20:19). Proud Assyria stormed through the land of Israel and stopped at Lachish readying herself for Jerusalem (vv. 1-22). King Sennacherib sent Rab-shakeh to threaten a take-over if no surrender (vv. 2-4). He used a brilliant example of psychological warfare on Eliakim, Shebna, and the Jews. For instance, speaking in Hebrew and not Syrian (אַרְבֵּיית [5x]),⁶³ he used barbs (v. 6), theological perversion (v. 7), ridicule (v. 8), threats (v. 12), pre-empted truth with denial (vv. 14-16), and

⁶⁰"*The book of the LORD*" refers to the book of Isaiah, and contains prophecies throughout, all of which are inspired and will be fulfilled.

⁶¹During the Lord Jesus' earthly ministry, His healing of the blind, deaf, lame, and deaf was a precursor to the Millennial Kingdom of Heaven He was offering (Mt. 4:17-25).

⁶²Cf. "*For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody*" (Isa. 51:3).

⁶³This was the *lingua franca* of the heathen world, although not necessarily known by the Jews.

false conclusions (vv. 18-20). The Jewish delegation reported the confrontation to Hezekiah (vv. 21-22).

Chapter Thirty-Seven

In his time of national distress, King Hezekiah consulted with the prophet Isaiah who gave encouraging words of prophecy (vv. 1-7). Assyria was momentarily distracted with warring against Libnah, and threatened Hezekiah with a warning letter (vv. 8-14). The king of Judah prayed for the Lord's glory to revenge the reproach of the heathen (vv. 15-20). Furthermore, Isaiah announced the fall of Sennacherib because Jehovah would defend His city (vv. 21-35). As the Lord had promised, He fulfilled by sending the angel of the LORD into the camp of the Assyrians and slew 185,000 in one night (v. 36). Moreover, Jehovah allowed Sennacherib's sons to murder him in the midst of his worship of Nisroch [נִסְרוֹךְ] "the great eagle" (vv. 37-38).

Chapter Thirty-Eight

At the age of thirty-nine (c. 712 BC), King Hezekiah was dying of a sickness as Isaiah challenged him to prepare his house (v. 1). After prayers and tears, the Lord promised to spare his life (vv. 2-6).⁶⁴ He gave the king a sign since he asked (v. 22), which sign was the stupendous miracle of the shadow on the sundial returning backwards ten degrees (vv. 7-8).⁶⁵ The prophet wrote about his deliverance coming from the Lord and through the instrumentality of the advice of Isaiah to lay figs on the boil (vv. 9-22).

Chapter Thirty-Nine

The early involvement of Babylon with Judah began with Merodach-baladan (and ended with Nebuchadnezzar [586 BC]) sending letters and a present to congratulate Hezekiah for his divine deliverance from disease (v. 1). Proud Hezekiah fell for this ploy, showed the Babylonians his riches, and received Isaiah's severe rebuke for this foolishness (vv. 2-7). Hezekiah recognized that he would be spared Babylonian judgment, even if his progeny would not (v. 8).

⁶⁴Since Moses' day Jewish believers had the expectation of 70-80 years of life if they honored their parents (Ps. 90:10; Ex. 20:12).

⁶⁵This backward direction of the sun in a geocentric creation meant that the firmament which carries all astral objects continued around the earth even though the sun within the firmament moved against the movement of the firmament.

God's Glory (Isaiah 40-66)

The LORD's enlightened glory (כְּבוֹד) is prominent in this section of Isaiah's book, occurring seventeen times (Isa. 40:5-66:19). For instance, Isaiah proclaimed, saying, "Arise, shine; for thy *light* is come, and the *glory* of the LORD is risen upon thee" (Isa. 60:1). He gave encouraging words about the LORD's restoration of the land (Isa. 40-48), the LORD's coming Messiah (Isa. 49-57), and LORD's Millennial glory (58-66).

I. The Providence of God (Isaiah 40-48)

Chapter Forty

The double comfort (נְחֻמוֹ נְחֻמוֹ)⁶⁶ reciprocates the double judgment (cf. Jer. 16:18; 17:18; Dt. 21:7), as Isaiah begins to comfort the Jews for their yet to be Babylonian exile and ultimate release (vv. 1-11). The nation's iniquity "is pardoned" (נִרְצָה) ultimately in the crucifixion of Messiah, Whose ministry was prepared by the forerunner John the Baptist (vv. 3-5; Mk. 1:1-2). This messianic ministry would allow all of the repentant remnant to see the Millennial glory of the LORD, since the Lord has promised, with His mouth, these "good tidings" in His permanent word (vv. 5-11). That Jehovah can deliver Judah from the most powerful nation in the world at that time is based on His sovereignty and omnipotence (vv. 12-24). He it is "that sitteth upon the circle of the earth" (הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל-חַוּג הָאָרֶץ)⁶⁷, and the nations are to Him as "a drop of a bucket" (כַּבִּיבֵי מִדְּלֵי). No one can be likened upon the Holy One, and therefore Judah should wait upon the LORD and not faint (vv. 25-31).

Chapter Forty-One

Continuing the theme of renewal⁶⁸ (Isa. 40:31), the LORD promised His people hope from the east, the "righteous" Cyrus (558-529 BC) who would allow the Jews to return and rebuild (cf. Isa. 44:28-45:4; Ezr. 1:1-4). After giving encouraging revelation about the Cyrus, Isaiah predicted that the Lord would use His chosen servant (עֶבְדִּי)⁶⁹ to become a mighty weapon to defeat the feeble idols of the heathen (vv. 8-29; Zech. 13:2-6).

⁶⁶This masculine plural *piel* imperative ("comfort ye") apparently refers to the exiled Jewish people encouraging one another. The root נָחַם occurs 14x out of 17x in the latter half of Isaiah.

⁶⁷The OT saints knew that the earth was a circle with depth, or a sphere (cf. Gen. 1:2)

⁶⁸The verb חָלַף 7x in Isaiah out of a total of 28x.

⁶⁹This is the first of references to עֶבְדִּי ("my servant"). The servant of the Lord in Isaiah refers to either 1) the nation of Israel (Isa. 42:19), 2) the remnant of Israel (Isa. 43:10; 44:1-8; 45:4), or 3) the Messiah of Israel (Isa. 42:1-12; 49:1-9; 50:4-6; 52:13-53:12; Acts 8:28-35).

Chapter Forty-Two

The Lord's ultimate anointed servant was not Cyrus (Isa. 41:2; 45:1), but the Lord Jesus Christ Who would be empowered by the divine Spirit (Isa. 11:2; 61:1-2; Mt. 3:16; Acts 10:38), humbly carrying out Jehovah's plan redemption for Jew and Gentile (vv. 1-9; 49:6; 51:4). All should sing praise for the LORD's ultimate victory over His enemies, the prophet enjoined (vv. 10-17).⁷⁰ The Lord had brought trouble upon His people in the past because they were spiritually "deaf" (חָרָשׁ) and "blind" (עִוֵּר) to the law,⁷¹ but now He challenges His remnant to give ear, and avoid Jehovah's anger (vv. 18-25).

Chapter Forty-Three

More words of comfort to Jacob and Israel included the truth that Jehovah not only created (בָּרָא)⁷² and formed (יָצַר) the nation, but he also redeemed (גָּאֵל)⁷³ and called (קָרָא) the people (v. 1). He will restore Israel and perform "a new thing" (חֲדָשָׁה) by bringing forth the nation from the Babylonians in spite of Jacob's rebellion (vv. 2-24). The Lord will blot out sins even though the Jews have a history of transgressions going back to their first father Jacob and the line of priests/prophets (vv. 25-28).

Chapter Forty-Four

Beginning similar to chapter forty-three with "yet now" (וְעַתָּה), Isaiah leaves behind his judgment theme (Isa. 43:22-28) and returns to the blessings theme (Isa. 44:1-28). He addressed the nation as "the upright one" ("Jesurun"/"Jeshurun"),⁷⁴ whom Jehovah has sovereignly chosen to bless (vv. 1-5; Gen. 9:26). The LORD has the omnipotence to bless His choice because He is superior to all idols (vv. 6-23). His blessing will include the Babylonian exiles returning to Jerusalem through the instrumentality of the Gentile King Cyrus⁷⁵ of Media-Persia (vv. 24-28; II Chr. 36:22-23; Ezr. 1:1-4).

⁷⁰What a pathetic mantra: "ye are our gods" (אַתֶּם אֱלֹהֵינוּ).

⁷¹The LORD had predicted that Israel would be spiritually deaf and blind (Isa. 6:10).

⁷²Isaiah employed בָּרָא 21x out of 54x in the OT, being the writer who employed most. The LORD God created Adam for His glory (Gen. 2:7), from which he came short (cf. Rom. 3:23).

⁷³The prophet focused on Jehovah as the great Redeemer (גָּאֵל [25x]).

⁷⁴(יִשְׂרָוּן); cf. Dt. 32:15; 33:5; and 33:26.

⁷⁵Cyrus בּוֹרֶשׁ (559-530 BC) was also Darius (Dan. 6:28), the son of Ahasuerus I (Dan. 9:1), but distinct from Darius I, and not the son of Ahasuerus II (Dan. 9:1; Ezr. 4:5-6).

Chapter Forty-Five

The Lord would use unbelieving but “*anointed*” (מָשִׁיחַ)⁷⁶ Cyrus to accomplish His national purposes for Israel (vv. 1-4). Jehovah in His sovereignty will work in His creation as “*Maker*” (יָצַר) however He chooses (vv. 5-21). He is creator⁷⁷ and saviour (v. 22), and all shall bow before the LORD (vv. 22-25).⁷⁸

Chapter Forty-Six

This chapter with the following chapter forty-seven depicts the collapse of Babylon because of her powerless deities, such as Bel and Nebo,⁷⁹ and her deserved judgment. The Jewish exiles would not be able to return to Jerusalem until Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was defeated (cf. Dan. 2:38; 5:25-31). Babylon’s weak idols were no match for Jehovah, since their cattle stooped under the load of the gold and silver images fleeing from the Media-Persians, whereas the LORD would bear and carry His people back home (vv. 1-4). The idols are limited in time and place, whereas the Lord declares the end from the beginning (Rev. 22:13) and accomplishes His sovereign purposes, Isaiah declared (5-11). He has salvation available for His people (vv. 12-13).

Chapter Forty-Seven

Babylon will be brought into the dust and shamed as a naked woman (vv. 1-3). Using the feminine metaphors for daughter, lady, and widow, Isaiah predicted how the kingdom would be reduced from “*the lady of kingdoms*” (מִמְלָכוֹת) to “*widowhood*” (אַלְמוּנָה [1x]) abruptly (vv. 4-9). The reason for judgment included her pride and occultic practices of astrology,⁸⁰ etc. (vv. 10-15).

⁷⁶The Hebrew *mashiyach* (39x) is transliterated as the Greek Μεσσίας (2x) or translated Χριστός (569x).

⁷⁷Using His three basic words for the creative event (יָצַר, עָשָׂה, בָּרָא) God made light, darkness, peace, and evil (רָע) or “*adversity*” (4x).

⁷⁸Cf. “*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth*” (Phil. 2:10).

⁷⁹“*Bel*” (בֵּל) is a variation of “*Baal*” (בַּעַל) and as “*Nebo*” (נְבוֹ) is of Nabu (cf. the names Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar).

⁸⁰Their pagan occultism was powerless to predict imminent danger and to save them from it. The use of the zodiac, including “*astrologers*” (הַבָּר [1x]), “*stargazers*” (בְּפוֹכְכָבִים), and “*the monthly prognosticators*” (מוֹדִיעֵם לְחַדְשֵׁים) was in vain.

Chapter Forty-Eight

Isaiah concluded this first section (Isa. 40-48) with this summary of the previous chapters. All though the nation has been hypocritical in worship, the LORD will accomplish His plan for them because of His omnipotence over all things including idols⁸¹ (vv. 1-8). The Lord's grace towards Israel was not because of their merit but His name's sake (vv. 9-11). Jehovah invited the remnant to hearken and to come near Him, their Redeemer (גֹּאֲלֵנוּ) and Holy One of Israel (קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) in vv. 12-17.⁸² If they would have hearkened, says the Lord, they would have had peace, but alas, they choose Babylonian captivity, and no peace (vv. 18-22).

II. The Suffering Servant (Isaiah 49-57)

Chapter Forty-Nine

This constitutes the Second Servant Song (vv. 1-10), revealing that the true Servant, the true Israel—the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 3), Who as an individual (Isa. 42:1-12) will provide salvation for not only the tribes of Jacob but also for the Gentiles⁸³ (v. 6). He shall take the prisoners out of darkness and into blessing (vv. 9-10). Jehovah has not forgotten his people,⁸⁴ albeit they will be in captivity (vv. 11-26).

Chapter Fifty

Having used the metaphor of “*bride*” (כַּלְתָּהּ) for Israel (Isa. 49:18), Jehovah charged her with the “*divorce*” (vv. 1-3; *vide* Dt. 24:1).⁸⁵ The true Servant, however, will be obedient in

⁸¹The “*idol*” (עֲצָבָה), “*the graven image*” (פֶּסֶל), and “*the molten image*” (נְסֻךְ) all emphasize the depth of Israel's idolatry.

⁸²The Triune Godhead declared Trinity distinctions (the Father, the Holy Spirit, and the Son, respectively), referring to “*the Lord GOD*” (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה), and “*his spirit*” (רוּחֹהוּ), “*me*” = “*I am the LORD thy God*” (אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ). Cf. Isa. 61:1; I Jn. 5:7.

⁸³His salvation of the Gentiles will reach to the land of *Sinim* (סִינִים), or China (v. 12).

⁸⁴After all, Isaiah reminded his readers, the Lord had graven them upon His palms (v. 16). He won't forget the Jewish people or the walls of Jerusalem!

⁸⁵The Scripture allowed divorce during betrothal and before consummation (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 1:18 ff.). Christ's Bride (i.e., all saints [Rev. 21:1-2, 12, 14]), has not consummated with Him yet. Consummation will occur at the respective resurrections.

suffering⁸⁶ and death, as the NT indicates He was (vv. 4-9; Mt. 26:67; 27:28-31, 39-44). Israel needed to obey the voice of the true Servant (vv. 10-11; Mt. 17:5), the prophet enjoined.

Chapter Fifty-One

Isaiah encouraged the remnant to look unto the Lord because of the blessings He has in store for them (vv. 1-3). His blessings will include the Millennium and the new heavens and earth (vv. 4-8). It was time for Israel to be awakened out of the drunkenness of the cup of His fury, as the Lord exhorted, saying “*awake, awake*” (עוֹרִי עוֹרִי) in vv. 9, 17, and 52:1. The Lord’s redeemed will return to Zion with joy, the prophet declared (vv. 11-23; cf. also Zech. 1:16).

Chapter Fifty-Two

The Lord had redeemed His people by freeing them from past enemies including Babylon (vv. 1-6). The good tidings of Israel’s return to Zion⁸⁷ and departure from Babylon⁸⁸ all point to the greatest redemption ever (vv. 7-12). With the particle interjection “*Behold*” (הִנֵּה), Isaiah began one of the most beloved and theologically significant passages of the OT in five literary triplets (52:13-15; 53:1-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12). First, he focused on the glorification (Eph. 1:18-23) and humiliation (Phil. 2:1-8) of the Lord’s Servant for the spiritual benefit of man (vv. 13-15).⁸⁹

Chapter Fifty-Three

Continuing the Servant’s Song, Isaiah revealed that His upbringing was obscure and His person humble (vv. 1-3).⁹⁰ Next, he expressed very precisely the vicarious, substitutionary atonement of the Servant for all mankind (vv. 4-6; Mk. 10:45).⁹¹ The servant was passively

⁸⁶He had a beard (as most Jewish men had) and it was painfully plucked from his face. They also spat upon Him (Mk. 10:34).

⁸⁷Paul cited v. 7 and applied it to the preachers of the Gospel to Jew and Gentile (Rom. 10:15).

⁸⁸Cf. Isa. 48:20. The message of separation from Babylonianism receives Paul’s encouragement (II Cor. 6:17) as well as that of John, who said, “*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues*” (Rev. 18:4; cf. Jer. 51:6).

⁸⁹In the precious Redeemer’s crucifixion He was brutally tormented but could not die until He gave up the ghost (Jn. 19:30). He sprinkled (נָזַף) His blood for the many nations (cf. Lev. 5:9; I Pet. 1:18-19).

⁹⁰“*But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people*” (Ps. 22:6).

⁹¹“*So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation*” (Heb. 9:28).

determined to accomplish the divine plan of redemption, the prophet continued (vv. 7-9).⁹² Jehovah bruised the Servant in death⁹³ and then prospered His seed. The Son satisfied the Father and consequently His inheritance will be great (vv. 10-12).⁹⁴

Chapter Fifty-Four

Because of the Servant's redemptive work, joy and blessing will come to the Jewish people. Post-exilic Israel will be enlarged as an ancient tent was stretched out (v. 2; cf. Est. 4:14) and receive full blessings during the Millennium (vv. 1-17).⁹⁵

Chapter Fifty-Five

Because of the Servant's redemptive work, sinners (those thirsty and without money) may be invited to receive Christ's salvation (Jn. 1:12; 3:16). However, one cannot buy eternal life, but must receive it as a gift, the prophets affirmed (vv. 1-3). The Lord's Davidic covenant is available to repentant sinners (vv. 4-7). The LORD's plan will be accomplished because His word does not return void, and He has promised to bless the believing remnant (vv. 8-13).

Chapter Fifty-Six

Because of the Servant's redemptive work, Gentiles (and "eunuchs")⁹⁶ may be invited to receive the Lord's righteousness (vv. 1-8). Nevertheless, the prophet warned about apostate prophets who were blind watchmen (cf. Jer. 6:17) and never ministered to others with the great salvation they rejected (vv. 9-12).

Chapter Fifty-Seven

Isaiah revealed that some of the righteous would die because of weak Judean leadership and prevalent occultism among the people (vv. 1-13). Yet the LORD gave hope to those of a contrite (cf. Isa. 66:2) and humble spirit (vv. 14-19), but He gave no hope of peace (cf. Eph. 2:17) to the wicked (vv. 20-21).⁹⁷

⁹²Cf. Mt. 26:63; 27:12-14; Jn. 19:9.

⁹³The Hebrew in v. 9 referred to "his death[s]" (בְּמוֹתָיו), indicating either the intensity of the crucifixion, or the symbolic multiplicity for every man's death (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; cf. Heb. 2:9).

⁹⁴He justified believers (Rom. 5:18-19; II Cor. 5:21).

⁹⁵The LORD will rule with a rod of iron prosper Israel with one thousand years of peace (v. 17).

⁹⁶Cf. "He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD" (Dt. 23:1).

⁹⁷The popular expression "no rest for the wicked" comes from these two verses.

III. The Final Consummation (Isaiah 58-66)

As Daniel would reveal sometime later, Isaiah focused on the Lord's plan for Israel's gradual but sure restoration, dealing with sin and then ultimate Millennial blessings (cf. Dan. 9:24). The last nine chapters Isaiah shows the Lord's program for proper worship, which must follow salvation from sins, and then the expectation of peace from enemies and kingdom promises (Isa. 58-66).

Chapter Fifty-Eight

First, Jehovah rebuked His people for the empty ritual of fasting (צַיִם), which would show spiritual reality in their ministry towards others (vv. 1-7; cf. Zech. 7:5-7). He wanted the Jews to delight (עֲנֵג) in His rituals because they delight in the LORD (vv. 8-14).

Chapter Fifty-Nine

The Lord described Israel's sins in great detail (vv. 1-8).⁹⁸ The prophet Isaiah identified with the nation in vocalizing the need for repentance from sin (vv. 9-15). When the Lord returns, He will judge Israel's enemies and save the nation (vv. 16-21),⁹⁹ Isaiah proclaimed.

Chapter Sixty

Isaiah described the brilliant glory of the Millennium, seen through the historical context of Babylonian exile and the return to Jerusalem (vv. 1-2). Gentiles will be saved, and desire to come to Jerusalem to worship the glorious LORD (vv. 3-14). Though Israel has been despised in past judgments, they will be honored by "*the Mighty One of Jacob*" (אַבְרָהָם יְעֻקֵב), the prophet Isaiah predicted (vv. 15-22),

Chapter Sixty-One

The prophet viewed the Servant's Coming ministry as a unit, albeit historically it falls into two Comings, the First (vv. 1-3) and the Second (vv. 4-11). The Lord Jesus claimed that Isa. 61:1-2a was referring to His presence in the first century (Lk. 4:18-19). "*The day of vengeance*" (יְוֹם נִקְמָת) ¹⁰⁰ refers to the Tribulation (vv. 2b and Isa. 63:4). During the Millennium,

⁹⁸Paul cited this passage, saying, "*Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known*" (Rom. 3:15-17).

⁹⁹Cf. "*And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins*" (Rom. 11:26-27).

¹⁰⁰The expression occurs 4x in the OT.

the saved Jews will be “*Priests of the LORD*” (כֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה) and “*ministers of our God*” (אַלְהֵינוּ מְשָׁרְתֵינוּ) according to v. 6.

Chapter Sixty-Two

The LORD’s promise is to restore the nation of Israel during the Millennium (vv. 1-12). Evidence of this restoration are the new names that His people will receive, including “*Hephzibah*” (חֶפְצִי-בָּה) ¹⁰¹ and “*Beulah*” (בְּעוּלָה). ¹⁰² Furthermore, they shall be called “*Sought out*” (דְּרוּשָׁה) instead of “*Desolate*” (שְׁמֹמָה), and “*A city not forsaken*” (עִיר לֹא נֶעְזְבָה) instead of “*Forsaken*” (עֶזְב). ¹⁰³

Chapter Sixty-Three

Again, the Lord promised to deal with Israel’s enemies as the ultimate fulfillment will occur during the Armageddon slaughter (vv. 1-6; Rev. 14:14-20). ¹⁰³ The Lord reflected upon the grace and deliverance ¹⁰⁴ that He gave the Israelites in their long history of rebellion (vv. 7-19).

Chapter Sixty-Four

Isaiah made a prayer for divine intervention, suggesting the Second Coming of Christ, as he acknowledged that he and the Jews have sinned against Jehovah (vv. 1-12). The Messiah will indeed come down and rend Mt. Olivet in half (v. 1-2, Zech. 14:4; cf. Ex. 19:18). The Lord has prepared great things (i.e., the New Jerusalem [I Cor. 2:9; Rev. 21:1 ff.]) for His people in spite of their un-righteousness (vv. 3-7). The prophet pled for the LORD’s merciful intervention (vv. 8-12). ¹⁰⁵

Chapter Sixty-Five

The Lord ceased from being silent ¹⁰⁶ and answered Isaiah’s prayer (v. 6; cf. Isa. 42:14), by extending mercy to the Gentiles (v. 1) as well as to the Jews, intermixing judgment and

¹⁰¹This mean “my delight is in her.”

¹⁰²“*Beulah*” means “married” and is related to the noun *baal*.

¹⁰³Cf. “*And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God*” (Rev. 19:13).

¹⁰⁴He sent “*the angel of His presence*” (מַלְאֲכַי פְּנֵי) to assist them (Ex. 33:14-15).

¹⁰⁵Solomon’s beautiful Temple was destroyed in 586 BC.

¹⁰⁶Cf. Zech. 1:15; 6:8.

salvation to the rebels and the remnant, respectively (vv.2-16).¹⁰⁷ The troubles that redeemed sinners have had in the present life will not be remembered, Jehovah promised for those anticipating the new heavens and new earth (v. 17). Prior to eternity, the Millennial blessings will include longevity, prosperity, safety, spirituality, and removal of the curse (vv. 18-25).

Chapter Sixty-Six

The Lord requires a contrite spirit of those who will receive His future blessings (vv. 1-6). He promised that the nation would be reborn in one day, namely at the outset of the Millennium (vv. 7-9).¹⁰⁸ The Millennium will be a time of rejoicing, the prophet promised (vv. 10-14), as the Lord will judge prior to the Millennium (vv. 15-17), and as the saints will attempt to evangelize the nations during the Millennium (vv. 15-21).¹⁰⁹ Isaiah concluded with a stark contrast between the reality of the new heavens and the new earth (vv. 22-23; II Pet. 3:10-13), and the reality of eternal judgment (v. 24).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷Cf. *“But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people”* (Rom. 10:20-21).

¹⁰⁸Before the nation’s Tribulation travail, the Lord declared, she brought forth the Messiah, and after the Tribulation, she will *“be born at once—in one day”* when the Lord’s Spirit is poured out upon her (Ezk. 39:29; Joel 2:28-32). This prophecy did NOT occur in 1948!

¹⁰⁹Regenerated believers will evangelize those born during the Millennium, who will need to be saved.

¹¹⁰Just as saints will have glorified resurrected bodies for eternity (Rom. 8:30), sinners will have a “de-glorified” resurrected bodies (i.e., “carcasses” [פְּגָרָה] or “a worm” [תוֹלַעַת]) for the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

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