

Isaiah: God's Comfort in Human Chaos

The Gospel According to Isaiah



"All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all." Isaiah 53:6 NLT

Like us today, the Prophet Isaiah lived in a world of chaos. He lived in Jerusalem around 700 B.C., where there was a constant threat of war from Assyria & Babylon (modern-day Iraq). The government was filled with corruption. Immorality and crime were widespread. The people worshipped idols, sacrificed their infant babies to pagan deities, participated in pagan sex rituals, abused the poor, and rejected God's laws and Commandments. Most of the religious leaders were hypocritical—going through the motions of worshipping God while freely living in sin and corruption (1:11-17). In addition, Isaiah was the target of personal threats and abuse because he confronted the nation with their sin and warned them of God's coming judgment. Eventually, Isaiah was killed for his preaching. Tradition says that he was sawed in half by King Manasseh (cf. Hebrews 11:37).

Even though the world was in chaos, **God had a message of comfort for those who would turn to Him** (40:1; 51:3; 57:18; 61:2; 66:13). God's message of comfort included the prophecy of Messiah's coming, salvation, and blessing. Also, the message provided a glimpse of the future, when the Messiah will reign over the earth, bringing order, justice, and peace. **God has a message of comfort for you today. Will you fully open your heart to His message and live for Him?**

Central Lesson: *Jesus is the promised Savior who came into the world to rescue us from the brokenness of sin.*

Date: 740-680 B.C.

Author: **ISAIAH** the prophet. He is called the "Saint Paul of the Old Testament." Isaiah was a prophet of God in Jerusalem during the reign of the four kings of **Judah**: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He was married to a woman who was a prophetess (8:8) and had two sons (8:8). Isaiah eagerly answered God's call to be a prophet even though God told him that his preaching would be rejected by the people (6:9-13).

Title: The book is named after its author—the Prophet Isaiah. His name in Hebrew means "Jehovah is **SALVATION**." This name is a fitting summary of the book. The book of Isaiah is called a **miniature of the Bible**.

- Isaiah has **66 chapters**, just as the Bible has **66 books**.
- The first half of Isaiah has **39 chapters**, just as the Old Testament has **39 books**, and the second half has **27 chapters**, just as the New Testament has **27 books**.
- The first half of Isaiah and the Old Testament focus on the same message—**God's law and judgment on sin**. The second half of Isaiah and the New Testament focus on the same message—**God's grace and salvation** through the **substitutionary atonement of the Messiah**—Jesus Christ.

Key Word: The key words in Isaiah are "**SALVATION**" and "**COMFORT**." The word "salvation" appears 27 times in Isaiah but only 7 times in all the other prophets combined.

- **Salvation**—12:2, 3; 25:9; 26:1, 18; 30:15; 33:2, 6; 45:8, 17; 46: 13; 49:6, 8; 51:5, 6, 8; 52:10; 56:1; 59:16, 17; 60:18; 61:10; 62:1; 63:5.
- **Comfort**—40:1; 51:3, 19; 57:18; 61:2; 66:13.

Key Verse: The key verse is **Isaiah 53:6**. It summarizes the book. The first 39 chapters describe the people **going their own way** and straying from God. The second half of the book revolves around **the Messiah's coming** to take the world's sins upon Himself.

Key Chapters: The key chapter of Isaiah is chapter **53**.

Isaiah 53 provides several prophecy details concerning the coming of the Messiah, His death, substitutionary atonement, salvation, and resurrection. All these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Chapter 53 is quoted or alluded to at least 85 times in the New Testament.

Outline:

- I. **CONDEMNATION** against Sin—**Chapters 1-39**.
Condemnation of Judah (1-12), World Nations (13-23), the End Times (24-27), Woes & Blessings upon Israel & Judah (28-35), Condemnation of Sennacherib through Hezekiah (36-39).
- II. **COMFORT** and Salvation—**Chapters 40-66**.
The Coming of Israel's Salvation (40-48), Israel's Savior (49-57), Israel's Shinning Future (58-66).

Christ in Isaiah: Christ is more prominent in the book of Isaiah than in any other Old Testament book. When referring to Christ, Isaiah sounds more like a New Testament writer than an Old Testament prophet. Isaiah prophesied about Christ's **first and second comings**, sometimes merging the details of the two comings.

Purpose and Theme: God's **COMFORT** and **SALVATION** through the **Messiah, Jesus Christ**. Another way of expressing the theme is: **warning about sin and watching for the Savior**.

Miscellaneous Items in Isaiah:

- Satan's fall is described (14:12-15). (Compare Revelation 12.)
- Isaiah's naked three year object lesson—Chapter 20.
- The shadow from the sun goes back ten steps (38:7-8).
- A glimpse of heaven with God sitting on His throne—Chapter 6.
- The purpose for prophecy (48:3-6).

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(1) *Human depravity*—Isaiah 64:6; (2) *Sin's hurtful consequences*—Isaiah 59:2; (3) *Salvation is a free gift*—Isaiah 55:1; (4) *Messiah paid sin's penalty (Substitutionary Atonement)*—Isaiah 53:4-6, 11-12; (5) *God's invitation to forgiveness*—Isaiah 1:18; (6) *God's forgiveness is complete & permanent*—Isaiah 43:25; (7) *Salvation requires repentance & faith*—Isaiah 30:15, (*Repentance*—Isaiah 45:22; 55:7; *Faith*—Isaiah 28:16; 12:2).

Central Lesson: *Jesus is the promised Savior who came into the world to rescue us from the brokenness of sin.*

► Accept Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ► Attend a small group. ► Read the Bible & journal meaningful verses. ► Pray for friends that need Jesus.