

Lesson #26

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: read Isaiah 1, 6, 14, 30, 40, 43, 59

BACKGROUND

Author: Isaiah, a contemporary of Hosea and Micah

Date and Place of Ministry: He taught and wrote some 60 years in Jerusalem from 740 – 681 BC.

Theme: God's holiness: because God is holy, He must judge disobedience
because God is holy, He must keep His promises

Purposes: To warn Judah of God's judgment
To comfort Jewish believers in the underground and in exile, with God's promise of salvation
To reveal Jesus, the coming Messiah

Scripture background: 2 Kings 15-18; 2 Chronicles 26-33

OUTLINE The Holy One of Israel

- I. God's Holiness brings Judgment 1 - 39
 - On Judah 1-12
 - On Gentile nations 13-23
 - On the world 24-35
 - Thru example 36-39
- II. God's Holiness brings comfort and salvation 40 - 66
 - Thru His greatness 40-48 who He is; what He will do
 - Thru His Servant 49-57 Israel; Jesus
 - Thru His challenge 59-66 *repentance will bring blessing*

HISTORICAL SETTING IN JUDAH

The Life of the Nation

- **Uzziah** 781-740 BC (Azariah) 2 Chron 26:1-15
It was the golden age of Judah. When king Uzziah died, young Isaiah felt like Judah's future had died.
- **Jotham** 740-736 BC - godly king; ungodly people; had political and military victories 2 Chron 27:4-6
- **Ahaz** 736-726 BC - ungodly king; ungodly people; had political and military defeats 2 Chron. 28:5, 16, 20-21; Isa. 10:1-2; 29:13
- **Hezekiah** 726-697 BC - godly king; godly people; had political and military victories
- **Manasseh** 697-642 BC - ungodly king; ungodly people; had political and military defeats 2 Kings 21:16; 2 Chron. 33:11-14
After 6 years he tries to kill all who follow God; believing Jews are forced underground for some 40 years.
When Isaiah is killed, the last part of Isaiah's book is what gets the believing Jews thru the remaining years.
It strengthens their faith to know when the nation is destroyed, God will give them grace to face it.
The Jews as a people will survive in spite of the exile; their nation will be restored.

The Life and Ministry of Isaiah

- He was from the nation of Judah; his ministry was to the nation of Judah; his name means *Yahweh is salvation*.
- He was well-educated; a poet, orator, historian. 2 Chron. 26:22
- He had access to the royal court and kings of Judah; tradition says Isaiah was of royal blood.
- He was married to a prophetess; had 2 sons. Isa. 7:3; 8:3
- He was given a vision of the Lord's holiness and called to be a prophet in his early 20's. Isa. 6:1-5
God's holiness changed his life; God's holiness became his focus and message.
- He taught openly under Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah and the first years of Manasseh.
- He went into hiding with believing Jews for 10 years under Manasseh; he wrote chapters 40-66 during this time.
- He died a martyr under king Manasseh; he was placed in a hollow log and sawed in half (according to Jewish tradition)
cf. Hebrews 11:37

EXPLANATIONS

The Book of Isaiah is unusual for its many quotes; what it tells about Jesus; its use in the Old Testament

Isaiah wrote it for 3 different groups in 3 different time periods:

Chapters 1-39 were for the Jews in Judah in the 700's BC; to warn his generation.

Chapters 40-66 were for the believing Jews in hiding in Judah in the 600's; to comfort and encourage their faith.

Chapters 40-66 were also for Jews in exile in Babylon in the 500's; to comfort and answer their questions. 48:4-6



EXPLANATIONS continued

The Problem of Isaiah - are there 1 or 2 authors?

- **Reasons** to support 2 authors: Isaiah, writing in Jerusalem in the 700's; a 2nd (deutero) Isaiah in Babylon in the 500's.

Difference in readership: Chapters 1-39 warn Jews in 700's in Judah; God will judge their disobedience.

Chapters 40-66 comfort Jews in the 500's in Babylonian exile; God will deliver them.

Difference in style: Chapters 1-39 are abrupt and quick; chapters 40-66 are contemplative and consoling.

Difference in situation: In the first part, Judah is a thriving nation; in the second part, Judah needs to be rebuilt.

- **Reasons** to support 1 author for all 66 chapters.

God's title *Holy One of Israel* is unique to Isaiah - used 12 times in chapters 1-39 and 14 times in chapters 40-66.

Belief of Old Testament Jews : in Sirach 48:22-25, (Jewish literature from 180 BC), says all of Isaiah is written by 1 author.

Dead Sea Scroll copy of Isaiah from 150 BC: has all 66 chapters in 1 scroll, with no sign of division.

Belief of New Testament Jews : Gospel writers give nine quotes from chapters 40-66 and say they are written by Isaiah.

John 12:38-41 quotes from Isa. 53:1 and 6:9 say the same Isaiah wrote both.

- **The basic issue:** Is the Bible only the words of human authors or is it the Word of the Lord?

If it is human words, then there had to be 2 authors living 100 years apart.

If it is God's Word, then God who knows the future needs only one man to write about the present and future.

Chapters 1-12 Judgment on Judah: for injustice, hypocrisy, trust in Egypt, unwillingness to obey God.

Chapters 13-23 Judgment on Gentile nations:

Country	Conquered by:	Date: BC
Syria	Assyria	732
Israel	Assyria	722
Attempt on Jerusalem	Assyria	701
Egypt	Assyria	671
Tyre	Assyria, Babylon, Greece	664, 609, 332
Assyria	Babylon	612, 605
Judah	Babylon	586
Babylon	Medo-Persia	539

Chapter 14 Judgment on Babylon

Meaning: there is a double meaning of time and subjects.

Future meaning is about the Babylonian kings thruout history and their defeats in battle.

Past meaning is about Satan - the one who empowers kings of Babylon to defy God.

Names: *Lucifer* - one who bears light after the creation of the angels, he was in charge of the other angels.

Day /Morning Star is an unusually bright star just before sunrise - a picture of Lucifer, the head angel.

Satan masquerades as the *angel of light*. 2 Cor. 11:14

After his rebellion, his name was changed to *Satan* meaning *adversary* - he is in opposition to God and God's people.

His rebellion against God 14:12-14 (1/3 of the angels decided to join him - Rev. 12:4, 7, 8)

I will ascend to heaven - wanted to take over God's place.

I will raise my throne above the stars - wanted to be greater than the angels.

I will sit enthroned on the heights of the sacred mountain - wanted to reign as king on this earth (in place of Jesus).

I will ascend above the tops of the clouds - wanted glory greater than God's.

I will make myself like the Most High - wanted to be God.

Chapters 40 - 49 The greatness of Yahweh His character 40:25-29

Chapter 59:1 God will not answer the prayers of His people when there is deliberate disobedience in their life.

APPLICATION: God wants to show His greatness in our lives 43:1-3

We have all discovered that we never know what may suddenly happen that will change our lives forever. When we go thru times of sorrow, stress or great uncertainty and we feel totally overwhelmed, God gives us these words of comfort.

Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine. When you pass thru the waters of uncertainty, I will be with you; when you pass thru the rivers of adversity, they will not sweep over you. When you walk thru the fire of trials, you will not be burned;... For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One, your Savior;...

