

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 6-3-12 PM NOTES
ISAIAH
#25 in Series, "The Glory of God in the Old Testament"

Isaiah 6:8 (NKJV) "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me.'"

Isaiah 6:9-12 (NKJV) "9 And He said, 'Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. 10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return and be healed.' 11 Then I said, 'Lord, how long?' And He answered: 'Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, the houses are without a man, the land is utterly desolate, 12 the Lord has removed men far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.'"

Hebrews 11:37a (NKJV) "They were stoned, they were **sawn in two**..."

Isaiah 66:22 (NKJV) "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, "So shall your descendants and your name remain."

Isaiah 9:7 (NKJV) "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."

Isaiah 11:6-9 (NKJV) "6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) "I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting."

Isaiah 52:14 (HCSB) "Just as many were appalled at You—His appearance was so disfigured that He did not look like a man, and His form did not resemble a human being."

I. Prophetic Condemnations (Chapter 1-35)

A. Condemnations Concerning Judah and Israel (Chapter 1-12)

1. The Upward Look (6:1-4)

John 12:41 (NIV) "Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him."

2. The Inward Look (6:5-7)

Philippians 3:8 (ESV) "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ."

3. The Outward Look (6:8)

- B. Condemnations Concerning Surrounding Nations (Chapter 13-23)
- C. Condemnations Concerning All Nations (Chapter 24-35)

Isaiah 35:10 (NKJV) “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

II. Historic Capture (Chapter 36-39)

- A. Looking Back at the Assyrian Invasion of Israel (Chapter 36-37)

Isaiah 37:5-7 (NKJV) “⁵ So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. ⁶ And Isaiah said to them, ‘Thus shall you say to your master, ‘Thus says the Lord: ‘Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷ Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.’”

- B. Looking Forward to the Babylonian Invasion of Judah (Chapter 38-39)

Isaiah 38:5 (NKJV) “Go and tell Hezekiah, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: “I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years.””

III. Messianic Consolation (Chapter 40-66)

- A. The Deliverance of God’s People (Chapter 40-48)

Isaiah 40:1 (NKJV) “‘Comfort, yes, comfort My people!’ Says your God.”

Isaiah 40:10-11 (NKJV) “¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong *hand*, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward *is* with Him, and His work before Him. ¹¹ He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry *them* in His bosom, *and* gently lead those who are with young.”

Isaiah 40:28-31 (NKJV) “²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the weak, and to *those who have* no might He increases strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ but those who wait on the Lord shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV) “Fear not, for I *am* with you; be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

- B. The Deliverer of God’s People (Chapter 49-57)

Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV) “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.”

Isaiah 53:10a (NKJV) “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin...”

Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV) “But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:11a (NKJV) “He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied.”

- C. The Delivered People (Chapter 58-66)

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Suppose you came before God and had an amazing revelation of Him and the greatest worship experience of your life. In response you made a total surrender of your life to Him and told Him you would go anywhere and do anything for Him. Now suppose God gave you an assignment to go as His representative to a people who are in rebellion against God and instead of God telling you that there would be a mass turning to Him in repentance and revival, He says that nobody will even listen to you! God tells you that those you go to will have a dull heart, deaf ears, and blinded eyes and therefore they will reject you and the message you bring. Suppose you thought, “Oh well, they will be resistant at first, but surely they will eventually break and repent and come to the Lord”. You ask the Lord how long this resistant action will take place. God tells you that it will be until their cities are destroyed and every inhabitant is gone and the whole land is desolate. How would you respond? Would it be, “About that surrender to go anywhere and do anything – I was just kidding”? Or would you respond in obedience to the Lord’s commission for you? This is not some hypothetical story I made up; it was a summary of God’s call of Isaiah and God’s description of the mission on which Isaiah was being sent. In response to God’s call, Isaiah says in **Isaiah 6:8 (NKJV)** “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here *am* I! Send me.’” Here is exactly what God told Isaiah that his ministry would be like: **Isaiah 6:9-10 (NKJV)** “⁹ And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ ¹⁰ ‘Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return and be healed.’” Listen to God’s response when Isaiah asked Him “How long?” **Isaiah 6:11-12 (NKJV)** “¹¹ Then I said, ‘Lord, how long?’ And He answered: ‘Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, the houses are without a man, the land is utterly desolate, ¹² the Lord has removed men far away, and the forsaken places *are* many in the midst of the land.’” Need I tell you that Isaiah was one of the godliest men who ever lived? After a ministry of being for the most part rejected and ignored, tradition tells us that Judah’s most wicked king, Manasseh had Isaiah sawn in two. It was likely Isaiah that was referred to in God’s hall of fame in **Hebrews 11:37a (NKJV)** “They were stoned, they were sawn in two...”

Let’s examine a little background of the book of Isaiah. This is the first book in the section of the Old Testament called “the prophets” that make up the rest of the Old Testament. The books of the Prophets are divided into two sections – the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah / Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel) the Minor Prophets (the remaining 12 books). Why were the prophets divided up into “major” and “minor”? It has nothing to do with importance. It has to do with length of the book. The Major Prophets are the longer books and the Minor Prophets are the shorter books.

The book of Isaiah has often been called “The Bible in Miniature”. Here is why. Isaiah has 66 chapters and there are 66 books in the Bible. The first 39 chapters of Isaiah lay out the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. While there certainly is grace in the first 39 chapters, the emphasis is judgment and the preparation for the last 27 chapters. Even so, the 39 books of the Old Testament give us God’s law and while grace is prevalent, there is primarily the foundation for the 27 New Testament books and the coming Messiah. The second part of Isaiah (Chapter 40-66) begins with a prophesy about John the Baptist who would prepare the way for the Messiah. The New Testament begins with the ministry of John the Baptist. In the last 27 chapters of the book of Isaiah, we are introduced to the suffering servant who would bear the punishment for our sin, and in the New Testament’s 27 books we see His life and ministry in full. The last chapter of Isaiah speaks of the new heavens and the new earth. **Isaiah 66:22 (NKJV)** “‘For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,’ says the Lord, ‘So shall your descendants and your name remain.’” The last of the New Testament’s 27 books gives the details of the new heavens and the new earth. Do you see why Isaiah is called the Bible in miniature?

Let's look for a moment at the man Isaiah. He was a very educated man. We know that from the Hebrew that he used. He had a large vocabulary. Whereas Ezekiel used 1,535 different words and Jeremiah used 1,653 different words, Isaiah uses 2,186 different words. Isaiah had a grasp of international affairs and even though they seldom listened, he had access to the royal court. Isaiah prophesied under 5 kings of Judah – Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. In spite the frequent rejection of his message, Isaiah remained faithful to the Lord and His message until the end.

The book of Isaiah is quoted 65 times in the New Testament. Isaiah gives us the fullest revelation of Christ in the Old Testament. Let me just share a few of the many prophecies of Christ in this book. The Messiah will be a descendent of David – **Isaiah 9:7 (NKJV)** “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.” When He reigns in His coming earthly kingdom, it will be characterized by security and harmony – **Isaiah 11:6-9 (NKJV)** ⁶ “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” In the last section of Isaiah (Chapters 40-66) we see a detailed description of the suffering of the Messiah. We will look at chapter 53 a little later in the message, but let me share just a few of the prophecies relating to His suffering. **Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV)** “I gave My back to those who struck *Me*, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.” Keep in mind that this is over 700 years before Christ's crucifixion! **Isaiah 52:14 (HCSB)** “Just as many were appalled at You— His appearance was so disfigured that He did not look like a man, and His form did not resemble a human being”. Isaiah presents not only prophecy of Christ crucified, but of Christ reigning. The Old Testament Rabbis were often perplexed by Isaiah's prophecies because he presents Jesus as the suffering servant and the reigning King. This seemed to be a contradiction. Is He the suffering one or the reigning One? I doubt that Isaiah understood that either; he was just writing what God told him to write. The Old Testament prophets did not see the two comings of Christ with the church age in between. They saw them together. That is why the church is called a “mystery” in the New Testament. A mystery in the New Testament didn't mean what we mean by mystery today. A mystery in the New Testament was something unknown until it was revealed. Dr W. A. Criswell used to illustrate it like this. When you are driving in a relatively flat part of the country coming into a mountainous area, you see two mountains in the distance and the peaks look like they are together, but when you get closer, the two mountains are separated by many miles. Even so, from the distance of the Old Testament prophets, the first coming of Christ to suffer and to die and the second coming of Christ to rule and reign as King seemed right together. In fact they are separated by more than 2,000 years. The Christ who suffered in Isaiah 53 is the same Christ who will rule and reign in Isaiah 66.

Before we take a brief look at some of the key texts in Isaiah, let me say a few things about the historical background of Isaiah's times. When Isaiah received his prophetic call, Judah was in a time of great affluence. King Uzziah reigned for 55 years and led Judah to much achievement and peace with surrounding nations. Uzziah didn't end so well however. He became arrogant because of his success and thought that as King, he could do the work of a priest also. For his pride and disobedience, God struck him with leprosy and he lived the last years of his life in quarantine. Jotham, Uzziah's son became king before his father died. When Jotham became king, Assyria was quickly becoming a world power. Judah was being threatened by Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel. Ahaz, Jotham's son, became king of Judah at age 25. During his reign, Israel and Syria formed an alliance and became an immediate threat to Judah. In response, Ahaz made an alliance with Assyria which led to Assyria defeating and taking into captivity Israel, the northern kingdom in 722 BC. Ahaz adopted many of the gods of Assyria and led the nation into idolatry. Judah lived under the constant threat of an invasion by their “allies”, the Assyrians. Ahaz's son Hezekiah became king of Judah in 715 BC. Hezekiah's priority was reformation and he was

all in all one of the godliest kings of Judah. He struggled however with trusting God and paid heavy tribute to the Assyrians to keep them from attacking Judah. In 701 BC the Assyrian ruler set out to destroy Jerusalem and at Isaiah's urging Hezekiah trusted God and God delivered Judah from the Assyrians and they never threatened Judah again.

The introduction tonight was longer than the message. Let's look at some selected texts in Isaiah.

I. Prophetic Condemnations (Chapter 1-35)

In this first section Isaiah speaks forth God's rebuke to Judah and Israel, then to the surrounding nations and finally to all nations who have forgotten God.

A. Condemnations Concerning Judah and Israel (Chapter 1-12)

The language in these condemnations is blunt. Judah is rebuked for their social sins and their political alliances that they made in lieu of trusting God. Here is an example of the social sins: Isaiah 1:15-17; 3:8-9 [Read]. In the midst of these rebukes Isaiah shares his call from God in chapter 6:1-13. We can only scratch the surface, but I want us to see this dramatic call that took Isaiah through so many hard years and finally to a martyr's death.

1. The Upward Look (6:1-4) – Who was this that Isaiah saw? It was the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. I know that because the Apostle John tells us after referring to Isaiah six that it was Jesus Isaiah saw in **John 12:41 (NIV)** “Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.” This is a picture of Christ in His glory that He veiled when He took on human flesh and walked on earth for 33 years. Isaiah was overwhelmed with His glory. The aspect of His glory that sunk in on Isaiah was His holiness. So moved was he that his favorite title for the Lord was “The Holy One of Israel” which he used 25 times.

2. The Inward Look (6:5-7) – When Isaiah looked at himself in the light of the Lord's holiness, He said “Woe is me for I am undone”. When we catch a glimpse of God's holiness, we will always become aware of our sinfulness. When the self-righteous Pharisee Saul of Tarsus saw the glory of the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, he saw his own righteousness as rubbish. He said in **Philippians 3:8 (ESV)** “Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ”. In response to Isaiah's conviction, God cleansed his lips since unclean lips come from an unclean heart. Isaiah knew that he could not be a faithful mouthpiece for God until he was cleansed.

3. The Outward Look (6:8) – It was after this surrender on Isaiah's part that God tells him the kind of ministry he would have (verses 9-13 that we read earlier – people who would not hear and would thereby experience the judgment of God). Because of this clear call from God, when Isaiah faced opposition, lack of visible fruit and even death and still He kept on going. He was doing what he was doing for God and not man or for encouraging results.

B. Condemnations Concerning the Surrounding Nations (Chapter 13-23)

In this section, Isaiah moves from one country to another prophesying the judgment of God on Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, Tyre, Dumah, Arabia, and also Jerusalem. Israel was held to a higher standard than the nations around them because they had so much light, but the nations would be judged also.

C. Condemnations Concerning All Nations (Chapter 24-35)

In the first part of this section, Isaiah refers to a time of judgment that is called in other places, “the day of the Lord”. It will be a time of desolation followed by a time of restoration. In chapters 28-33 Isaiah pronounces five “woes” on the people – One woe is on the drunkards and scoffers in Chapter 28; another is on deceivers in chapter 29; another is on the rebellious that put their confidence in man and not God (Chapter 30). He pronounces “woes” on those who make alliances with the enemy (Chapter 31-32) and one woe on treacherous destroyers (chapter 33). Isaiah ends this section with hope in chapter 35 [**Isaiah 35:10 (NKJV)** “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

II. Historic Capture (Chapter 36-39)

In these four chapters, we see the capture of the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah).

A. Looking Back at the Assyrian Invasion of Israel (Chapter 36-37)

Chapters 36-39 are stylishly more like the historical accounts such as Kings and Chronicles. When the King of Assyria threatened Judah, King Hezekiah sent for Isaiah. It is interesting how the prophets are normally not called for until the nation is facing a crisis. Isaiah assures the king that the Assyrians will not defeat Judah like they did Israel. **Isaiah 37:5-7 (NKJV)** “⁵ So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. ⁶ And Isaiah said to them, ‘Thus shall you say to your master, ‘Thus says the Lord: ‘Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷ Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.’ ”

B. Looking Forward to the Babylonian Invasion (Chapter 38-39)

While Hezekiah was one of the godliest kings of Judah, he really made some bad decisions. Hezekiah got sick and the physicians evidently told him that he was near death. Hezekiah cried out to the Lord and the Lord healed him and gave him 15 more years of life [**Isaiah 38:5 (NKJV)** "Go and tell Hezekiah, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: ‘I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years.’” It was during those 15 years that Hezekiah did something very foolish that after his life led to Judah being defeated and captured by Babylon [Read Isaiah 39:1-8].

III. Messianic Consolation (Chapter 40-66)

In the last 27 chapters of Isaiah, the emphasis changed from condemnation to consolation.

A. The Deliverance of God’s People (Chapter 40-48)

The tone for this whole section of Isaiah is **Isaiah 40:1 (NKJV)** “‘Comfort, yes, comfort My people!’ Says your God.” The ultimate comfort and consolation is in the coming of the Messiah. The emphasis of chapters 40-41 is the power of God to comfort and deliver His people. We see His compassion paired with His power in **Isaiah 40:10-11 (NKJV)** “¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God shall come with a strong *hand*, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward *is* with Him, and His work before Him. ¹¹ He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry *them* in His bosom, *and* gently lead those who are with young.” He not only is powerful to deliver, He gives power to His people. **Isaiah 40:28-31 (NKJV)** “²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the weak, And to *those who have* no might He increases strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.” Because of His power and compassion for His people we are told in **Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV)** “Fear not, for I *am* with you; be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” In chapters 46-48, God contrasts Himself with idols to show forth His power.

B. The Deliverer of God’s People (Chapter 49-57)

Time allows us to only focus on chapter 53. The Gospel in miniature is found in **Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV)** “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.” That having our iniquity laid on Him is enlarged on in 53:7-11. We see the imputation of our sin upon Him in the last part of **Isaiah 53:6b (NKJV)** “...and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” How did the father deal with the Son who now has our iniquity imputed to Him? **Isaiah 53:10a (NKJV)** “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin...” That bruising is also described in **Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)** “But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.” The Father accepted His payment. **Isaiah 53:11a (NKJV)** “He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied.” This is the Gospel! Our iniquities were imputed to

Him and He bore the wrath of a holy God for those sins so that they were paid in full and by His payment, His suffering, we are healed of the disease of enslavement to sin. Hallelujah!

C. The Delivered People of God (Chapter 58-66)

These last chapters center in on the future of ethnic Israel. Let me just say that those who believe that God is through with Israel and the church is the recipient of the promises made to ethnic Israel have a real problem with these chapters. Here we see the final fulfillment of the promises to Israel. In Chapters 60-66, there will be a glorious era of peace and prosperity as Israel is returned to the land of Palestine. The Savior will come, and Zion will be restored. Israel will be converted and the Gentile nations who call upon God will be saved.

CONCLUSION

Oh what a glorious presentation of the Gospel 700 years before the Savior was born. Read the book of Isaiah. Study the book of Isaiah. Treasure the book of Isaiah and allow it to lead you into a lifetime of worshipping our holy, compassionate, powerful God. (3567)