

A Survey of Isaiah

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Background Information

The book as such

One of the “major prophets”

The longest of the prophetic books (at least in terms of number of chapters)

Regarded as (one of) the most elegant and profound books in the Hebrew canon

Historical/geographical situation of the author

Situated in Judah (primarily Jerusalem) during the latter eighth century BC

Was familiar with political and religious leaders of his day

Ministered over a period of 40+ years

Witnessed firsthand great political and spiritual upheavals in Israel and Judah

Unity of the book

The liberal view: at least two authors, perhaps three or as many as seven

The conservative (and biblical) view: a single author, led by the Holy Spirit

Structure of the Book

Basic divisions of the book

Chapters 1-39: Words of judgment

Chapters 40-66: Words of comfort

Outline of the book

See Alan Stringfellow’s *Through the Bible in One Year*

Sample Texts

1.1-6, 11-14, 18-20

Illustrates the spiritual and moral decadence of Isaiah’s day

Shows that God judges sin

Applies quite well to modern situation

6.1-10

Narrates Isaiah’s call, surrender, and commission to serve the Lord

Reveals the holiness of God

By extension, calls on today’s believers to offer themselves willingly in service to God

7.10-16 (cf. Mt. 1.20-23)

Shows God’s sovereign power in the forecasting of future events

Predicts the future birth of Jesus Christ by a virgin

Reveals the faithlessness of King Ahaz

9.6-7

Predicts the coming of the Messiah who would reign on David’s throne

Speaks of the peace and righteousness that will prevail under his kingdom

11.1-10

Describes the future kingdom of the Messiah

Discusses the wisdom and righteousness with which he will reign

Reveals God’s plan for restoration, including the physical creation

40.12-14, 18, 25-31

Discusses God's incomparability

Encourages believers with the promise of strength in weakness

53.1-9, 11 (cf. Acts 8.32-35)

Predicts the Messiah's agonizing death

Reveals that Jehovah's Servant would bear the sins of all mankind

61.1-2 (cf. Lk 4.16-21)

Foretells the coming of Messiah

Balances the offer of liberation to those who believe with the reality of judgment for those who do not

Fulfilled only partially in the first coming of Christ