

An overview of

Isaiah

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

BOOK OF ISAIAH

... is like a miniature Bible. The first
... chapters (like the thirty-nine
... Old Testament) are filled with
... immoral and idolatrous men.

... often forget that content, time, and circum-
... stances typically affect any author's style. In
... addition, there is no theological contradiction
... when the emphasis on the Messiah as King
... and as suffering Servant in 40—66. What
... is different, the Messiah is seen in both
... as Servant and King.

Messiah is coming as a savior and a
... bear a cross and to wear a crown.
... Isaiah's prophetic ministry, spanning the reign
... of Sennacherib (Isaiah 37) covers at least forty years.

... 42:9). The theory cannot explain the
... messianic prophecies of Isaiah that were
... fulfilled in the life of Christ (see "The Christ

“Isaiah is like a miniature Bible” (1)

- 66 chapters, with two interconnected yet distinctive sections (39 chapters, 27 chapters) → A coincidental pattern?
- First 39 chapters → A particular focus on sin & judgement
- Last 27 chapters → A particular focus on hope of redemption

Romans 11 ²² Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

“Isaiah is like a miniature Bible” (2)

- **Ch. 1** – rebellion and its sentence (cp. **Genesis** ‘fall of man’)

Isaiah 1 ² Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. [...] ¹⁹ If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: ²⁰ But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

- **Ch. 40** – the hope of coming comfort (cp. **Matthew** & gospel)

Isaiah 40 ¹ Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. ² Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³ The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: ⁵ And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Aside: Isaiah and 'higher criticism'

- Perhaps in part because of their different character, some have suggested two (or even three) writers of Isaiah, i.e. separating chapters 1-39 and 40-66 (or even further sub-splitting chapters 40-55 and 56-66)
- This, to be clear, has only been suggested in the past 150-or-so years (and is altogether absent from Jewish rabbinical writings, ancient translations, e.g. LXX, or Dead Sea Scrolls)
- As clear evidence against multiple writers we have verses such as John 12 v 38-41 (which quotes from Isaiah chapters 6 and 53, without any differentiation or demarcation)

The rest of this evening's study, GW

*"...things
new and
old..."*

(Matthew 13 v 52)



Fact: the most referred to OT book in NT

- Overall **165** quotations, allusions or possible allusions (18% of OT total), next highest is Psalms with 147 (16% of OT total)
- Within this, **62 (direct) quotations** is second only to Psalms with 82 (but significantly higher than any other prophet, Jeremiah being next with 12)
- This book was therefore **a critical source for the NT writers**, when they, through the spirit, expounded God's truth

1 Peter 1 ¹⁰ Of which salvation [Note: Isaiah = 'Yahweh saves' or 'salvation is of Yahweh'] the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: ¹¹ Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

Amazing Messianic content throughout

- “Esaias” is named 13 times in the gospel records (cp. “Jeremy” only twice)

- Servant songs in
ch. 42 v 1-7;
49 v 1-6;
50 v 4-9; &
52 v 13 –
53 v 12

Messianic Prophecies in ISAIAH

The book of Isaiah has more prophecies about Jesus' birth, life and ministry than any other Old Testament book

Part 1

- He will be born of a virgin
7:14 (fulfilled Matt. 1:20-23; Luke 1:26-35)
- He will cause those who don't believe in him to stumble
8:14 (fulfilled Luke 2:34; Rom. 9:32-33)
- His ministry will begin in Galilee
9:1 (fulfilled Matt. 4:12-15,23)
- His kingdom will last forever
9:7 (fulfilled Luke 1:32-33)
- He will be a descendant of Jesse (David)
11:1,10 (fulfilled Matt. 1:1,6,17)
- He will be followed by Gentiles
11:10; 56:6-8 (fulfilled John 10:16; Acts 10:34-35,45,47)
- He will be considered the chief cornerstone
28:16 (fulfilled 1 Pet. 2:6-7)
- He will heal the sick
35:5-6 (fulfilled Matt. 11:4-6; John 9:6-7)
- He will be preceded by a messenger
40:3 (fulfilled Luke 1:17,76-77)

Messianic Prophecies in ISAIAH

Part 2

- He will be humble yet bring forth justice
42:1-6 (fulfilled Matt. 12:15-21)
- He will endure people spitting on him and beating him
50:6 (fulfilled Matt. 26:67)
- He will be rejected and despised
53:3 (fulfilled Matt. 13:57; Mark 6:4)
- He will suffer
53:3,10 (fulfilled Matt. 27:26,29)
- He will be punished and die for our sins
53:4-5,8,11-12 (fulfilled 2 Cor. 5:21)
- He will not defend himself
53:7 (fulfilled Matt. 26:62-63; 27:11-14)
- He will be buried with the rich
53:9 (fulfilled John 19:38-42)
- He will be anointed by God's Spirit
61:1 (fulfilled Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10)
- He will minister in public
61:1-3 (fulfilled Luke 4:16-21,43)

It has been called “the Gospel according to Isaiah”

The most quoted verses from Isaiah in NT

- From our 2005 study on 'OT quotes in the NT explored':

Top 3

Isaiah 6v9-10 (5 appearances)

Isaiah 6v9-10

⁹ And he said, Go, and tell this people, *Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.*

¹⁰ *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.*

- Matthew 13v14-15; Mark 4v12; Luke 8v10; Acts 28v26-27
- *This prophecy, from their own oracles, rings condemnation against the Jews (as Isaiah 2*

OT being used ... to show that the rejection of God's message was foreseen

Top 3

Isaiah 40v3-5 (4 appearances)

Isaiah 40v3-5

³ *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

⁴ *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the places plain:*

⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, **and all flesh shall see together:** for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

- Matthew 3v3; Mark 1v2-3; Luke 3v4-6; John 1v9
- *John's preparatory work meant there would be no hiding place from the penetrating words of J*

OT being used ... to validate the message of John the Baptist who was one sent by God (in fulfilment of prophecy)

Isaiah 56v7 / Jeremiah 7v11 (3 paired appearances)

Isaiah 56v7

⁷ Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for **mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.**

Jeremiah 7v11

¹¹ Is this house, which is called by my name, become **a den of robbers** in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.

- Matthew 21v13; Mark 11v17; Luke 19v46
- *Two quotes are fused together to show the appalling result of human beings following their own 'initiative'*

OT being used ... to show the difference between God's way and Man's corruption of it

Some other facts about the book

- Based on the number of words it is **the 5th largest book in the Bible** (and the 3rd largest prophecy)
- Connections with Isaiah's name are embedded a number of **times** in the book e.g. 12 v 3, 25 v 9, 26 v 1, 52 v 7 & 60 v 18

Isaiah 12 ³ Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

- It is notable that 19 copies of the book of Isaiah were found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls
 - The most iconic of these being *The Great Isaiah Scroll*, see link: <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/Isaiah>

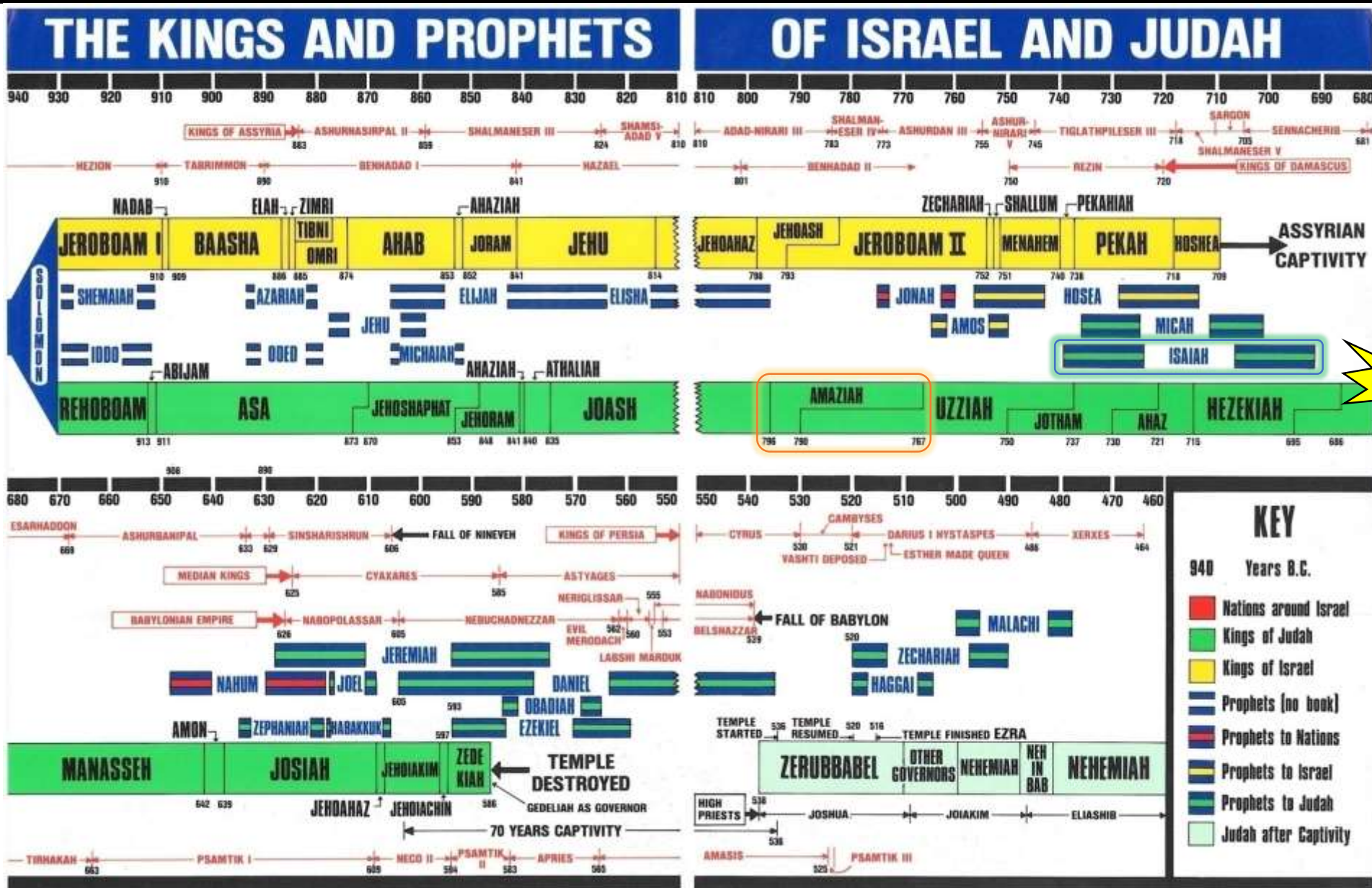
The prophet himself – who was he?

- Born c.760-755 BC, his name means ‘Yahweh saves’ or ‘salvation is of Yahweh’
- 13 times in scripture he is referred to as the “son of Amoz” (7x in Isaiah, 3x in each of 2 Kings / 2 Chronicles) = important
- Jewish tradition suggests that **Amoz was brother of Amaziah the King** i.e. Isaiah was a member of the royal family
- He was **married** (8 v 3) and had at least **two sons** (7 v 3, 8 v 3)
- Jewish tradition that was **sawn asunder** (NB: Heb. 11 v 37) in a hollow log by King Manasseh (cp. 2 Kings 21 v 16, 24 v 3-4)

The timing and context of the prophecy

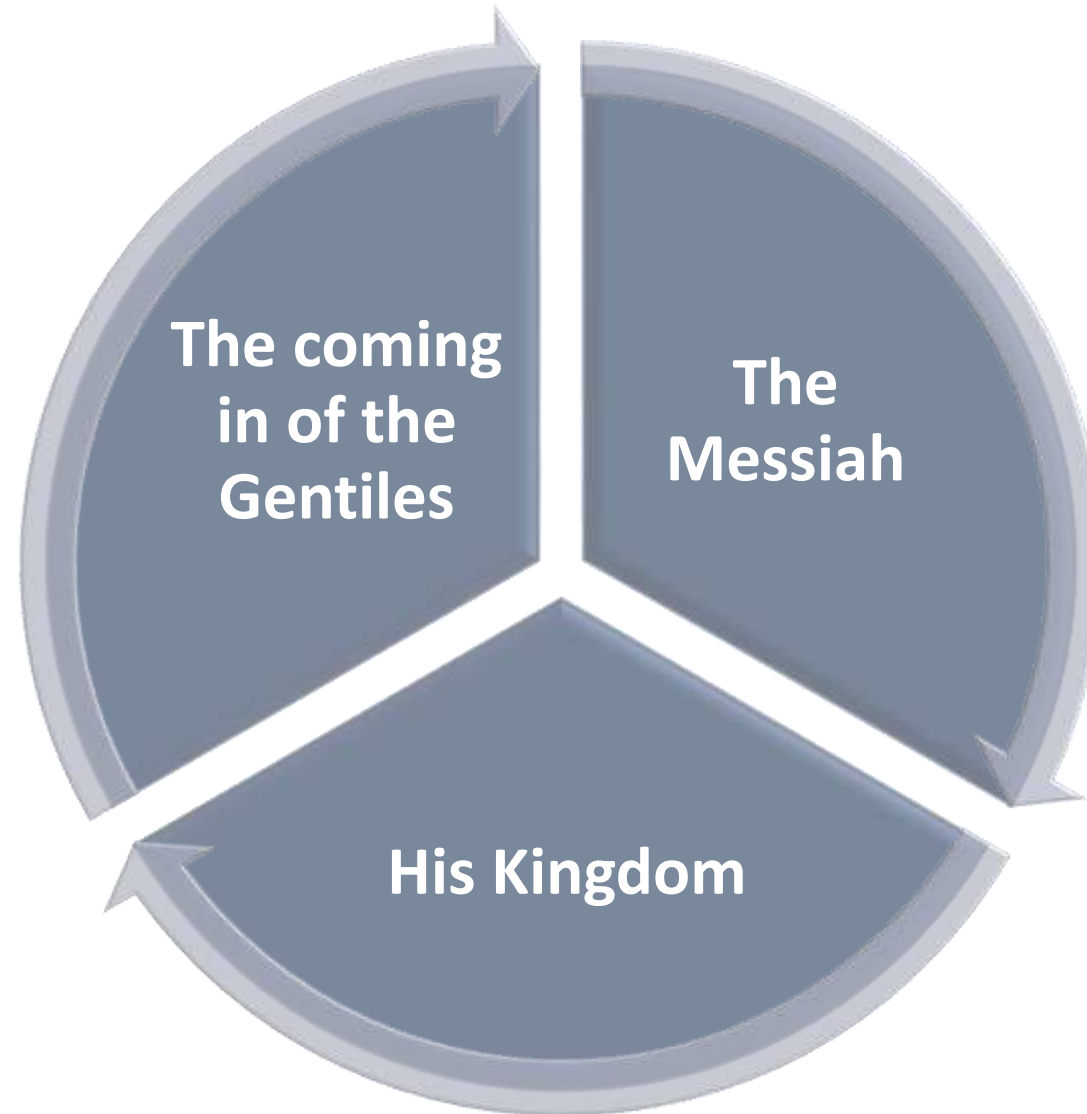
- Isaiah probably prophesied from about **739-680 BC**, during the reigns of Kings Uzziah^{790-739 BC}, Jotham^{739-731 BC}, Ahaz^{731-715 BC} and Hezekiah^{715-686 BC} (as confirmed by Isaiah 1 v 1)
- At this time **Assyria was the prominent world power** and around 709 BC she brought to an end the Northern Kingdom (which would have been witnessed by Isaiah, albeit he was a prophet to Judah)
- He was **contemporary with** the prophets **Hosea** (a prophet to Israel) and **Micah** (a fellow prophet to Judah)

The timing and context of the prophecy



An overview of Isaiah

Some grand themes from Isaiah



High level: the seven sections of Isaiah

Overview:

- Prophecies against Judah (chapters 1 – 12)
- Prophecies against neighbours (chapters 13 – 23)
- Further prophecies against Judah (chapters 24 – 35)
- **Historical record of Hezekiah (chapters 36 – 39) [PIVOT]**
- Omnipotence of God (chapters 40 – 48)
- Prophecies of Messiah (chapters 49 – 59)
- Prophecies of the future glory (chapters 60 – 66)

A few helpful charts (1)

PRE-EXILIC PROPHETS

23 ISAIAH

(690-710BC)

JUDAH TO BE JUDGED												NATIONS TO BE JUDGED												KINGDOM TO BE ESTABLISHED												HEZEKIAH DELIVERED								ISRAEL TO BE DELIVERED								REDEMPTION THROUGH GOD'S SERVANT								REDEEMED ISRAEL'S GLORY							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66		
JUDAH'S SUBMISSION. MERCY												REMNANT'S THANKSGIVING												EGYPTIAN ALLIANCE CONDEMNED												HEZEKIAH HEALED								ISRAEL REVEALS DEFENSES								REDEMPTION THROUGH GOD'S SERVANT								REDEEMED ISRAEL'S GLORY							

Judah judged before the nations, greater level of responsibility

Biographical pivot, Hezekiah an amazing type of Christ

A few helpful charts (2)

ISAIAH

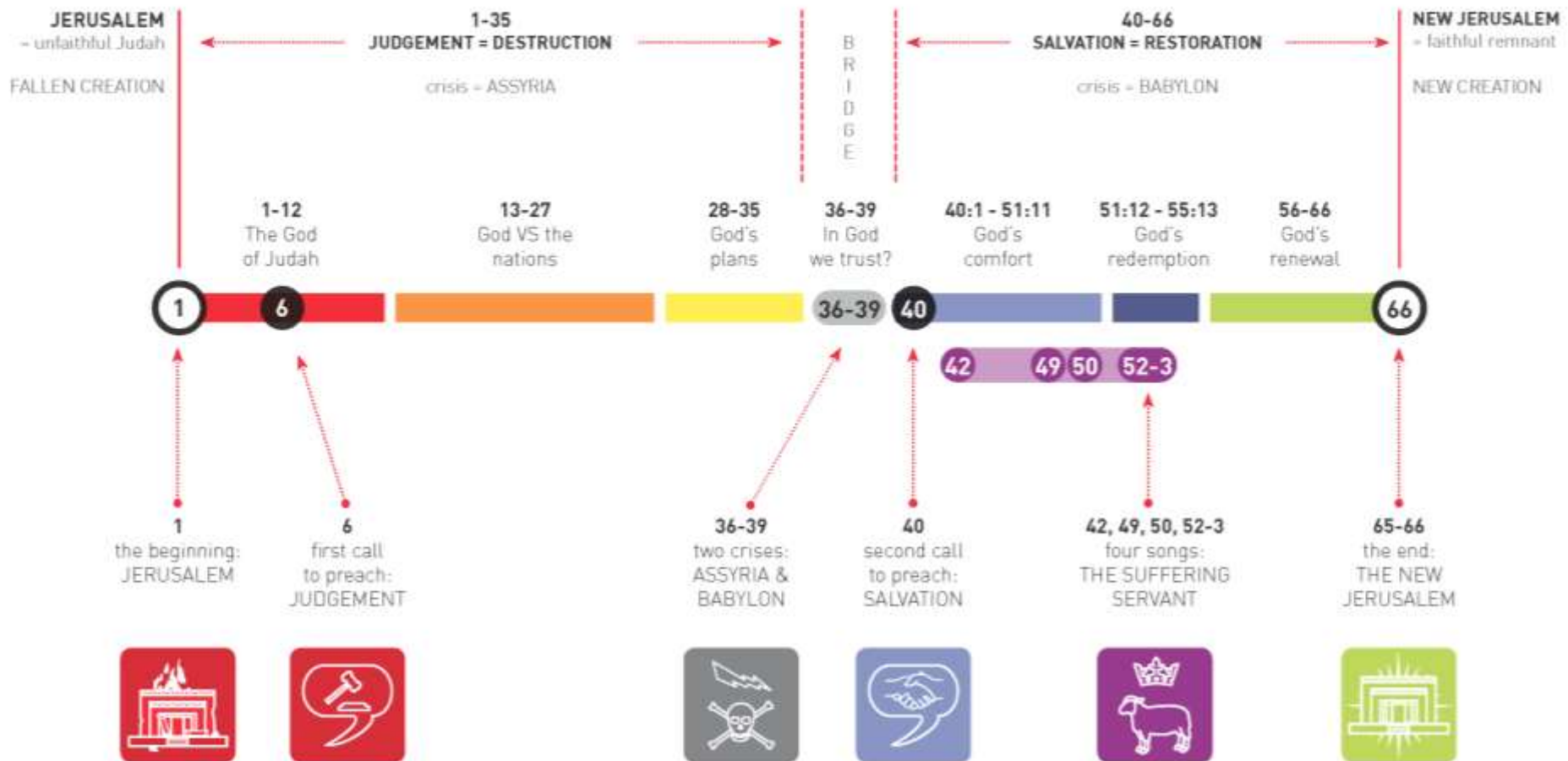
	The Judgment of God	The Deliverance of God		
		THE SUPREMACY OF THE LORD	THE SERVANT OF THE LORD	THE FUTURE PLAN OF THE LORD
			Servant Songs: 42:1-9 49:1-13 50:4-11 52:13-53:12	
	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 1-39	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 40-48	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 49-53	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 54-66
Emphasis	The law and judgment for disobedience	God's grace and deliverance Comfort . . . Promise . . . Hope . . .		
"Bible within Bible"	Old Testament	New Testament		
Theme	The justice and mercy of God			
Key Verses	2:3-5; 6:1-3; 53:1-12			
Christ in Isaiah	His first and second advents are prophesied throughout the book (child of a virgin in 7:14, the shoot from the stem of Jesse in chapter 11, the Suffering Servant in chapter 53).			

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A few helpful charts (3)

ISAIAH OVERVIEW

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Detailed level: Ministry of the Prophets I.

- Ch. 1.** “The LORD hath spoken”
- 2 – 4.** Jerusalem in the last days – Exalted after long humiliation
- 5.** “The song of the vineyard”
- 6.** The glory of the King, the LORD of Hosts in the temple
- 7.** Immanuel
- 8.** Maher-shalal-hash-baz
- 9.** “A great light in Galilee”
- 10.** “Asshur, the rod of mine anger”
- 11.** “The rod out of the stem of Jesse”
- 12.** The Holy One in Zion
- 13 – 14.** The burden of Babylon
- 15.** The burden of Moab
- 16.** Moab’s final subjection to the Kingdom of David
- 17.** Damascus and “the day of vengeance”
- 18.** “The land shadowing with wings”
- 19.** The burden of Egypt
- 20.** “Naked and barefoot”
- 21.** “What of the night?”
- 22.** The burden of the valley of vision
- 23.** The burden of Tyre
- 24.** A world turned upside down
- 25.** Fall of the great city – rise of Zion in deathless glory
- 26.** The new song and the righteous nation
- 27.** The judgment of the serpent – Israel blossoms and buds
- 28.** Woe to the drunkards of Ephraim and Judah
- 29.** “Woe to Ariel!”
- 30.** Woe to the rebels that trust on Egypt
- 31.** Woe to Egypt and Assyria
- 32.** God’s King, his princes, and his peace based on righteousness
- 33.** Woe to the spoiler! – The LORD exalted
- 34.** Yahweh’s sword upon Edom – “The year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion”
- 35.** Zion’s wilderness transformed
- 36 – 39.** Sennacherib’s challenge
- 40.** The voice in the wilderness
- 41.** The first to Zion – Rishion-le-Zion
- 42.** Yahweh’s servant given for a covenant
- 43.** God’s witnesses
- 44.** Jeshurun the alpha and omega
- 45.** Cyrus and Jesus
- 46 – 47.** Ruin of the gods of Babylon
- 48.** No peace to the wicked “who say they are Jews but are not”
- 49.** The alpha and omega turns to “the isles”
- 50.** Why Zion was “put away”
- 51.** “Look unto Abraham”
- 52.** The awakening of Zion
- 53.** The slain lamb
- 54.** New Jerusalem and her children of promise
- 55.** “Ho, everyone that thirsteth!”
- 56.** The house of prayer for all peoples
- 57.** “The troubled sea” and its “mire and dirt”
- 58.** Fasting, and yet rejecting the bridegroom
- 59.** The hindered blessing of God
- 60.** Sunrise upon Zion after a dark night
- 61.** The spirit of Christ in Isaiah
- 62.** Hephzi-bah – Beulah
- 63.** “Who is this that comes from Edom?”
- 64.** “Righteousness” in relation to “fine linen” and “filthy rags”
- 65.** “New heavens and a new earth”
- 66.** The Father’s house

[Index - Summary](#)

Key takeaways from our Isaiah overview

- “Isaiah is like a **miniature Bible**” – a wonderful pattern
- Hezekiah **biography** is the ‘**pivot point**’ in the book
- A clear response to **unfounded ‘higher critics’** suggestions
- The **importance** of **Isaiah in the NT** (most referred to book)
- A **book about salvation**, as embedded in Isaiah’s own name
- Deep **Messianic content**, alongside grand themes of **Kingdom** and coming in of **Gentiles**
- Points of **context** – royal line? / N. Kingdom / martyred?
- Judgment **and** hope / Severity **and** goodness

Final treasured passages for comfort

32 ¹ Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

32 ¹⁷ And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

35 ¹ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. ² It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

40 ³¹ But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

65 ¹⁷ For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ¹⁸ But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. ¹⁹ And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.