

Isaiah

Original Historical Setting

Author: Isaiah

Written: ~755 B.C.

Audience: The people of Judah living during the time of Isaiah whose influence was between ~750-700 BC

Occasion: There were several occasions which prompted various prophecies such as the Syrian-Israelite coalition against Judah and Sennacherib/s invasion of Judah.

Timeline:

- ~792 BC – King Uzziah begins reign
- ~752 BC – King Jotham begins reign
- ~736 BC – King Ahaz begins reign
- ~729 BC – King Hezekiah begins reign

World Events that occur simultaneously

- 780 B.C. – First solar eclipse recorded in China
- 776 B.C. – First Olympic games in Greece
- 753 B.C. – Kings Romulus founds Rome
- June 15, 763 B.C. – A solar eclipse on this date is used to fix the chronology of the Ancient Near East

Genre/Literary style

Prophecies and a few historical narratives written in excellent Hebrew poetry and prose

Features and Structure

- The book of Isaiah is a collection of prophecies that span Isaiah's ministry of about 40 years.
- Isaiah is easily divided into 2 major sections
Ch **1-39** –Divine Judgment
Ch **40-66** –Divine Comfort

Key text(s)

- 1:18** – Come now, let us reason
- 6:8** – Here am I, send me
- 7:14** – Virgin will be with Child
- 9:6-7** – For unto us a Child is born
- 11:1-5** – Rod from stem of Jesse
- 11:6-10** – Wolf and lamb will lie together
- 11:40** – Grass withers but Word of God never fades
- 53:5** – He was wounded for our transgressions
- 53:6** – All we like sheep have gone astray
- 55:6** – Seek the LORD while He may be found
- 55:8** – “My thoughts are not your thoughts,” says the LORD

What to look for

- Notice how the two main sections of Isaiah divide into 39 and 27 books respectively mirroring the division of the Bible between the OT (39 books) and the NT (27 books)
- Notice how even though Isaiah lived 700 years before Christ, it seems as if he witnessed and described the good news of Christ's life and work on the cross. In fact Isaiah is sometimes referred to as “The Evangelist of the Old Covenant.”

Interesting facts

- The longest word in the Bible is the name of Isaiah's son, Maher-Shallal-Hash-Baz. It's a Hebrew phrase that means, “Invaders are coming soon.” Isaiah used this to drive home the point that before his newborn could say “Mommy” or “Daddy” (or his own name for that matter), Assyria would crush Israel.
- When speaking of God, Isaiah uses “the Holy One of Israel” 26 times (found only 6 times elsewhere) and “the LORD of hosts” 62 times. Together these drive home the idea of God's omnipotence and holiness in light of the prophesied judgment for going against God's commands.

Memory Verse: Isaiah 53:6