

Introduction to Isaiah

The book of Isaiah begins by identifying its author: Isaiah, the son of Amoz. He was a well-educated man, likely from a family of means, and his refined, poetic style shows both eloquence and depth. Many scholars believe he was familiar with the royal court of Judah, which explains his insights into both politics and prophecy.

Isaiah's ministry stretched from about 739 to 690 BC, overlapping the reigns of four kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 26–32). His prophetic voice was especially vital during the Assyrian crises, when both the northern and southern kingdoms were under threat.

Isaiah is one of the most significant prophets in the Bible. The New Testament quotes him twenty-one times—more than any other prophet. Jesus Himself launched His public ministry by reading Isaiah's words in the synagogue of Nazareth:

*"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor."* (Luke 4:18, quoting Isaiah 61:1)

Because of his repeated focus on the coming Messiah, Isaiah is often called "the Messianic Prophet." He foretold the virgin birth of Christ (Isaiah 7:14), the arrival of the Child who would be both God and King (Isaiah 9:6–7), and the suffering Servant who would bear the sins of the world (Isaiah 53). The theme of salvation—found thirty-one times in the book—runs like a scarlet thread from beginning to end. Even Isaiah's name, *Yeshayahu*, means "The LORD is salvation."

One of the greatest discoveries confirming the reliability of Isaiah came with the Dead Sea Scrolls. Among them was a complete scroll of Isaiah, dating to around 200 BC. When compared with the much later Masoretic text (over 1,100 years younger), only a handful of minor letter differences appeared. This is a stunning testimony to God's providence in preserving His Word through the centuries.

The Message of Isaiah

Isaiah's prophecy is a mixture of warning and hope. He announced judgment on Judah for their sin and hypocrisy, yet he also promised that restoration would come. Unlike the Northern Kingdom, which fell and never returned, Judah would be disciplined but not destroyed. God's covenant purposes would stand.

Isaiah also confronted empty religion. He warned the people against going through the motions of worship while their hearts were far from God. At the same time, he pointed forward to the Messiah—the ultimate Servant of God—who would bring redemption, peace, and one day reign in righteousness.

His message still speaks powerfully today. Here are some of his timeless lessons:

- **Call sin what it is.** Sin is not just a mistake or a product of environment—it is rebellion against God. Isaiah reminds us that God hates sin but loves sinners, offering them forgiveness through His Servant.

- **Remember who is on the throne.** Political systems may crumble and leaders may fail, but the Lord reigns forever. Our ultimate trust is not in human government but in God.
- **Discipline before comfort.** God often allows His people to experience the consequences of their choices so that they will turn back to Him. Judgment and restoration are both acts of His mercy.
- **God's Word is always relevant.** Sometimes it convicts us, other times it comforts us—but always it points us to the heart of God. He knows when we need correction and when we need consolation.

Practical Application

Isaiah's words remind us that life apart from God leads to ruin, but life surrendered to Him leads to restoration. Just as Judah could not save itself, neither can we. Our only hope is the Servant of the Lord—Jesus Christ—who bore our sins on the cross.

*"Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows...
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 53:4–5)

Invitation

Isaiah points us directly to Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. His prophecies remind us that God always had a plan to rescue us from sin and restore us to Himself. That invitation is still open today.

Have you given your life to Jesus? Have you placed your trust in the Servant who was crucified and pierced for your sins and raised to give you life? You can come to Him right now. Repent and confess your need for His forgiveness, believe in His death and resurrection, and commit yourself to follow Him.

And if you already belong to Him, Isaiah calls you to daily trust. In times of uncertainty, remember that God is on the throne. In seasons of failure, remember that He restores. In moments of despair, remember that His Word brings both conviction and comfort.

Today is the day to take Isaiah's message to heart. Come to Jesus, and trust Him not just once—but every day of your life.