

Survey of the Old Testament

Isaiah

Isaiah prophesied about 740-690 BC. When he began there were still two kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. During his lifetime, the northern nation of Israel was taken away by the Assyrians. 2 Kings 15-20 and 2 Chronicles 26-32 are the historical sections that coincide with Isaiah. Most of Isaiah are records of the oracles proclaimed by Isaiah. There are, however, some narrative sections. The longest narrative section includes chapters 36 through 39, and they correspond to 2 Kings 18:13 – 20:19.

There are a number of Messianic predictions in the oracles of Isaiah. Perhaps chapter 53 is the most quoted in the New Testament, with bits of it showing up in numerous passages (e.g., Jn. 12:38; Mt. 8:17; Acts 8:32-33; Lk. 22:37; 1 Pet. 2:22-25). Isaiah 28:16 is cited in Romans 9:33; 10:11; and 1 Peter 2:6. Isaiah 7:14 is cited in Matthew 1:23, and it stands as a classic example of a prophecy with a fulfillment in the life of Israel as well as a fuller meaning in Jesus.

I. Chapters 1-39

- A. Vivid description of Judah's sin (1-5)
- B. Historical narrative section (6-8)
 - 1. Isaiah's call to be a prophet (6)
 - 2. Sign for Ahaz (7)
 - 3. Coming Assyrian invasion (8)
- C. Agents of blessing and judgment (9-12)
- D. Oracles against the nations (13-23)
- E. Messages of warning and hope (24-35)
- F. Historical section on the invasion by Assyria (36-39)

II. Chapters 40-66

- A. God's power and the impotence of idols (40-48). Isaiah reminds the people that God is powerful and the idols are nothing. This includes some predictions showing that God knows the future while the idols know nothing.
- B. The Servant of Yahweh (49-55). The focus seems to be on restoration, much of which is connected to the servant of Yahweh.
- C. The future glory of God's people (56-66). Included with the promises of a bright future are warnings about wrong living and admonitions to pursue righteousness.