

- Isaiah 1:1 attributes the entire Book to one prophet - Isaiah. Jesus (Luke 4:17–21) and John (John 12:38–41) quoted both halves of Isaiah as the work of one prophet. The Great Isaiah Scroll (written c. 125 BC) from the Dead Sea Scrolls (discovered in Qumran Caves) confirms all 66 chapters as a unified Book & reveals that Isaiah is truly an inspired Book of God.
- Isaiah lived more than 700 years before Christ, yet his prophecies point unmistakably to the Messiah. These fulfilled prophecies are powerful evidence of divine inspiration, and that Isaiah is truly the Word of God.

(iv) Messianic and Millennial Themes (Premillennial)

- John said Isaiah “saw the glory of Christ, and spoke of Him” (John 12:41). Isaiah vividly presents:
 - Christ’s First Coming: virgin birth (7:14), divine King (9:6), suffering Servant (Isaiah 53). Isaiah has been called “The Fifth Gospel” or “The Gospel According to Isaiah.”
 - Christ’s Second Coming: conquering King (63:1–4) who will return to judge the nations (2:12–22) and restore Israel (11:11–12).
 - Millennial Kingdom: A literal, righteous reign of Christ on earth (Isaiah 11; 60). Isaiah points us to the God who reigns and the Redeemer who will one day reign on earth in glory.

(v) Themes of the Book

- Studying Isaiah is deeply rewarding. Rich in prophecy and poetry, it contains powerful themes of judgment, hope, and redemption. It has been compared to Romans in the New Testament for its breadth and depth. Romans systematically presents Christian doctrines, while Isaiah prophetically unfolds God’s purposes for mankind.
- The Book’s central theme is salvation. Isaiah proclaims that salvation is not by human effort but by God alone (12:2). The Book reveals:
 - God’s holiness - Isaiah’s favourite title for God is “The Holy One of Israel.”
 - God’s sovereignty - ruling over nations and history.
 - God’s redemption - offering salvation through the coming Messiah.
- The Church faces the same dangers Judah faced - spiritual complacency, outward religion without inward obedience, trusting human strength more than God, and compromise with the world. Isaiah calls us to faith, repentance, and hope in God’s redemptive plan.

The Vision of Isaiah (1:1)

- Isaiah 1:1 introduces the Book as “*the vision of Isaiah*” – a divine revelation given to Isaiah - concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
- Isaiah’s ministry spanned the reigns of 4 kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The Book of Isaiah is firmly grounded in real history, real people, and real dangers. Its message of judgment, hope, and salvation speaks powerfully to our generation today.

1. Isaiah the Prophet

(i) His Name and Background

- Isaiah’s name (Yeshayahu) means “*The LORD is salvation*,” a theme woven throughout the Book & expresses the purpose of his prophetic mission. (12:2). He was called deliver messages of judgment, hope, and redemption.
- Isaiah is identified as “*the son of Amoz*” (not Amos the prophet). Jewish tradition suggests Amoz may have had royal connections, which could explain Isaiah’s access to kings and priests (7:3; 8:2). He lived in Jerusalem and was married to “*the prophetess*” (8:3). Their sons bore prophetic names:
 - Shear-jashub (7:3), meaning “a remnant shall return” - a promise that God would preserve a faithful remnant.
 - Maher-shalal-hash-baz (8:3), meaning “swift is the spoil, speedy is the prey” - a warning of Assyria’s imminent invasion that would devastate northern Israel & Syria.

(ii) His Ministry and Message

- Isaiah ministered in Judah during the 8th century BC, a period of political turmoil and spiritual decline. After Solomon’s death (c. 930 BC), Israel was divided into the northern kingdom of Israel (10 tribes) and Judah (2 tribes).
- His ministry began “*in the year that King Uzziah died*” (6:1), and spanned over 5 decades, c.740-680 BC (37:38; 2 Chronicles 32:32). Isaiah’s prophetic calling began with an awe-inspiring and life-changing vision of God recorded vividly in Isaiah 6:1-8, shaping his lifelong emphasis on God’s holiness. Isaiah’s message was both immediate and prophetic:
 - He warned Judah of judgment if they refused to repent.
 - He pointed forward to the coming Messiah and ultimate redemption.
- Often called “the Prince of the Prophets,” Isaiah’s prophecies confront sin, warn of judgment, and yet shine with hope in God’s salvation through the Messiah. His writings reveal deep spiritual insight, poetic brilliance and a

profound vision of God's holiness. He wrote under the inspiration of God (2 Peter 1:21). Isaiah was well versed in Hebrew and extraordinarily skilled in communication – he is known as the “Shakespeare of the prophets.”

- Isaiah was a contemporary of Hosea (to Israel) and Micah (to Judah). His ministry involved both forth-telling God's truth and fore-telling God's redemptive plan. Isaiah's message was often rejected (6:9–10), yet he faithfully proclaimed God's Word.
- Jewish tradition holds that Isaiah was martyred under King Manasseh, possibly alluded to in Hebrews 11:37 - “*they were sawn asunder.*”

2. Isaiah and His Times

(i) The Four Kings of Judah

- Isaiah's ministry spanned the reign of four kings, each shaping Judah's history and spiritual direction - cf 2 Kings 15–21; 2 Chronicles 26–33:
 - Uzziah – prosperous but prideful; struck with leprosy.
 - Jotham – personally faithful, yet national corruption continued.
 - Ahaz – wicked and idolatrous; trusted Assyria over God.
 - Hezekiah – godly reformer who trusted the LORD during times of crisis.

(ii) The Political Situation

- Assyria was the superpower in the Near East and conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC (Isaiah saw fall of northern Israel). Judah was tempted to rely on political alliances for protection rather than the LORD.
- In 701 BC, Assyria besieged Jerusalem (Isaiah 36-37). God intervened when “*the angel of the LORD smote... an hundred fourscore and five thousand*” (37:36), proving that God defends those who trust Him.
- Isaiah also foresaw Babylon's rise and Judah's future captivity (Isaiah 39), fulfilled in 586 BC.

(iii) Judah's Spiritual State

- Isaiah ministered during a time of deep spiritual decline. Judah was outwardly religious but inwardly corrupt (1:11–17). Idolatry, hypocrisy, injustice and pride were rampant. Isaiah warned of judgment but promised hope - a remnant, restoration & a coming Messiah.
- He strongly opposed foreign alliances, urging Judah to trust the LORD (7:4; 30:1–17). He also confronted social abuses - not as a reformer, but as a prophet who saw them as symptoms of spiritual decay.

(iv) Isaiah's Message to the Surrounding Nations

- Although Isaiah's ministry primarily focused on Judah, his prophecies extended to surrounding nations. He pronounced judgment on northern Israel, Assyria, Babylon, and other surrounding nations. These nations rebelled against God, oppressed His people & indulged in wickedness.
- He specifically prophesied that Assyria would act as the instrument of God's wrath against northern Israel (10:5).

3. Isaiah the Book

(i) Overview

- The 1st of the Major Prophets and the 3rd longest Book in the Bible, Isaiah contains 66 chapters and next to Psalms, Isaiah is the most-quoted OT Book in the NT (66X). John the Baptist (40:3; Matt 3:3) and Jesus (61:1-2; Luke 4:17–19) began their ministries with Isaiah's words.
- Isaiah is sometimes called a “miniature Bible” - 39 chapters of judgment (like the OT) followed by 27 chapters of comfort (like the NT). This division, however, is editorial, not inspired.

(ii) Two Major Divisions

- The Assyrian Period – chapters 1-39 (Prophecies of Condemnation). The prophet proclaimed the LORD's indictment against Judah and Jerusalem for their sins, and the coming judgment.
- The Babylonian Period – chapters 40-66 (Prophecies of Comfort). Isaiah looked ahead to the captivity of Judah by the Babylonians in 586 BC, and then beyond that to an ultimate deliverance for the nation of Israel, including the largely Messianic section dealing with the Millennium.

(iii) One Author, Not Two or Three

- Critics suggest multiple authors because chapters 40–66 contain many remarkable prophecies that were later fulfilled, long after Isaiah's death.
 - Judah's Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 6:11–12; 39).
 - Judah's release from Babylonian captivity (48:20).
 - The naming of Cyrus, king of Persia, who conquered Babylon and released the Jews (44:28; 45:1).
 - The suffering Messiah (Isaiah 53), fulfilled in Christ.

At the heart of their argument is an attempt to discredit the amazing prophecies that literally did come true.