

Key to ISAIAH

1. STATISTICS:

Writer, Isaiah a prophet living in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (758-694 B.C., cf. 1:1); type of book, judgment-history-prophecy; theme, GOD's deliverance; key thought, the coming Messiah; key verse, 9:6,7.

2. THEME:

Isaiah was the greatest of the writing prophets. With exceptional ability he advised and counseled kings, denounced evil, threatened judgment and added the priceless hope of a better day of peace, blessing and righteousness. Tradition states that his long ministry of 60 years embracing good and bad times, good and bad kings, ended in a violent death under wicked King Manasseh.

3. OUTLINE:

Judgment against Judah, Israel and surrounding nations (1-35).

An exceptional page of history showing GOD's deliverance (36-39).

Looking into near future (Christ's first coming), far future (40-66).

Two main divisions: 39 chapters on judgment; 27 with note of comfort.

4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The self dedication that arose from his vision as a youth (6:1) imbued all his writing. Isaiah's style is lofty and rhetorical. He used many vivid figures of speech along with biting sarcasm and ridicule.

As a poet, orator, statesman and prophet he was bold, fearless and thoroughly sincere. Whether before a king or a multitude he did not hesitate to denounce sin or predict judgment.

Contemporaries were: Hosea, Nahum and Micah.

5. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

Isaiah's vision and response explain his tremendous accomplishments (6:1-13). Dedicated men of his type are greatly needed in every age.

As a young man he observed his country's high degree of power and prosperity, rivaling the days of Solomon. Prosperity brought on internal greed and worldliness. True worship deteriorated into formality and hypocrisy and GOD called on His ministers to show the inevitability of judgment for sinful conduct.

One of the Old Testament's greatest prophecies is 7:14 where our LORD's virgin birth is foretold.

A passage of more than unusual interest (14:12-17) reveals the nature of Satan's rebellion and its consequence.

Many of Isaiah's prophecies dealt with then current problems. Before him were the threatening ambitions of Assyria and Egypt with the kingdom of Judah in between. On its borders were the peoples of Syria, Moab, Philistia and Edom. It was concerning the destiny of these nations that he wrote.

One of the most remarkable predictions of the entire Bible was the naming of Cyrus as GOD's deliverer for His people some 200 years before his birth (41:25; 44:28-45:5).

The climax of the prophet's messianic message is chapter 53.

6. INTERESTING FEATURES:

Our LORD quoted 61:1, 2 in the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:17-20).

A great national prayer of Isaiah is in 63:7-19

Because of its salvation content, some have called Isaiah the fifth gospel. Hezekiah's most unusual answer to prayer is recorded in chapter 37.

7. KEY TO UNDERSTANDING:

You will greatly love the book of Isaiah. Read it with a background of the four gospels. Rejoice also in its foreview of coming blessing and glory.

~ end of Isaiah ~

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