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Isaiah (Part 1)

Jesus Christ, the Messiah

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October 9, 2019

F-L-I-G-H-T

F – The first verse of the book tells us that it was written by the prophet Isaiah, the well-to-do son of Amoz, a claim reinforced throughout the book. His poetic and eloquent writing style reveals that he was well-educated; he was well acquainted with the royal court of Judah.

Isaiah wrote his book between 739 and 700 BC, during the reigns of four kings of Judah: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah.

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F-L-I-G-H-T

L – Isaiah is known as the Shakespeare of prophets. His ministry to Israel and Judah lasted about 50 years. The NT quotes him more than any other prophet. The book offers both some of the clearest prophecies about the Messiah and a fascinating parallel with the narrative of the whole Bible.

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F-L-I-G-H-T

L – Just as the Bible has 66 books, there are 66 chapters in Isaiah. The Bible is split into two testaments: the OT contains 39 books, and the NT contains 27 books. Isaiah contains a similar thematic division: its first 39 chapters focus on God's condemnation, and the last 27 emphasize God's consolation.

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F – L – I – G – H – T

I – Prophecies of Condemnation (1-39)

- Denunciation of Judah (1-12)
- Vengeance on Enemies (13-23)
- Intermission: Isaiah's Apocalypse (24-27)
- Warnings for Judah and Israel (28-35)
- Assault on Assyria (36-39)

F – L – I – G – H – T

I – Prophecies of Consolation (40-66)

- Israel's Salvation (40-48)
- Israel's Savior (49-57)
- Israel's Splendor (58-66)

F – L – I – G – H – T

G – The NT quotes Isaiah 21 different times. Jesus began his own ministry in Nazareth by reading a passage from Isaiah: *“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor”* (Luke 4:18, quoting Isa. 61:1). Isaiah is called the messianic prophet because of his emphasis on God's Anointed One: he spoke of the virgin birth of the Messiah in 7:14; prophesied both Christ's birth and his coming kingdom in 9:6-7; alluded to his atoning work on the cross in 53. Salvation, mentioned 31 times, is a major theme. Even Isaiah's name (Yeshayahu in Heb.) means *“Yahweh is salvation.”*

F – L – I – G – H – T

G – One of the main places we see the scarlet thread of redemption in Isaiah is in the oft-repeated word *servant*. While it sometimes refers to David (37) or the nation of Israel (41), most often it describes the Messiah. In four passages known as *“the Servant Songs”* (42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:14-53:12) we see the work and calling of God's ultimate servant, Jesus Christ. The messianic focus of so many of Isaiah's prophecies shows us that it was always God's plan to make the most precious and powerful sacrifices to bring his people-both Jews and Gentiles-into relationship with him.

F-L-I-G-H-T

H – Isaiah served as God’s prophet from around 740 to 690 BC. His ministry hit its stride when the northern and southern kingdoms came under threat during the Assyrian crises (735-701 BC). When Hezekiah became king, Isaiah served as a powerful positive influence on his leadership, along with two other prophets of the time, Hosea and Micah.

F-L-I-G-H-T

H – Four kings reigned in Judah during Isaiah’s life: Uzziah (d. 740 BC), Jotham (750-732 BC), Ahaz (735-715 BC), and Hezekiah (715-686 BC). You can read more about this period of Israel’s history in 2 Chronicles 26-32.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **Call sin what it is.** Sin shouldn’t be dismissed or diminished as a mistake or a product of one’s environment; it shouldn’t be winked at or shrugged off. God hates sin. **Remember that God is on the throne, no matter who is the president or leader of a country, and no matter how broken a system of politics appears to be.** While Christians should be involved in politics, we should never forget in whom we place our ultimate trust.

F-L-I-G-H-T

T – **God often disciplines his people before he comforts them.** The difference between the two sections of Isaiah reflects this pattern. He brings judgment and institutes consequences for sin so that he can then rescue and restore. **God speaks to the condition of your heart in all seasons of life, sometimes challenging you, sometimes comforting you.** God knows when you need conviction and when you need consolation, and his Word provides both.

Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah

- Christ will have a virgin birth (7:14)
- He will grow up in a land dominated by a foreign power (7:15-16)
- He will minister in Galilee (9:1-2)
- He will be of the line of David, but his kingship will be eternal and he will be the Son of God (9:7)
- He will be anointed with the Holy Spirit (11:2)
- He will administer perfect justice regarding the poor and the meek (11:4)
- He will offer salvation to the entire world (24:16)
- He will have a forerunner (40:3)

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Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah

- He will be the great anointed Servant of Yahweh (42:1)
- His ministry will be gentle (42:2)
- He will be the fulfillment of God's covenant (42:6)
- He will be a light to the Gentiles (49:6)
- He would be disfigured by the abuses he suffered (52:14)
- He will bear all our diseases (53:4)
- He will provide atonement for sin (53:5)
- He will be buried in a rich man's tomb (53:9)
- The Father will prolong his days by resurrecting him from the dead (53:10)

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Isaiah's Experience in Chapter 6

Conviction – *Woe is me...I am undone* was the cry brought by the sense of sinfulness before God's holiness (v. 5).

Confession – *A man of unclean lips*. A broken and a contrite heart is precious to the Lord (v. 5).

Cleansing – *Your sin purged*. After confession, a flying seraph cleansed his lips with a hot coal from off the altar (v. 7).

Consecration – *Here am I; send me* (v. 8).

Commission – *Go*. God's command (v. 9).

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Identity of *Immanuel* in Ch. 7

- Collective name for *all* children born from Judahite women who were pregnant at the time of the prophecy?
- The child of a queen or princess in the royal family?
- Maher-shalal-hash-baz, whose birth is recorded in chapter 8?

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