

# OUTLINE OF ISAIAH

## 1. First epoch: death of Uzziah, ch. 1-6

6:1 = 739 BC

This section (1-6) provides the need for a prophet, and God's provision in sending Isaiah. It thus introduces the book. At the chiastic heart of the first two sections (chpts 1-12) is the sending of the prophet.

In the light of this grim introduction on Jerusalem, be sure to note how the closing of the book of Isaiah portrays a New Jerusalem (Isa 66) through God's restorative work. This promised ending is foretold in 1:26:

"I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."

### a. Judah's sins and judgment, ch. 1-5

Hence, the need for a prophet

Internal arrangement of 1-5:

- Chpt 1 = Call to Repentance centering on vss 16-20
- Chpts 2-4 = Pride and Judgment centering on judgment in chpt 3 but promising restoration and exaltation in 2:2 and 4:2
- Chpt 5 = Song of the Vineyard revealing God's sovereignty and man's humiliation in the center (5:15-17)

Themes of chapters 1-5:

- (1) hypocritical worship of God, 1:11-17
- (2) idolatry, 2:8
- (3) oppression, 3:13-15
- (4) decline of the nation, 3:1-12, 16-26; 4:1,4; 5:13-23
- (5) vanity of ornaments, 3:18-23 (cf. LXX translation procedure)
- (6) the punishing army, 5:24-30
- (7) parable of the vineyard (sin & judgment), 5:1-7 (cf. Mt. 21:33-45)
- (8) only a remnant left, 1:9
- (9) the gospel invitation, 1:18

(10) day of Yahweh; shake the earth, 2:12-22

(11) promise of renewal through the future “Branch,” 1:26; 2:2-4; 4:2-6

### **b. Isaiah’s call, ch. 6**

—God provides a prophet to call the people to obedience and holiness

6:1, exalted Lord

an enthronement festival?

6:2, seraphim = “burning ones”

cf. cherubim, or living creatures, Ezek. 1:5-14; Rev. 4:6-8

6:3, DSS has two “holies”

holiness, the great theme of Isaiah

6:8, missionary spirit

LXX avoids plurality of deity and translates, “...And who will go for Us?” to “...who will go to this people?”

3-point sermon: “Woe, Lo, Go”

6:9-13, hardening ministry; ctr. 32:3 where eyes/ears are opened

but still a remnant, v. 13

\* most quoted OT text in NT (found in Mt. 13:14; Mk. 4:12; Lk. 8:10; Acts 28:25-27; cf. Rom. 9:18 and 2 Cor. 2:14-16)

\* Acts 28:25 credits this passage to the H.S.

\* John 12:41 context has Son of God in view

## **2. Second epoch: reign of Ahaz, ch. 7-27**

7:1; 735-715 BC

This major portion consists of three large sections. The backdrop is the threat of Israel and Syria from the north, and the growing threat of Assyria. During the reign of Ahaz the Assyrians invaded and then totally conquered the northern kingdom of Israel (732, 722 BC).

**a. The [unified] Book of Immanuel, ch. 7-12**

This important and beautiful section of Isaiah comes from ca. 733 BC, when Tiglath-pileser III was expanding his power westward. Syria and Israel were leading the resistance to Assyria.

**(1) The virgin birth prophecy, 7:1-17**

7:1, 4-6, situation (2 Kings 16:5-8)

7:3, fuller was outside the city

7:8, dissolution of Ephraim/Israel as a people within 65 years

733 BC + 65 years = 668 BC

during Ashurbanipal (669-633 BC); Ashurbanipal = “Osnappar” in Ezra 4:10 (cf. 2 Kings 17:24, unnamed); he is credited with the thorough mixing of populations

many see problems, try to link 65 years to the age of Rezin or of Pekah (cf. 8:4); e.g., R. L. Harris, “Isaiah,” *ZPEB* III, 324, says it is Rezin’s 65th year of age (see below)

7:10-17, the sign controversy: cf. Lk. 2:22-35 where Simeon calls Jesus “a sign” (Lk. 2:34; cf. Lk. 2:40,52)

7:12, tempt God; Dt. 6:16; cf. Mt. 4:7

7:13, switch to plural **you**, (in vs. 14) = the nation, “house of David”

but singular again in v. 16; cf. house of David, Mt. 1:20

“virgin,”  $hm6l4i5$  `almah, 7 times in OT, never married: Gen. 24:43; Ex. 2:8; Ps. 68:25 (cf. Ps. 46:1 —see NASB; 68:25, `alamoth, musical instruments?); Prov. 30:19 —see K&D; Song 1:3; 6:8

cf. masc. form in 1 Sam. 17:56; cf. 20:22

= “unmarried girl,” Old Eng. “maiden”; assumed to be a virgin

other words like  $hV6a1$  `ishah and  $hl6t7B4$  bethulah do not necessarily indicate a young maiden; bethulah could be married or could be an old woman (cf. bethulah in Joel 1:8, young widow.)

Only *`almah* denotes an unmarried maiden; hence this choice of words is deliberate. The Offspring of this unmarried young woman would therefore be either 1) illegitimate, or 2) a miracle sign Child

LXX translated Isa. 7:14 using παρθενος *parthenos*, Greek technical term for virgin (never married); NT does same in Mt. 1:23 (note context in Matthew [1:25] where virgin idea prominent)

(more discussion in Hengstenberg, *Christology of the OT*, I, 416-424 (1854); Young *Isaiah*, I, 286-89; Hindson's *Isaiah's Immanuel*)

“**Immanuel**,” la2WnM6i1 *`immanu'el*, “With us [is] God”; cf. 8:8,10

7:15, “poor food” (ctr. v. 22ff.); from pasture land, not tilled

7:16-17, before the Messiah is a reasoning child, two things:

- 1) Rezin and Pekah gone
- 2) Assyria to invade Judah

The place of Mahershalalhashbaz in parallel relation to this prophecy (8:1-4) seems to have been an additional revelation made to Isaiah at a different time, although the natural point of reference from the perspective of Ahaz might be a child born of a contemporary maiden.

Two views relating the “near” and “far” features of this prophecy:

1. R. Laird Harris: vv. 16,17 are 2 fulfillments separated by time. Vs. 16 is Rezin and Pekah in 732, and vs. 17 is Sennacherib in 701.

“The passage thus declares that before the Messiah Immanuel is born of a virgin and is weaned, the Assyrian will come and depopulate the land. . . . Isaiah did not set a date, for he did not know the date. Elsewhere he speaks of the coming wonderful king of David's line without giving the time. The coming of the Rod of Jesse is prophesied (11:1) in close succession to the downfall of the Assyrians (10:24-34). Isaiah was only to know that at an unspecified time the Messiah would come, and he warns Ahaz to mend his ways, because before the Messiah would come, the Assyrians would invade and bring tragedy greater than the division of Ephraim from Judah. Actually there is no information that this invasion came before the days of Sennacherib in 701 BC, thirty years after the prophecy was given. It could not in any case refer to a child of Ahaz or of Isaiah.” (“Isaiah,” *ZPEB*, III, 324)

2. A. A. MacRae: vv. 15ff. is one unified event of prophecy, i.e., Assyria's invasion of Israel in 732.  
(differs from Harris to make the Assyrian invasion of v. 17 that of 732 BC, not 701 BC)

“In his rejoinder (vv. 13, 14) Isaiah expressed a strong rebuke, not simply to Ahaz, but to the entire house of David, of which Ahaz was a very unsatisfactory representative. He spoke to the whole house of David, giving assurance that it would not always have such unworthy representatives as Ahaz, but that God Himself would provide, as the true head of the house of David, One born of a virgin, whose name can properly be called Immanuel (“God with us”).

“In vv. 15ff, the prophet turned his attention away from the house of David as a whole and back to Ahaz. No statement had been made as to when Immanuel would come. On the assumption that He might be born immediately, the time that would be involved in His growth was used as a measuring stick to show how soon God would cause Ahaz’s faithless scheme to produce results quite different from what he had expected. Supposing that the child were to be born right at that time, before he would reach the age when he could make simple choices, the two kings who were menacing Judah would have disappeared (v. 16), and the great depopulation caused by the Assyrian invasion would have resulted in a situation where crops that require human labor would be greatly diminished...”

“Thus v. 14 pointed to a single event that would occur 700 years later whereas vv. 15ff described the situation that would develop in the immediate future.” (“Prophets and Prophecy,” *ZPEB*, IV, 899, 902)

## **(2) God’s use of Assyria, 7:18 - ch. 10**

This topic has already been introduced in ch. 7; now Isaiah further develops Assyria’s relation to God and to Israel, and the way that God will finally destroy Israel’s enemies and rule through the Messiah, Immanuel.

7:18-25, Assyrian invasion brings judgment on Judah

ch. 8, more immediate judgment

Assyrian conquest starts soon, will reach Judah “up to the neck” (v. 8)

8:6, “waters of Shiloah ( $h5l'v1$  *shiloach*),” = spring used for Hezekiah’s Siloam Tunnel

8:7, River = Tigris, near Nineveh

8:8-10, opponents can touch Immanuel’s Land only by permission

8:18, Isaiah’s two children have symbolic names: Shearjashub and Mahershalalhashbaz

9:1-7, promised time of blessing when light replaces gloom

vv. 1-2, cf. Mt. 4:14-17

vv. 6-7, Messiah and his kingdom (note antecedent in 7:14)

Deity and Humanity of Immanuel is balanced in the symmetry of the four titles in 9:6

“Wonderful. . .” cf. Angel of the Lord in Jdg. 13:18

“Counselor,” cf. 11:2

“the mighty God,” cf. 10:21 (57:15)

“everlasting Father,” cf. Ps. 103:13; ctr. Is. 57:15

“prince of peace” = King of Salem

v. 7 = outgrowth of Davidic Covt and protevangelium of Gen. 3:16

9:8 - ch. 10, judgment through and upon Assyria

10:5-12, note God’s sovereignty and theodicy (cf. Habakkuk)

10:20-22, only a “remnant returns” to God, fulfilling the symbol of Isaiah’s son, Shearjashub, 7:3

### (3) The Messiah and his kingdom, ch. 11-12

11:1, branch of Jesse; cf. 4:2

shoot → tree cut; cf. Mt. 3:10; ctr. II Sam. 23:5

Mt. 2:23, Nazarene; branch = *rx3n3 netser*

11:2-5, qualifications to rule

v. 2, Spirit distinct from Messiah (cf. 61:1)  
—seven-fold blessing? cf. Rev. 4:5

v. 4, \*breath of His lips

\*\* **NT citations, 2 Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:15\***, indicate that this prophecy is yet future (Ps. 2:9; Rev. 2:27)

He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,  
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. – Isa 11.4

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with  
the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.  
– 2 Thess 2.8

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp<sup>Ⓜ</sup> sword, that with it He should strike the  
nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. – Rev 19.15

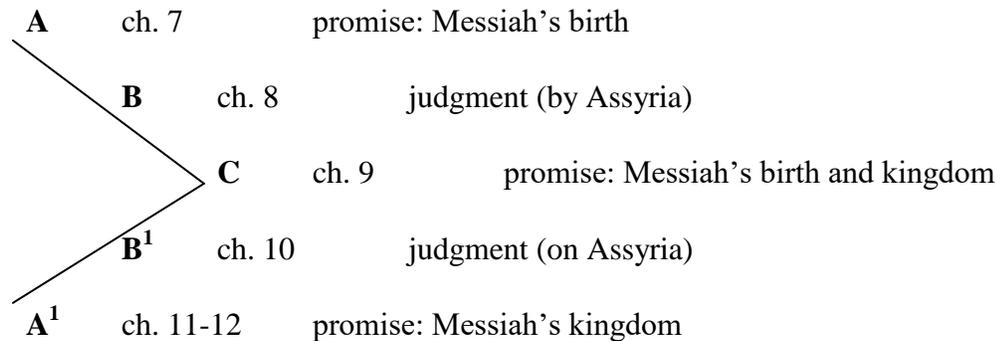
11:6-9, nature in harmony (cf. Rom. 8:22)

Calvin in his commentary recognizes the fulfillment of this passage in the animal kingdom after the return of Christ, but he says that the passage “chiefly means” that Christians of all different temperaments or dispositions will live harmoniously in the church.

On the other hand, amil Young states that the passage refers to literal animals in the new heavens and new earth (cf. Isa. 65:17-25; 66:22-24).

ch. 12, psalm of praise in the kingdom

#### (4) Symmetrical Structure of the Book of Immanuel



#### b. Prophecies against the nations, ch. 13-23

Babylon, ch. 13 - 14:23, holds the first place in judgment, not Assyria! And the fall of Babylon in chpt 21 is the center focus of this [broader] section of prophecies against the nations, chpts 13-27. (See Dorsey outline, p. 221.)

ch. 13, note apocalyptic language in vv. 6, 9-13

13:16, cf. Ps. 137

13:17, accuracy about the Medes, an “inorganic element,” proves divine source of prediction

13:20, desolation; see Urquhart, *Wonders of Prophecy*, 138-50; “Bedouins shrink from it in superstition” –Delitzsch

14:4-20, doom of king of Babylon, or “Who was **Lucifer**?”

- Young: “Babylonian dynasty conceived as an ideal person”
- Satan?

per Tertullian, Origen, Gregory the Great, etc.

cf. Ezek. 28; Lk. 10:18

Old Scofield, “Lucifer, ‘day-star,’ can be none other than Satan”; New Scofield agrees, calls Lucifer “the real though unseen ruler of the successive world powers”

v. 12, הלל *helel*, “shining one,” from *halal*, shine

KJV, “Lucifer” follows the Vulgate

ASV, “day-star”

NASB, NIV, “morning star”

“The exposition of this passage, which some have given, as if it referred to Satan, has arisen from ignorance, for the context plainly shows that these statements must be understood in reference to the King of the Babylonians. But when passages of Scripture are taken up at random, and no attention is paid to the context, we need not wonder that mistakes of this kind frequently arise.” –Calvin *Commentary on Isaiah*. Calvin goes on to call the Satan interpretation “inventions and useless fables.”

- better to take Lucifer within context as king of Babylon, perhaps Belshazzar (14:19,31), recognizing the poetic language. He is counterfeit messiah (cf. 2Pet 2.19 and Rev. 22.16).

For a fascinating comparison between the false king of Isaiah 14 and God’s Servant of Isaiah 53, see Dorsey’s *The Literary Structure of the OT*, pp. 230-31.

Assyria, 14:24-27

Philistia, 14:28-32 (fulfilled 711, 701)

v. 28, death of Ahaz dates this prophecy, 715 BC

Moab, ch. 15-16 (fulfilled 722)

destroyed by Shalmaneser V and Sargon II

16:4-6, Moabites hide Jews, or Jews hide Moabites, or both? cf. Rev. 12:6,14

v. 5, throne of David to provide refuge

16:14, three years from when?

3 years from death of Ahaz would be ca. 712; but Moab destroyed in 722; Young suggests different date for v. 14 (725 bc)

Damascus, ch. 17

mostly fulfilled in Assyrian conquest of 732 BC

Ethiopia, ch. 18

Egypt, ch. 19-20

19:4, great variety of interpretations of the “cruel master over Egypt”:

various Assyrian rulers

various Egyptian tyrants

4 world kingdoms (Young)

little horn of Dan. 7

19:16-25, future theocratic kingdom

20:1, synchronism

Sargon II (721-705), great campaign against Ashdod in 712 BC

“Tartan” = king’s viceroy, military title (NIV “supreme commander”), cf. 2 Kings 18:17

20:2-4, Isaiah naked and barefoot

only recorded unusual action of this prophet

a 3-year sign

perhaps fulfilled in 712 by Sargon

perhaps fulfilled in 682, when Essar-haddon carried away captives from Egypt

Babylon, 21:1-10

again, after chpts. 13 – 14:23, and preceding chpt.

“wilderness by the sea”

v. 1, sea = “great plain watered by a mighty river (cf. Gen. 11:2; Isa. 23:13; 27:1 — cf. Nile: 19:5)”  
–Young

v. 2, defeated by Elam, Persia, and Media

v.5, last orgy in Babylon, phps Belshazzar’s feast

v. 9, repeated in Rev. 14:8; ch. 17-18

Edom, 21:11-12

= Dumah, Gen. 25:14

Arabia, 21:13-17

modern Jordan and west side of Saudi Arabia

Jerusalem, ch. 22

“valley of vision,” vv. 1,5

vv. 1-14, to be destroyed; sin of complacency

vv. 15-25, treasurer Shebna to be exiled, replaced by Eliakim (cf. 36:3, 22; 37:2)

perhaps Shebna demoted to “scribe,” or perhaps this is another Shebna

cf. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, I, 129-31, who shows this position to be the highest under the king, “master of the palace”

Tyre, ch. 23

v. 16, harlot, commercialism; cf. Nah. 3:4; Rev. 18:3

vv. 15-18, 70 years, then holiness

great variety of interpretations:

Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre 13 years, evidently captured it (but wealth and ships moved away, cf. Ezek. 29:17-18). 70 years = time of Neo-Babylonian empire to the beginning of Persian empire (Delitzsch, pp. 416-21)

perhaps gap after v. 15; v. 16 period in between; v. 17 future kingdom

### **c. Isaiah's Apocalypse, ch. 24-27**

This section is unique in that many verses are clearly eschatological. There are many similarities to the NT book of Revelation. There are few “near” references, and there is little historical background.

ch. 24, judgment on the earth, and the reign of Yahweh

vv. 5,6, breach of covt brings fiery judgment

v. 22, fits with millennium? cf. Rev. 20:3

ch. 25, institution of the kingdom

v. 6, banquet feast—Rev. 19

esp. v. 8 cf. Ps. 116:8; I Cor. 15:54,26; Rev. 21

vv. 10-12, Moab an example of all enemies; as Edom in ch. 34

ch. 26, song in the kingdom

v. 11, judgment by fire

v. 12, sovereignty; cf. Phil 2:13

v. 14, wicked dead viewed as a group

v. 19, resurrection of the righteous dead (“they” = Lord’s “dead ones”; Hebrew says “my dead ones will rise”)

\*contrast v. 14 where wicked dead not raised

v. 20, protection during time of God’s wrath

phps. related to Rev. 12:1-6; 13:1 (Isa. 27:1, serpent)

v. 21, phps. parousia of Rev. 1:7

ch. 27, regathering of Israel

v. 1, “Shalyat” - seven headed serpent in Ugaritic lore

esp. vv. 12-13; last trump / feast of trumpets. Cf. trumpet of I Cor. 15:52; I Thess 4:16

### **3. Third epoch: first 15 years of Hezekiah, ch. 28-39**

—715-701 BC

#### **a. Warnings, judgments, blessings for God's people, ch. 28-35**

ch. 28, Ephraim's bad example to Judah, and its coming destruction

vv. 7-10, drunkenness destroys discernment

vv. 9,10, mocking of Isaiah's pedagogic style of preaching

v. 11, "tongues" of judgment (promised curse of Dt. 28:49) replace simplicity of Isaiah's simple teaching; = meaning of 1 Cor. 14:21,22

See O.P. Robertson's interpretation of strange tongues in connection with I Cor. 14: *Westminster Journal*, 38:43

vv. 14-22, God is the best ally

v. 16, cornerstone (allusion to Ps. 118:22); NT reference: Rom. 9:33; 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:6

ch. 29, Jerusalem's coming siege and deliverance

vv. 1-4, siege

"Ariel" = phps "Lion of God"

vv. 5-8, deliverance from enemies

vv. 9-16, their sin

vv. 17-24, final righteousness

possibly fulfilled in 701 BC, invasion of Sennacherib; but probably eschatological; cf. Zech. 14; Lk. 21; Rev. 12; end of chapter seems to fit with final kingdom

ch. 30-31, denunciation of Egyptian alliance

as in ch. 28

30:1-14, sin involved

30:15-33, deliverance for remnant

31:1-3, Egypt's helplessness

31:5, Passover protection; cf. Mt. 23:37 cf. Is. 30:15

31:4-9, Yahweh to protect Jerusalem

ch. 32, kingdom blessings after destruction

v. 1, king and princes; cf. 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 20:4-6

future kingdom; vv. 1-5, 15-18

\* v. 3, second advent vs. first advent of Is. 6:10

ch. 33, destruction of Assyria and salvation of Jerusalem

cf. Isa. 10:5-34

ch. 34, day of vengeance on Edom

vv. 8-17, animals to take over forever

Note. Edom used here as example, as Moab in 25:10-12

ch. 35, messianic blessings

v. 3, cf. Heb. 12:12

vv. 5-6, Mt. 11:2-6

v. 10, cf. Rev. 7:17

### **b. Historical interlude, ch. 36-39**

—701 BC, cf. 2 Kings 18-20

More than an interlude, this historical section is the centerpiece of Isaiah showing the transition from imperial Assyria to the spiritual-political threat of Babylon. Babylon in the Book of Isaiah is structurally juxtaposed against Jerusalem that is meant to be God's holy witness in the world.

Dealings with Assyria, ch. 36-37

Sennacherib's campaign in Judea (see under historical background in Micah)

36:2, the Rabshakeh, NIV "field commander"

36:11, Aramaic = the lingua franca, not yet known by most Jews

37:7, Isaiah's prophecy: Sennacherib to hear a rumor of war from back home; returns to be killed later by the sword, v. 38

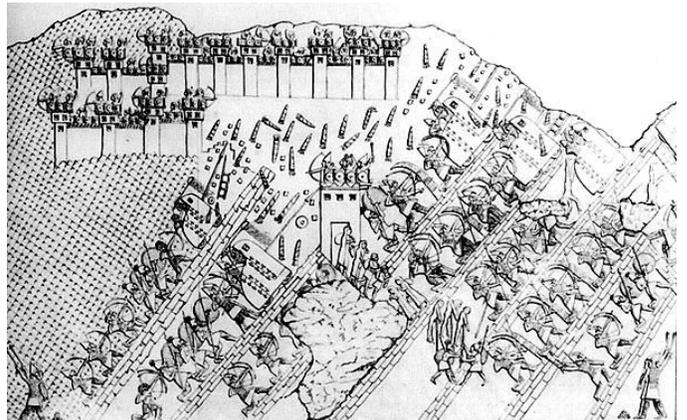
37:8, Sennacherib's campaign against all fortified cities

pictures of Lachish campaign, *ANEP* #371-74, line drawings in *ANE* #100-02

good discussion and suggested order of events, Oswalt *Isaiah*, pp. 11-13

37:14-20, Hezekiah's prayer

37:36-38, death of Sennacherib, *ANET*, p. 288



Dealings with Babylon, ch. 38-39

ch. 38, Hezekiah's illness, ca. 700 B.C.

v. 5, given 15 years more; 11 years co-regent with Manasseh

v. 8, sign of the sun dial

vv. 10-20, Hezekiah's praise

vv. 18-19, intermediate state;  $l\bar{a}^{\prime}v_4$  *sheol* = uncertain place of dead; cf. II Cor. 5:1-4

ch. 39, visit from the Babylonian envoys

v. 1, Merodach-baladan

discussion in Leon Wood, p. 363, n. 78

721-710, rule Babylon

703-702, rule Babylon again

after 702, “he continued his opposition to Assyrian control as a refugee in Elam. It was likely during this time that he sought the support of Judah by means of this embassy.”

vv. 6-7, Babylonian captivity predicted; Jewish eunuchs in Babylon

v. 8, Hezekiah’s shortsighted reaction

vv. 6-8, provides transition to second half of Isaiah

#### **4. Fourth epoch: last 15 years of Hezekiah, ch. 40-66**

—701-686 BC

With the ultimate doom of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians predicted at the end of chapter 39, and with Hezekiah’s response, “There will be peace and security in my time,” Isaiah turns his attention away from his own contemporaries to those Israelites who will suffer in the future, and to the remnant who will finally be delivered and restored. This change in perspective has led many to posit two authors. But in its context this new outlook in Isaiah is eminently proper.

##### **a. Babylonian exile and deliverance, ch. 40-48**

###### note on the Lord’s servant

= Key theme in chapters 40-55

references which contain the term, together with suggested interpretation; starred passage (\*) indicates major Messianic passage:

41:8-9	Israel
*42:1-9	Messiah
42:19	Israel
43:10	Israel
44:1-2, 21	Israel
44:26	Isaiah (but cf. 43:10; 42:19)
45:4	Israel
48:20	Israel
*49:1-6	Messiah (as head of Israel)
*50:4-10	Messiah
*52:13–ch. 53	Messiah

Problem: sometimes the servant is plainly Israel (41:8-9)

but other times the NT indicates Jesus is Isaiah’s servant (52:13 – ch. 53)

Is. 53 is cited 10 times in NT: Mt. 8:17; Lk. 22:37; Jn. 12:38; Acts 8:32; Rom. 10:16; 15:21; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:22, 24, 25

Solution: not just one servant, but one of two or perhaps three—Israel, Messiah, perhaps Isaiah himself

compare other examples of varying identity of God's servants :

Jer. 27:6	Nebuchadnezzar
Jer. 46:27-28	Jacob (nation)
Ezek. 37:24-25	Jacob & "David" (=Messiah)
Hag. 2:23	Zerubbabel
Zech. 3:8	Branch of David
Mal. 4:4	Moses

see progression in Isaiah 49:3-6: Israel → Messiah, the true Prince of God

\*Isaiah 53 can hardly refer to Israel, who was being punished for sin; and the remnant's punishment was not vicarious. The NT requires a messianic interpretation: the term *παῖς* (*pais*) in Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30 should be translated "servant," not "child" (cf. Bruce *Acts*, p. 193). Note how Peter identifies this "Servant" with a "prophet like Moses," 3.22.

#### contents of ch. 40-48

ch. 40, consolation from the sovereign God:

sovereign in power (12,22), wisdom (13,14,26) and mercy (2,11)

v. 2, punishment is fulfilled

v. 3, theme of John the Baptist

cf. Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6; Mt. 3:1-3

ch. 41, God the source of deliverance

vv. 8-10, servant Israel not to fear

vv. 21-24, idols worthless

v. 25, deliverer from north (Cyrus); cf. Jer. 50:3

41:25 "I have raised up one from the north, And he shall come; From the rising of the sun he shall call on My name...;"

ch. 42, the two servants contrasted

vv. 1-9, the righteous servant: Messiah

vv. 18-25, ctr. the blind and deaf servant: Israel

Israel's image is in keeping with God's revelation of them in Isa 6:9,10. Contrast the righteous Servant whose ear is open (Isa 50:5).

ch. 43-45, the servant Israel's delivery under Cyrus

some eschatological references—43:5-7, 19-21, 25; 44:3; 45:17, 23

44:3, possible Pentecostal reference

44:3 "For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;"

44:26, servant appears to be Isaiah (see note above)

44:24 - 45:7, the Cyrus prophecy

Cyrus named in advance—45:3-4, 11 (fulfilled in Ezra 1)

see Allis, *Unity of Isaiah*, ch. 4-5

God shown to be the only true God; e.g., 44:6; 45:5, 22



150 years after this prophecy, God fulfilled it in the career of Cyrus the Persian, who destroyed the Babylonian empire, and permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem and reestablish their temple worship. An outstanding contemporary source is the Cyrus Cylinder (536 BC; *ANET* 315-16; picture in *New ISBE* 1:847).

ch. 46-47, Babylon's useless idols, and fall

ch. 48, God to deliver Israel for his glory, not for their righteousness

vv. 1-11, for God's glory

v. 14, Babylon destroyed

v. 15, Cyrus implied

\* v. 16, the Trinity

48:16 "Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me."

vv. 18-19, Retrospection on conditionality of Mosaic covenant

This section of Isaiah (ch. 40-48) shows how God's servant Israel does not deserve salvation or the promised theocratic kingdom, but it also shows that God will bring these blessings anyway. It thus leads logically to the next section, which answers the question, "How can God justly bless this disobedient servant?" The answer lies in the suffering righteous servant of the Lord, the Messiah (ch. 49-55), Who acts as the new Israel in behalf of Israel.

## **2. Salvation through the Lord's righteous servant, ch. 49-55**

### **a. Messiah's appointment and humiliation, ch. 49-50**

49:1-6, important servant section

Is servant both Israel and Christ, or Christ as representative of Israel? (see note above)

SERVANT

- 1) Redeems Israel - 5,6
- 2) From the womb - 1,5
- 3) Epitome (corporate solidarity) of everything Israel should have been

49:3 "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, O Israel, In whom I will be glorified.' 5 " And now the LORD says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him ( For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, And My God shall be My strength), 6 Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

perspective transition: Israel → Messiah; cf. "righteous vs. deaf servant" of ch. 42: Messiah, Israel

49:4, cf. 42:4; cf. Jesus' crucifixion in ch. 50, 53

49:6, "Light of Gentiles" cf. Acts 13:47

49:7-13, results of Messiah's work

v. 8 cited in 2 Cor 6:2; "accepted time" = Year of Jubilee

49:8 "Thus says the LORD: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages; 9 That You may say to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' To those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.'"

49:14-26, resulting confidence of Israel

vv. 15-16, God's love for Israel

vv. 22-23, "Jewish supremacy"

50:1-3, God looks for a redeemer

50:4-10, another important servant passage

Messiah to be the Redeemer

v. 5, "The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away."

Interpretations:      1. cf. Ps. 40:6 (LXX) in Heb. 10:5-7 = obedient heart vs. "deaf servant" of ch. 42  
                                 OR      2. ctr. ear piercing of Ex. 21:6 = dedicated servant

v. 6: "shame and spitting" cf. Mt. 26:67; 27:30; back 27:26; Jn. 19:1

note: "my cheeks," Heb. *yjl lechi*, "jaw, cheek"; implies beard for Jesus

Christ shows never any sin or rebelliousness throughout

## **b. Promised deliverance to Jerusalem, ch. 51 - 52:12**

51:3, Eden's return promised (cf. Ezk. 28:13)

This deliverance is based upon the work and sacrifice of the righteous servant of Yahweh.

tribulation, then glory; e.g., 51:17, 22; 52:4, 7-10

52:11, principle applied in 2 Cor. 6:17 (cf. Haggai 2:12-14)

Is. 52:11 Depart! Depart! Go out from there, Touch no unclean thing; Go out from the midst of her, Be clean, You who bear the vessels of the LORD."

## **c. The suffering servant, 52:13 - ch. 53**

“servant” — 52:13; 53:11

This is the last servant passage in Isaiah. \*\*This Servant is Messiah (not Israel) because

- 1) He is righteous; 53:11
  - 2) He suffers vicariously; 53:4,5,8,10-12
- KNOW** {
- 3) the antecedent Servant passage (ch. 49,50) flows easily into this same identity
  - 4) the NT shows a Messianic fulfillment (10X)

52:13,15 (Is. 56:3-5) cf. interest of the eunuch in Acts 8:33-35

“sprinkle many nations” vs. “astonish many nations” of LXX

Servant will be “high and lifted up.” This phrase is found only in Isaiah and normally applies to God. Comparing 52: 13 with 6:1, O.P. Robertson notes that the apostle John can say that Isaiah himself beheld the glory of Jesus upon the throne:

**John 12:37-41** But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, <sup>38</sup> that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" <sup>39</sup> Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: <sup>40</sup> "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them." <sup>41</sup> These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

53:4,5, cf. Mt. 8:16,17

53:9, 11, righteous; OT concept of righteous includes faithfulness to covenant, resulting in deliverance for covenant people, in spite of their unworthiness (cf. Ps. 71, 143)

52:14; 53:2-5,7-12, suffering; fulfilled in passion of Christ; see NT references above

52:15 (pbly.); 53:4-6, 8, 10-12, vicarious suffering; leads to forgiveness and blessing on sinners; not appropriate for Isaiah himself or for faithful remnant of Israel

52:13, 15; reward for the suffering servant (vv. 10,12 are proof texts for “covt of redemption”)  
53:10-12

53:11, cf. DSS, LXX, NIV (“...to see the light of life” = resurrection)

How is this suffering servant passage fulfilled? —in Isaiah? Israel? Sacral kingship (cf. Mowinckle, or Harris “Isaiah,” *ZPEB* 3:326)? Messiah?

Messiah is best; by process of elimination, by context, by exact fulfillments (e.g., 52:14; 53:2,5,7,9)

#### **d. Israel's future restoration, ch. 54-55**

54:4-8, cf. Hos. 2-3; = wife motif in vs. 5

54:9-10, "covenant of peace"

compared to Noah's (Is. 24:5,6)

Covenant in Isaiah

- Davidic 55:3
- New Covt 59:21; 61:8

54:11-13, kingdom blessings for future; cf. language of Rev. 21:10-27

ch. 55, Gospel of Isaiah: appeal to repent and to receive these blessings

Fulfillment of Davidic Covt (55:3) leads to removal of the curse

#### **3. The sins of Judah, ch. 56 - 59:15** (this section begins Isaiah III for the critics)

note Sabbath emphasis, 56:2-8; 58:1,13-14

Sabbath keeping = a sign of belonging to the covt community (vs. 6) in exile in face of loss of ceremonies

56:7, OT universal appeal to all nations: "house of prayer for all peoples"

#### **4. Zion's Redeemer and his kingdom, 59:16 - ch. 66**

59:16-21, Yahweh himself provides salvation

New Covt language: vs. 21

Paul is familiar: Eph. 6 cf. Is. 59:17, 49:2, 52:7

ch. 60-62, description of promised kingdom (millennial)

some Bibles: ch. 59 — “judgments on Israel”  
ch. 60 — “blessings on the church”

61:1, Baptism of Jesus (cf. Acts 10:38); cf. 42:1

two advents in view here, cited in Lk. 4:17-20

62:4, Beulah and Hepzibah

63:1-6, Yahweh’s day of vengeance

esp. v. 2; cf. Joel 3; Rev. 14:20; 19:11-16

63:7 - ch. 64, Isaiah’s prayer for quick deliverance

note non-theocratic appearance of Israel, 63:16-19

63:10, “grieve His holy Spirit;” LXX word is same as in Eph. 4:30. Snackenburg says Is 63 is the backdrop for Paul’s understanding of the kingdom as developed in Ephesians

64:11, prophecy of temple destroyed (prophetic perfect)

(Young: could be figurative of worship condition)

ch. 65-66, God’s answer to Isaiah after Jerusalem is viewed as desolate (64:10)

65:8, blessing for obedient remnant

65:6,7, destruction for rebellious

65:17; 66:22, new heaven and new earth (= millennium and eternal kingdom); cf. 2 Pet. 3:13;  
Rev. 21:1; see Peters, Prop. 148 (vol. 2, 499-505)

65:20