

July 9, 2023

God's Good News Story

Isaiah: Visionary Prophet, Foreteller of Christ

Haven't you ever heard of "Christmas in July"? LOL Well, the intro video sets the story for our next story in the **Scarlet Thread of Redemption**. Today we continue with our Good News Story journey as we look at the life and ministry of Isaiah the prophet and the lessons, we can learn from him. Nearly 700 years before Jesus Christ was born we have a biblical prophecy given to us from the Key Player in today's story... ISIAH.

Isaiah is considered to be one of the most important prophets in the Old Testament. The Book of Isaiah is also considered to be one of the greatest books of the Old Testament. Following is an overview chart by Dr. Charles Swindoll of Insight for Living Ministries that gives us a quick 'big picture' view of the book of Isaiah.

ISAIAH				
	The Judgment of God	The Deliverance of God		
		THE SUPREMACY OF THE LORD	THE SERVANT OF THE LORD	THE FUTURE PLAN OF THE LORD
	CHAPTERS 1-39	CHAPTERS 40-48	CHAPTERS 49-53	CHAPTERS 54-66
Emphasis	The law and judgment for disobedience	God's grace and deliverance		
"Bible within Bible"	Old Testament	Comfort . . .	Promise . . .	Hope . . .
Theme	The justice and mercy of God			
Key Verses	2:3-5; 6:1-3; 53:1-12			
Christ in Isaiah	His first and second advents are prophesied throughout the book (child of a virgin in 7:14, the shoot from the stem of Jesse in chapter 11, the Suffering Servant in chapter 53).			

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<https://insightforliving.swncdn.com/pdf/bible-charts/Isaiah-Bible-chart.pdf> The prophet Isaiah lived around 740-680bc. Just a few decades after our last week's story of the prophet Jonah.

Whereas Jonah focused more on the northern kingdom of Israel, Isaiah was a prophet living in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. He was the son of a man Amoz, and tradition says that he was part of the royal family and a 1st cousin to King Uzziah. We can't be sure, but it is obvious that his major prophetic ministry was to the leadership of both Judah and Israel. His ministry spanned around 50 years with visions and prophecies given to both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms and their rulers. His name in Hebrew *Yesha'yahu*, means "Yahweh Saves". He had two known sons with strange and prophetic meaning names. One son was called *Shear-yashuv* (Jashub) meaning "A Remnant Shall Return", and the second is known as the longest name in the Bible *Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz* meaning "Speed, spoil, hasten, plunder" or summarized as "quick to plunder - hurry to the spoils"

In regard to the **Scarlet Thread of Redemption**, Isaiah is a key focus, especially Chapter 53 which describes the Suffering Servant and portrays the future suffering of Christ on the Cross who provides the climax of the **Scarlet Thread of Redemption**, the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross. Predicted nearly 700 years before it happened. Chapter 53 is sometimes referred to as the John 3:16 of the Old Testament. It is regarded as the clearest theological statement on the meaning of atonement in the whole Bible. Theologian J. Wash Watts called Isaiah "the Literary masterpiece of all Hebrew writing. One needs to realize that Isaiah's word-jewels are like diamonds in a fine watch, set as bearings on which a message pivots and revolves". (OT Teaching, 1967)

A Man of Visions

Nearly everyone would like to know what the future holds. Well, Isaiah is a man who was given multiple visions of the future, the near future as well as the far distant future. Listen to Isaiah 1:1...

Isaiah 1:1... The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

His ‘vision’ or ‘Word from the Lord’, starts out focused on the present time, then moves into the future. In his lifetime, Isaiah was a Prophet/Counselor to 4 different Kings of Israel as found in verse 1...Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah and met his death under a fifth evil King Manasseh.

Isaiah prophesied during a difficult time in Israel when most people had turned away from Yahweh/God. He is called by biblical scholars as a “Messianic Prophet”.

Charles Swindoll states this:

“Why is Isaiah so important?”

The book of Isaiah provides us with the most comprehensive prophetic picture of Jesus Christ in the entire Old Testament. It includes the full scope of His life: the announcement of His coming (Isaiah 40:3–5), His virgin birth (7:14), His proclamation of the good news (61:1), His sacrificial death (52:13–53:12), and His return to claim His own (60:2–3). Because of these and numerous other Christological texts in Isaiah, the book stands as a testament of hope in the Lord, the One who saves His people from themselves”.

<https://www.insight.org/resources/bible/the-major-prophets/isaiah>

Another interesting point on the importance and impact of Isaiah is that Isaiah is quoted more times in the New Testament than any other Old Testament prophet.

(Wilmington’s Guide to the Bible. P. 182)

Let me briefly share an overview of the multitude of prophecies by Isaiah (adapted from Wilmington’s Guide to the Bible. P. 182-183)

A. Prophecies Fulfilled During His Lifetime

There were 10 separate prophecies fulfilled during his lifetime most of which were concerning either the saving of Israel from its enemies, the destruction of Israel’s enemies and one unique one where God granted 15 extra years of life to King Hezekiah after he was diagnosed with imminent death from sickness.

B. Prophecies Fulfilled After His Lifetime

There were also 10 general prophecies that were fulfilled in the years following his death mostly concerning the Babylonian captivity, the conquest of the Persian King Cyrus and the edict to return to Israel by King Cyrus. Then a major Messianic Prophecy that dealt with several aspects of the life of Christ. These prophecies are a major part of the **Scarlet Thread of Redemption**. These elements about Christ’s life were included in Isaiah’s prophecy over several chapters... “the birth, earthly life, death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of Christ” (p. 182) were all wondrously and supernaturally given in great detail nearly 700 years before Christ came to earth. And a final prophecy even described the work of John the Baptist (Is. 40:1-5...

Isaiah 40:1-5...*“Comfort, comfort My people,” says your God.* ² *“Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, That her guilt has been removed, That she has received of the LORD’S hand Double for all her sins.”* ³ *The voice of one calling out, “Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.* ⁴ *Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the uneven ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley;* ⁵ *Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*

C. Prophecies Yet to Be Fulfilled

There are three yet to be fulfilled prophecies. These include (1) The Tribulation (2) The Battle of Armageddon and (3) The Millennium.

As I often say, since all the prophecies and promises made in the Bible have come true, that were supposed to come true by this time; we can be confident that the remaining prophecies will also come true!

There are so many things to say about Isaiah as a man and the Book he wrote, but I am going to use the remaining short time to focus on the main **Scarlet Thread of Redemption** connection found in the various chapters of Isaiah. These prophetic verses give approximately a 700 year advanced description of Jesus Christ and His Redemptive Work. (adapted from Wilmington, pp. 186-190)

1. **His Incarnation** (Is. 7:14; 9:6)
2. **His Humility and Early Years in Nazareth**
(Is. 7:15; 11:1,2; 53:2)
3. **His Relationship with His Father** (Is. 42:1; 50:4,5)
4. **His Miracles** (Is. 35:5,6)
5. **His Message** (Is. 61:1-3)
6. **His Specific Ministry to Gentiles** (Is. 9:1,2; 42:1)
7. **His Suffering and Death** (Is. 50:6; 52:14; 53:1-10)
8. **His Resurrection, Ascension and Exaltation**
(Is. 52:13-15; 53:10-12)
9. **His Millennial Reign**
(Is. 9:7; 11:3-9; 32:1; 33:22; 42:4-7; 59:16-21)

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1. **His Incarnation** (Is. 7:14; 9:6)

Is. 7:14...

¹⁴ *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

Is. 9:6...

⁶ *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

2. His Humility and Early Years in Nazareth

(Is. 7:15; 11:1,2; 53:2)

Is. 7:15... *Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good*

11:1,2... ¹ *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem or root of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.* ² *The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.*

53:2... ¹ *Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?* ² *For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.* ³ *He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

3. His Relationship with His Father (Is. 42:1; 50:4,5)

Is. 42:1a... *“Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him;*

Is. 50:4,5... ⁴ *“The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.* ⁵ *The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away.*

4. His Miracles (Is. 35:5,6)

Is. 35:5,6... ⁵ *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.* ⁶ *Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.*

5. His Message (Is. 61:1,2)

Is. 61:1-3... *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”*

6. **His Specific Ministry to the Gentiles**

(Is. 9:1,2; 42:1)

Is. 9:1-3... But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish. In earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He will make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

² The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them. ³ You will multiply the nation, You will increase their joy; They will rejoice in Your presence As with the joy of harvest, As people rejoice when they divide the spoils.

Is. 42:1... “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

7. **His Suffering and Death** (Is. 50:6; 52:14; 53:1-10)

Is. 50:6... I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pull out My beard; I did not hide My face from insults and spitting.

Isaiah 53:1-10,12... Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of dry ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we would look at Him, Nor an appearance that we would take pleasure in Him. ³ He was despised and abandoned by men, A man of great pain and familiar with sickness; And like one from whom people hide their

faces, He was despised, and we had no regard for Him.

⁴ However, it was our sicknesses that He Himself bore, And our pains that He carried; Yet we ourselves assumed that He had been afflicted, Struck down by God, and humiliated. ⁵ But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our wrongdoings; The punishment for our well-being was laid upon Him, And by His wounds we are healed. ⁶ All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the wrongdoing of us all To fall on Him. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off from the land of the living For the wrongdoing of my people, to whom the blow was due? ⁹ And His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

^{12b} Yet He Himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the wrongdoers.

8. **His Resurrection, Ascension and Exaltation**

(Is. 52:13-15; 53:10-12)

Is. 53:13-15... ¹³ See, My servant will act wisely; He will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ¹⁴ Just as there were many who were appalled at Him—His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and His form marred beyond human likeness ¹⁵ so He will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of Him.

For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

Is. 53:10-12... ¹⁰ *Yet it was the Lord's will to crush Him and cause Him to suffer, and though the Lord makes His life an offering for sin, He will see His offspring and prolong His days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in His hand. ¹¹ After He has suffered, He will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.*

¹² *Therefore I will give him a portion among the great and He will divide the spoils with the strong, because He poured out His life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

9. His Millennial Reign

(Is. 9:7; 11:3-9; 32:1; 33:22; 42:4-7; 59:16-21)

Is. 9:7... *Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

Is. 11:3-9... ³ *and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His*

mouth; with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness will be His belt and faithfulness the sash around His waist. ⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Amen! Hallelujah

What a Great & Mighty God we serve. One Who sees our sin and rebellion, yet He still reaches out in grace to provide a **Scarlet Thread of Redemption** to bring us back into Right relationship with Him.

It is up to us to join God in His Good News Story!

Will you respond as the Prophet Isaiah did when God called him?

Isaiah 6:8,9... ⁸ *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ⁹ God said, "Go and tell this people:*