

A Trek Through Isaiah 01 - Introduction

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Welcome and prayers

Introduction to the class

- Same time as the other class: 9:15 - 10:15. Start and end on time.
- If not meeting, please join other class.
- Smaller class so we can get to know each other. Prayers at the start; please share.
- Not a lecture. Discussion encouraged.
- Using the Legacy Standard Bible. NASB update.
- Sources: Motyer, Young, Steveson, Oswalt
- Approach: a trek: not cover everything in detail but see the high points: peaks, meadows, rivers, lakes, some flowers along the way. Joyce says treks are arduous. Not to worry. Everyone will be able to keep up.
- Notes will be published online.
- Last taught in 2015-16
 - 90+ lessons. Aiming to condense to about half as many this time.
 - Recordings and notes are on Sermon Audio. Search for me.

Introduction to the book

Author

- "Isaiah" means "Yahweh is salvation".
- Father was Amoz. No Bible information. Jewish tradition says Amoz was a brother of Amaziah, king of Judah. Isaiah seems to have had easy access to the court.
- Married (8:3 prophetess) with at least two sons (7:3, 8:3)
- Prophesied in and around Jerusalem over 60y
 - Called in the year that King Uzziah died 740 B.C. (6:1).
 - Prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (1:1)
 - Recorded the death of Sennacherib 681 B.C. (37:38)
- Jewish tradition says he was executed under Manasseh by being sawn in two inside a hollow log. (Heb 11:37 may refer to this).

Unity of composition

- Differing views on who wrote the book: Single author (traditional view) vs multiple authors (modern view)
- My view: a single author. Is 1:1 The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he beheld in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.
 - Vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz. A single person
 - Concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Speaking mostly of the southern kingdom
 - Which he beheld. Not from him; received from God
 - in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. During the reigns of four kings.

Historical setting

- Isaiah prophesied under four kings of Judah
 - Uzziah
 - Became king at 16. Reigned for 25y
 - Victories over Edomites, Philistines and Arabians. Ammonites paid tribute. Extended Judah's rule to the border of Egypt.
 - Became a leper after his transgression offering incense in the temple.
 - Jotham
 - Became king at 25 after his father became a leper.
 - Built cities, towers, castles, the upper gate to the temple.
 - First appearance of the Syrian league: Rezin and Pekah
 - Ahaz
 - Became king at 20. Reigned 16y.
 - Adopted pagan worship. Closed the temple.
 - Attacked by Rezin and Pekah. Made an alliance with Assyria.
 - Set up an altar in the temple patterned after the altar in Damascus.
 - Hezekiah
 - Reigned 25 years
 - Devoted to Yahweh
 - Reopened the temple, reinstated the Passover, removed idols from the land.
 - Resisted the Assyrian invasion
 - Received the Babylonian envoys and showed them all his treasures.
- Contemporary prophets
 - Amos in Israel: universal justice, the coming day of the LORD
 - Hosea in Israel: Israel's unfaithfulness and God's redeeming love.
 - Micah in Judah: judgment and forgiveness, the LORD as Judge and Shepherd-King

Structure of the book

- Historical
 - 1-5 Introduction
 - 6 Call
 - 7-37 The Assyrian period
 - 38-39 Transition to the Babylonian period
 - 40-66 The Babylonian period

- Themes (handout)
 - Three sections corresponding to three pictures of the Messiah
 - Isaiah standing at the bottom. He sees the present failure and then the coming ideal.
 - First view is of the King
 - Chapters 1 - 37
 - Concerns God's people and Assyria
 - Q: Who is the Lord of History?
 - Isaiah sees the failed Davidic king
 - But behind him is the perfect King who will not fail. He is the Lord of History.
 - Second view is of the Servant
 - Chapters 38 - 55
 - Concerns God's people and Babylon
 - Q: How will God's people be redeemed from captivity?
 - Isaiah sees the failed faith of the people
 - But behind them is the perfect Servant who will redeem them.
 - Third view is of the Conqueror
 - Chapters 56 - 66
 - Concerns God's people in an alien world
 - Q: How will God's people fulfill their promise?
 - Isaiah sees that they are inadequate for the task.
 - But behind them is the anointed Conqueror, who will bring to pass all of God's promises.

Outline

- Author's Preface 1:1 - 5:30
 - 1:1 The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz
 - Heading
 - 1:4 Alas, sinful nation
 - Israel has failed
 - 2:3-4 The son of David on the throne, nations at peace
 - The promised ideal
 - God's people will be redeemed and His plan accomplished
 - 4:2 the Branch of Yahweh
 - The One who will accomplish God's purpose
 - 5:25, 30 His hand is still stretched out...darkness and distress
 - First there will be judgment

- The Book of the King 6 - 37
 - Q: Who rules history? A: Yahweh. He will install His King to rule all.
 - Light beyond the darkness: The coming King 6 - 12
 - Structure
 - Ch 6 & 12 form an inclusio.
 - Ch 7-11 contain parallel sections addressed to Judah and to Israel.
 - Ch 10 is Isaiah's view of history: Yahweh is the Lord of history
 - Isaiah's Atonement and Commission 6:1-13
 - Darkness and Light in Judah 7:1 – 9:7
 - Crisis of faith for Judah: Judah attacked by Israel and Syria. King Ahaz trusts in politics rather than Yahweh.
 - 7:12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not test Yahweh!"
 - Isaiah prophesies invasion by Assyria but also coming light, coming redemption, coming King
 - 9:6-7 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
 - Darkness and Light in Israel 9:8 - 11:16
 - Crisis of faith for Israel
 - Israel chooses self-sufficiency rather than dependence on Yahweh.
 - 9:10 "The bricks have fallen down, But we will rebuild with cut stones; The sycamores have been cut in pieces, But we will replace them with cedars."
 - Isaiah prophesies consequences: adversaries, collapse of society, strife, injustice
 - Interlude: Isaiah's view of history 10:5-19
 - Yahweh rules history; uses nations to accomplish His purpose.
 - Assyria will be used, then judged.
 - A believing remnant preserved 10:20-34
 - 10:20 the remnant of Israel
 - The coming King 11:1-16
 - 11:1 A shoot from the stem of Jesse..
 - Salvation, Praise, Thanks 12:1-6
 - 12:6 Cry aloud and shout for joy

- Kingdom panorama 13 - 27
 - The nations reviewed.
 - Single question: Where is true security?
 - Five answers
 - Answer 1: World empire without God. As Babylon
 - Answer 2: Davidic monarchy. Broken then but one day the coming King will reign from Zion.
 - Answer 3: Collective security and self-sufficiency. Rejecting God's salvation.
 - Answer 4: The people of God. In bondage to sin. But one day they will see salvation and peace
 - Answer 5: Triumphant end: one world, one people, one God.
 - Fifteen sections, each using a country to illustrate one of the answers.
 - Example 21:13-17 Oracle about Arabia
 - Question: Where is true security? Country: Arabia. Answer: collective security and self-help.
 - What happened: Assyria attacking Arabia. Fugitives from battle hide in thickets. The local people help them with water and food. Tema is an oasis. Sons of Kedar are Arabians descended from Ishmael; they will be reduced to a remnant.
 - Why? They depended on themselves and did not call upon Yahweh. Collective security and self-help do not provide true security.
- The Lord of History 28 - 37
 - Overview
 - The greatest of Isaiah's interim fulfillments to verify his words.
 - The test case was the "Egyptian alliance" situation in the days of Hezekiah. Judah was under Assyria. Merodach-Baladan of Babylon was urging alliance against Assyria. Egypt was promising assistance for a revolt. Isaiah's job was to urge the way of faith, trusting in Yahweh rather than in politics.
 - Hezekiah was fascinated with military/political solutions. But in the end, with the Assyrians at the gate of Jerusalem, he trusted in the LORD, and the city was delivered.
 - Structure
 - 28 - 35 Six woes: principles & application (from present to far future)
 - 36 - 37 Delivery of Jerusalem from Assyria
 - 37:36 Then the angel of Yahweh went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians.

- The Book of the Servant 38 - 55
 - Q: How will God's people be redeemed from captivity? A: the Servant of Yahweh
 - Historical context
 - Hezekiah is king of Judah.
 - Assyrian power waning. Babylon rising.
 - Judah is taken captive to Babylon, then delivered by Cyrus
 - Hezekiah's Test of Faith (38 - 39)
 - Yahweh's assurance 38:1-22
 - Hezekiah becomes sick, prays to Yahweh
 - Yahweh gives healing and assurance that Assyria will not conquer Jerusalem.
 - Hezekiah acknowledges the blessing given to him and expresses his trust in Yahweh.
 - A proved answer to faith.
 - The test of faith 39:1-8
 - Using concern and flattery, Merodach-Baladan of Babylon sought alliance with Hezekiah against Assyria. Hezekiah received his embassy, forgetting Yahweh.
 - Isaiah therefore says that all he has will go to Babylon.
 - Universal consolation 40:1 - 42:17
 - Consolation for the LORD's people 40:1 - 41:20
 - 40:1 "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has been fulfilled, That her iniquity has been removed, That she has received from the hand of Yahweh Double for all her sins."
 - Comfort for Jerusalem
 - Hope for the Gentiles 41:21 - 42:17
 - 42:6 ... And I will give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations, To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who inhabit darkness from the prison.
 - The Servant will be a covenant and light to the nations

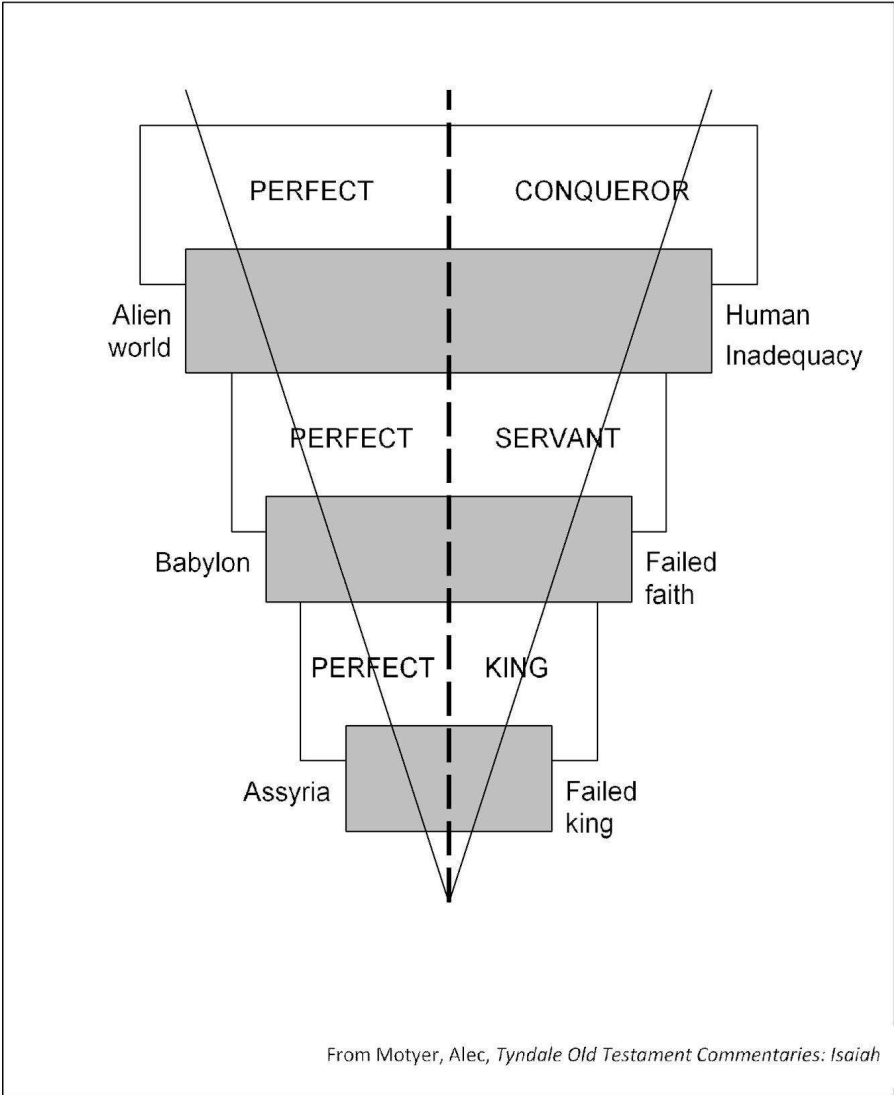
- The LORD's plan unfolded 42:18 - 44:23
 - The blind Gentiles need someone to lead them to the light. But God's servant of 41:8 (the nation Israel) is as blind as they! Another Servant is needed to carry out God's plan of redemption for the world.
 - Twin themes: Israel's captivity and liberation, Israel's sin and redemption
 - Israel's captivity and liberation 42:18 - 43:21
 - 42:22 But this is a people plundered and pillaged as spoil;
 - Israel is plundered and captive
 - 43:5 "Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your seed from the east, And gather you from the west.
 - Yahweh will deliver them
 - Israel's sin and redemption 43:22 - 44:23
 - 43:24 ... you have burdened Me with your sins; You have wearied Me with your iniquities.
 - Israel is a sinful people.
 - 44:23 Shout for joy, O heavens, for Yahweh has done it! Make a loud shout, you lower parts of the earth; Break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it; For Yahweh has redeemed Jacob And in Israel He shows forth His beautiful glory.
 - They will be redeemed
- The LORD's Plan Fulfilled (44:24 - 55:13)
 - The great deliverance: the work of Cyrus 44:24 - 48:22
 - 44:28 "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And all My good pleasure he will complete.' And saying of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' And of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'"
 - Jerusalem and the temple will be rebuilt. God will accomplish His word through Cyrus.
 - 47:1 "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon;
 - Babylon will be brought down
 - 48:20 Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! Declare with the sound of joyful shouting, cause this to be heard, Bring it forth to the end of the earth; Say, "Yahweh has redeemed His servant Jacob."
 - Israel will be delivered from Babylon
 - 48:22 "There is no peace for the wicked," says Yahweh.
 - Israel is free but they have not changed; they are not yet home.

- The greater deliverance: The work of the Servant 49 – 55
 - 49:5-6 So now says Yahweh, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To return Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am glorified in the sight of Yahweh, And My God is My strength), He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to cause the preserved ones of Israel to return; I will also give You as a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
 - The Servant is commissioned to bring salvation to Jacob and also to all nations.
 - 53:12 Therefore, I will divide for Him a portion with the many, And He will divide the spoil with the strong; Because He poured out His soul to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.
 - The Servant accomplishes His mission
 - 55:1 “Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.
 - The whole world is invited.
- The Book of the Conqueror 56 - 66
 - God’s people back in Judah but under foreign rule and still in bondage to sin.
 - Q: How will God’s purpose be accomplished? A: the Conqueror
 - The ideal and the actual 56:1 - 59:13
 - 56:1 Thus says Yahweh, “Keep justice and do righteousness, For My salvation is about to come And My righteousness to be revealed.
 - Yahweh promises salvation and righteousness.
 - 59:11-15 All of us growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We hope for justice, but there is none, For salvation, but it is far from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins answer against us; For our transgressions are with us, And we know our iniquities: Transgressing and denying Yahweh, And turning back from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words. Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands far away; For truth has stumbled in the street, And rightness cannot enter. So it is that truth is missing; And he who turns aside from evil makes himself plunder.
 - But His people have no justice and no salvation
 - Their sins are before them
 - They have turned away from their God

- The work accomplished 59:14 - 63:6
 - Situation and remedy: the promised Conqueror 59:14-21
 - 59:15-20 ...Then Yahweh saw, And it was evil in His eyes that there was no justice. And He saw that there was no man, And was astonished that there was no one to intercede; Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, And His righteousness upheld Him. He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. According to what they deserve, so He will pay in full, Wrath to His adversaries, what is deserved to His enemies; To the coastlands He will pay what they deserve. So they will fear the name of Yahweh from the west And His glory from the rising of the sun, For He will come like a rushing stream Which the wind of Yahweh makes flee. "A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares Yahweh.
 - Yahweh responds.
 - The Conqueror arms Himself for battle
 - For His enemies: wrath and recompense
 - For His people: redemption
 - The universal city 60:1-22
 - 60:1, 14, 20-21 "Arise, shine, for your light has come, And the glory of Yahweh has risen upon you...14 ...And they will call you the City of Yahweh, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel... 20-21 "Your sun will no longer set, Nor will your moon wane; For you will have Yahweh for an everlasting light, And the days of your mourning will be finished. "Then all your people will be righteous; They will possess the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may show forth My beautiful glory.
 - Zion will be transformed.
 - All her people will be righteous.
 - To display Yahweh's glory
 - The Anointed One 61:1 - 62:12
 - 61:1-2 The Spirit of Lord Yahweh is upon me Because Yahweh has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim release to captives And freedom to prisoners, To proclaim the favorable year of Yahweh And the day of vengeance of our God...
 - Read by Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth
 - The Conqueror speaks
 - Release to captives, freedom to prisoners, vengeance of our God

- 63:1-6 The consummation of the work
 - 63:1-6 Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His clothing, Marching in the greatness of His power? “It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” Why is Your clothing red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? “I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My clothes. “For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. “I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished, and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. “I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I brought down their lifeblood to the earth.”
 - The Conqueror returns in victory
 - Vengeance is accomplished
- The new heavens and new earth: prayers and promises 63:7 - 66:24
 - The watcher praying 63:7 - 64:12
 - 63:7 I shall bring to remembrance the lovingkindnesses of Yahweh, the praises of Yahweh, According to all the ways that Yahweh has dealt bountifully with us, And the abundant goodness toward the house of Israel, Which He has dealt bountifully to them according to His compassion And according to the abundance of His lovingkindnesses.
 - Remembering Yahweh’s lovingkindness
 - 64:5 ... Behold, You were angry; indeed we have sinned— We continued in them a long time— And shall we be saved?
 - Confessing the nation’s sins
 - Asking for salvation
 - The Lord responding 65:1 - 66:24
 - 66:22-24 “For just as the new heavens and the new earth Which I make will endure before Me,” declares Yahweh, “So your seed and your name will endure. “And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from sabbath to sabbath, All mankind will come to worship before Me,” says Yahweh. “Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be quenched; And they will be an object of contempt to all mankind.”
 - A new heavens and earth
 - Yahweh’s people from all nations will worship Him
 - The transgressors will burn forever.

Isaiah Themes



Book of the Conqueror 56 - 66
 How will God's people fulfill their promise?

Book of the Servant 38-55
 How will God's people be redeemed from captivity?

Book of the King 1 - 37
 Who is the Lord of History?