INTRODUCTION

TO THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

**DATE: 5/4/2016 Wed.**

**TEXT: Isaiah**

**INTRODUCTION**

There are wonderful books contained within the pages of the Old Testament

Each book plays an important role in the message that God conveyed to all men through His precious Word

They are sign posts of His Grace, Greatness, Goodness, Gifts, and Guidance

-- The foundational book is Genesis

From its pages we continually keep looking back to find answers to …

Our Creation

Our Condition

Our Confrontations (Because of Sin)

-- The harp of the Old Testament is the book of Psalms

It offers Consolation and Comfort to a weary soul

-- The book of Proverbs is the hammer that forges our Character and Caution

Like the blacksmith who pounds heated steel on an anvil

-- The Classroom on Suffering is found in Job

Where we find how to deal with the intense Complications of our lives

But the Jewel of the Old Testament, however, is the book of Isaiah

In Isaiah, we find …

-- The Communication of God's Grace and Coming Son

-- The Contemplation of Christ’s future suffering

-- The Celebration of His Millennial reign one day

Isaiah was a tremendous prophet and very eloquent and descriptive in his writings

Isaiah was quoted in the New Testament more than any other Old Testament prophet

The second most quoted book is Psalms

Isaiah has been referred to as the Paul of the Old Testament or the Shakespeare of the prophets

He is also referred to as the Messianic prophet

Why? Because he frequently spoke about the future ministry and reign of Jesus Christ, the Messiah

And he spoke often of the attributes of the Lord

The prophecy of the virgin birth of Jesus is found in **7:14**

***“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. ISAIAH’S “NAME”**

Isaiah’s name means the *“salvation of the Lord”*

The Salvation of the LORD is the key theme for the book of Isaiah

The word ***“salvation”*** is mentioned 28 times in this book,

While it is mentioned only 9 other times in the remaining prophets

You could easily explain the topic of salvation to someone by using verses in Isaiah

In fact, some have said that the book of Isaiah is like a jewel case, and **Isaiah 53** the jewel

This is the chapter that tells of the Savior who ***“took our infirmities and carried our sorrows”***

**Isaiah 53** is a wonderful chapter to memorize

Each verse is a nugget of golden truth

This is the chapter that pictures Christ as our suffering Redeemer who paid the price for our sins

Paul loved **Isaiah 53**, referring to it 5 times in his writings

Next there is …

**II. ISAIAH’S “NATURE”**

Isaiah was a Great Man who faithfully served the Lord for many years as a prophet

Not an easy occupation

He served for approximately 58 years beginning sometime during the reign of King Uzziah (790-739 B.C.) and ending around 681 B.C. when King Sennacherib of Assyria died

He preached during the reigns of 5 kings of Judah

-- Uzziah (aka - Azzariah)

-- Jotham

-- Ahaz

-- Hezekiah

-- Manasseh (some of the reign)

Tradition states that he was sawn in half by Manasseh, the successor of King Hezekiah

**Hebrews 11:37 *– “They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;”***

Next we have …

**III. ISAIAH’S “MINISTRY”**

At the time of Isaiah's ministry, Judah was a sinful and unjust nation

Nevertheless, Isaiah believed that Judah was God's chosen nation and they would be vindicated by God

With support from the Prophet Micah, and the godly King Hezekiah,

Their enemies were held at bay and a revival swept through the nation of Judah

As described in **II Kings 19** and **II Chronicles 32**

Many commentators describe Isaiah as Judah's evangelist

Because he worked tirelessly to turn the people back to God

Next, let’s look at …

**IV. ISAIAH’S “NATION”**

Isaiah was a man who loved his nation

The phrase ***“my people”*** is used at least 26 times

He was a patriot with a true love for his country,

Pleading with Judah to return to God and warning kings when their foreign policy was contrary to God's will

Where are the Isaiah’s today?

Isaiah was certainly a courageous man

Unafraid to denounce kings and priests, and unwavering when public opinion went against him,

He boldly declared the Word of God

It was a difficult time of international upheaval, when first one power and then another threatened Judah

The greatest dangers, however, were not from outside the nation, they were from within the nation

In spite of the godly leadership of King Hezekiah, Judah had no more godly kings after him

One by one, Hezekiah's successors led the nation into political and spiritual decay, ending in captivity in Babylon

**Quote:** The British expositor G. Campbell Morgan said, *“The whole story of the prophet Isaiah is that of a man who spoke to an inattentive age or to an age which, if attentive, mocked him and refused to obey his message, until, as the prophetic period drew to a close, he inquired in anguish, ‘Who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?’”*

Lastly in our Introduction

Let’s look at …

**V. ISAIAH’S “WRITINGS”**

When we look at the layout of the book of Isaiah,

We find that it is very similar to the layout of the entire Bible

1. For example, the Bible has 66 books and Isaiah has 66 chapters
2. The Old Testament has 39 books and the first section of Isaiah has 39 chapters

1. The New Testament has 27 books and the last section of Isaiah has 27 chapters
2. The Old Testament covers the history and sin of Israel, as does **Isaiah chapters 1 -39**
3. The New Testament describes the person and ministry of Christ, as does **Isaiah chapters 40 -66**
4. The New Testament begins with the ministry of John the Baptist

The second section in Isaiah (chapter 40) begins by predicting this ministry

1. The New Testament ends by referring to the new heavens and the new earth

Isaiah ends his book by describing the same things

Just Coincidence, right?

**Isaiah 66:22 –** ***“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain”***

**Revelation 21:1-3 – *“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea” “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God”***

**CONCLUSION**

As the curtain opens on chapter one of this tremendous book,

We find a dire situation in the nation of Israel

God's people have become *“out of touch”* with God

If we are not careful, we can follow the exact same pattern as the Israelites

Unfortunately, many Christians today are *“out of touch”* with the Lord

They spend no time with God

They rarely pray or read the Bible in order to let the Lord speak to them and give them direction in their lives

This is what we will look at in our First Message