

**Prophetical Babylon**  
**(Isa 13:1-22; 21:1-10; 47:1-15; Jer 50; 51; Rev 18)**

**ISAIAH**  
**(The Salvation of *Yahweh*)**

**Review of the Chronology of the Prophets:**

1. **Jonah (Fleeing From God's Will, 850-780 B.C.): 4 Chapters**  
Through Jonah, Christ is portrayed in His resurrection (Matt 12:40), seen as a prophet to the nations (though obviously not reluctantly like Jonah), and as the Savior of the nations. In Jonah's life, He is seen as the Savior and Lord (2:9).
2. **Obadiah (Poetic Justice, 840 B.C.): 1 Chapter**  
Christ is seen in Obadiah as the judge of the nations (15-16), the Savior of Israel (17-20), and the Possessor of the kingdom (21).
3. **Joel (The Coming Of The Day Of Yahweh, 835-796 B.C.): 3 Chapters**  
In Joel, Christ is presented as the one who will give the Holy Spirit (cf. 2:28 with John 16:7-15; Acts 1:8), who judges the nations (3:2, 12), and who is the refuge and stronghold of Israel (3:16).
4. **Amos (Judgment For Abuse of Privilege, 765-750 B.C.): 9 Chapters**  
Amos presents Christ as the One who will rebuild David's dynasty (9:11) and as the one who will restore His people (9:11-15).
5. **Hosea (Persevering Love, 755-715 B.C.): 14 Chapters**  
In Hosea, Messiah is presented as the Son of God (cf 11:1 with Matt 2:15), as the only Savior of His people (cf 13:4 with John 14:6), as the one who will ransom us from the dead (cf 13:14 with 1 Cor 15:55).
6. **Micah (Who Is Like God? 740-690 B.C.): 7 Chapters**  
Micah presents Christ as the God of Jacob (4:2), the Judge of the nations (4:3), and the Ruler who would be born in the city of Bethlehem (cf 5:2 with Matt 2:1-6). The priests and scribes quoted Micah 5:2 in answer to Herod's question about the birthplace of Messiah.
7. **Isaiah**                      **740-680**
8. **Nahum**                      **630-612**
9. **Jeremiah**                      **627-585**
10. **Zephaniah**                      **625**
11. **Habakkuk**                      **606-604**
12. **Daniel**                      **605-536**
13. **Ezekiel**                      **592-570**
14. **Lamentations**                      **586**

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| 15. | Haggai    | 520 |
| 16. | Zechariah | 515 |
| 17. | Malachi   | 430 |

## Isaiah

### **Author:**

As the book clearly declares, the author is Isaiah, the son of Amoz, from an apparently influential and distinguished Jewish family. Isaiah appears to have been on familiar terms with the royal court even in the reign of Ahaz. He was evidently a well-educated student of international affairs, who spent most of his time in the city of Jerusalem, where he rubbed shoulders with royalty and gave advice on foreign affairs because he was so in touch with the crosscurrents of world affairs. Though often scoffed at, being directed by God, he vigorously opposed any entangling alliances with foreign powers (whether with Assyria as against Samaria and Damascus, or with Egypt as against Assyria). As warned by the Lord in chapter six, his cause was doomed to failure, for both government and people chose to put their trust in the political alliances of man rather than in the sure person and promises of God.

An old tradition relates that he was martyred at some time in the reign of Manasseh, possibly by being sawed in two inside a hollow log (d. Heb. 11:37). Since he records the death of Sennacherib in Isaiah 37:37-38, it is fair to assume that Isaiah lived until after Sennacherib's death in 681 B.C.<sup>2</sup>

The unity of the book of Isaiah has been challenged by liberal critics who hold that a "Deutero-Isaiah" wrote chapters 40-66 after the Babylonian captivity. Concerning the various viewpoints of the critics, Ryrie writes.

Much dispute has arisen over the authorship of Chapters 40-66. Some assign the entire section to a "Deutero-Isaiah," who lived around 540 B.C. (after the Babylonian captivity). Others see a "Trito-Isaiah," who wrote chapters 56-66. Still others see insertions and editing as late as the first century B.C., a position difficult to maintain in view of the discovery of the Qumran Isaiah scroll dated in the second century B.C.

These suggestions attempt to eliminate the supernatural element necessary for predictive prophecy. Hence, the Babylonian captivity and the return under a Persian king (specifically named Cyrus) are not viewed as being predicted 150 years in advance, but as happenings recorded after the events. But even if one were to grant such a conclusion, it would not invalidate predictive prophecy. The name of King Josiah was predicted by a prophet three centuries before his time (1 Kings 13:2), and Bethlehem was named as the birthplace of Messiah seven centuries before the event (Mic 5:2). In addition, there is predictive prophecy in Chapters 1-39 of Isaiah (see 7:16; 8:4,7; 37:33-35; 38:8 for prophecies soon fulfilled and 9:1-2; 13:17-20 for prophecies of the more distant future).

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<sup>2</sup> Archer, Electronic Media.

If “Deutero-Isaiah” lived in Babylon, as is claimed, he shows little knowledge of Babylonian geography but great familiarity with Palestine (41:19; 43:14; 44:14). Further, it is asserted that differences in language and style can only be accounted for by assuming different authors, a theory which, if applied to Milton, Goethe, or Shakespeare, would force us to conclude that many of their writings were spurious. On the contrary, one can point out 40 or 50 sentences and phrases that appear in both sections of the book and that therefore argue for single authorship (cf. 1:20 with 40:5 and 58:14; 11:6-9 with 65:25; 35:6 with 41:18, etc.).

To claim two or more authors for this book is also to contradict the evidence of the New Testament. Quotations from chapters 40-66 are found in Matthew 3:3; 12:17-21; Luke 3:4-6; Acts 8:28; Romans 10:16,20, and all are attributed to Isaiah. Moreover, in John 12:38-41, quotations from Isaiah 6:9-10 and 53:1 appear together, and both are ascribed to the Isaiah who saw the Lord in the Temple vision of chapter 6. We must therefore conclude that the same author was responsible for the entire book and that no part of it was written at the time of the Babylonian captivity.<sup>3</sup>

For more on this issue, see Gleason Archer’s coverage in his work, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, Updated and Revised Edition, 1994, Moody Bible Institute, Paperback Edition.

#### **Date: 740–680 B.C.**

Isaiah had a very long ministry that ranged from around 740 to 680. His ministry began near the end of the reign of Uzziah (790-739 B.C.) and continued through the reigns of Jotham (739-731 B.C.), Ahaz (731-715 B.C.), and Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.). From the standpoint of Gentile rulers of the time, Isaiah ministered from the time of Tiglath-Pileser (745-727 B.C.) to the time of Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) of Assyria.

He outlived Hezekiah by a few years because chapter 37, verse 38, records the death of Sennacherib in 681 B.C. Hezekiah was succeeded by his wicked son Manasseh who overthrew the worship of *Yahweh* and no doubt opposed the work of Isaiah.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Title of the Book:**

The title, *Isaiah*, is obviously taken from the name of the human author who, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, composed it. The Hebrew name of this prophet means “*Yahweh* is salvation,” which appropriately, is an excellent summary of the theme and contents of the book.

#### **Theme and Purpose:**

As just mentioned, Isaiah’s name provides the theme of the book, “salvation is of *Yahweh*.” This is most evident by the fact the term “salvation” occurs some twenty-six times in Isaiah but only seven times in all the other prophets combined. Because of this, Isaiah has been called “the evangelical prophet” because he says so much about the

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<sup>3</sup> Ryrie, pp.1044-1045.

<sup>4</sup> Wilkinson and Boa, p. 191.

salvation and redemptive work of Messiah. In fact, more is said about the person and work of Messiah in His first and second advents than in any other Old Testament book. In some respects, Isaiah is a miniature Bible. It has sixty-six chapters while the Bible has sixty-six books. The first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah correspond to the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament which largely anticipate the coming of Messiah. The last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah neatly parallel the twenty-seven chapters of the New Testament because they speak a great deal about Messiah and His Kingdom as the Servant of the Lord. Chapters 1-39 speak of man's great need of salvation while chapters 40-66 reveal God's provision of Salvation in Messiah and His kingdom.

Summarizing the theme and content, Archer writes:

Appropriately enough, the basic theme of Isaiah's message is that salvation is bestowed only by grace, by the power of God, the Redeemer, rather than by the strength of man or the good works of the flesh. The holy God will not permit unholiness in His covenant people, and will therefore deal with them in such a way as to chasten and purge them and make them fit to participate in His program of redemption. Isaiah sets forth the doctrine of Christ in such full detail that he has rightly been described as "the evangelical prophet." Deeper Christological insights are to be found in his work than anywhere else in the Old Testament.<sup>5</sup>

### **Key Word:**

Again in keeping with the theme and Isaiah's name, the key word is *salvation*.

## **Isaiah 13-18**

- I. Prophecies of Denunciation and Judgment (1:1-39:8)**
  - A. Prophecies Against Judah (1:1-12:6)**
    - 1. The Condemnation of Judah (1:1-5:30)**
    - 2. The Commission of the Prophet (6:1-13)**
    - 3. The Coming of Messiah (7:1-12:6)**
  - B. Prophecies Against Gentile Nations (13:1-23:18)**
    - 1. Against Babylon (13:1-14:23)**
    - 2. Against Assyria (14:24-27)**
    - 3. Against Philistia (14:28-32)**
    - 4. Against Moab (15:1-16:14)**
    - 5. Against Damascus and Her Ally, Israel (17:1-14)**
    - 6. Against Ethiopia (18:1-7)**

## **Isaiah 13:1-22**

- I. Prophecies of Denunciation and Judgment (1:1-39:8)**
  - A. Prophecies Against Judah (1:1-12:6)**
  - B. Prophecies Against Gentile Nations (13:1-23:18)**

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<sup>5</sup> Archer, Electronic Media.

1. **Against Babylon (13:1-14:23)**

a. **A future Babylon. 13:1-5**

- 1 The oracle (**MASSA'** = 65x; a burden; 9x in Isaiah denoting a pressure on **Isaiah's soul**) concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw.

**Summary:**

1. **When Isaiah wrote this, Babylon was not in existence.**
  2. **Assyria occupied the Tigris-Euphrates area until 605 B.C.**
- 2 Lift up a standard (**NEs = banner**) on the bare hill (**Niph Ptc SHAPHAH = high + HAR = mountain**), raise your voice to them, wave the hand that they may enter the doors of the nobles.
- 3 I have commanded My consecrated ones, I have even called My mighty warriors, My proudly exulting ones, to execute My anger. (**'APH = 276x; anger**)

**Summary:**

1. **When God executes His anger on Babylon, he basically gives the "go ahead" to the executors to enter Babylon.**
  2. **He frequently permits one evil to attack another evil. This has been called by some a "Whip Nation."**
- 4 A sound of tumult on the mountains, like that of many people! A sound of the uproar of kingdoms, of nations gathered together! The LORD of hosts is mustering the army for battle.
- 5 They are coming from a far country from the farthest horizons, the LORD and His instruments of indignation (**ZA'AM**), to destroy the whole land.

**Summary:**

1. **The King of the North will have an alliance of nations working with him.**
2. **There are many descriptions of the "nations being gathered together," after the Jews have been dispersed and regathered.**
3. **At the time of writing the Jews were not yet dispersed. Cf Isa 43; 66; Jer 3; 29; Eze 36; 38; Joel 3; Hab 2; Zeph 2-3; Zech 12;14**
4. **The destruction will include all the land of Babylon, not just the city.**

b. **Judgment on the future Babylon. 13:6-16**

- 6 Wail (**Hiph Imp YALAL**), for the day of the LORD (**YAHWEH**) is near! (**QAROBH**) It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

**Summary:**

1. **The "Day of the Lord" is first mentioned in Obadiah and then followed by Joel and Amos.**
2. **Further study indicates that the "Day of the Lord" will begin with the Rapture of the Church which will unleash the wrath of God. 1 Cor 5:5; 1 Thes 5:2; 2 Thes 2:2; 2 Pet 3:10**

3. **From this use, and many others, “near” does not necessarily refer to human measurements of time.**
4. **God’s Justice is always “at the door.”**

7 Therefore all hands (in **Babylon’s land**) will fall limp, and every man's heart will melt (**Niph IPF MAsAs**).

8 And they will be terrified (**Niph Pf BAHAL cf Gen 45:3; Isa 21:3**), Pains and anguish will take hold of them; they will writhe like a woman in labor, they will look at one another in astonishment, their faces aflame. (**LAHABH**)

9 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming (**Qal Ptc BO’**), cruel, with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate (**Hiph IPF SHAMADH**) its sinners from it.

**Summary:**

1. **The “Day of the Lord” will bring massive destruction and Prophetical Babylon will receive its portion.**
2. **The land will be desolate, only inhabited by desert creatures.**
3. **The Lord will also totally destroy all the sinners in it, like was done to Sodom and Gomorrah. Cf 13:19**
4. **Believers after the Rapture may not heed the call to leave, and thus they have disobeyed and are classified as sinners.**

10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations (**KESIYL**) will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shed its light.

11 Thus I will punish (**Qal IPF + w.c. PAQADH**) the world (**TEBEL**) for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud, and abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.

**Summary:**

1. **The Lord Himself declares that this is for the time of the Tribulation and was not fulfilled in His day. Matt 24:29 & Mark 13:25 & Luke 21:25**
2. **The discipline on Babylon is just a part of the discipline on the entire world.**
3. **The reason for the discipline is outright rebellion, twisting of the truth and arrogance.**

12 I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold, and mankind than the gold of Ophir.

13 Therefore I shall make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken from its place at the fury of the LORD of hosts in the day of His burning anger.

**Summary:**

1. **This verse was also referred to by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and Heb 12:26-29. <sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>6</sup> **Heb 12:26-29** And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, " Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven." 27 And this expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which

**2. His burning anger is a description of the wrath of the Lamb.**

14 And it will be that like a hunted gazelle, or like sheep with none to gather them, they will each turn to his own people, and each one flee to his own land.

**Summary:**

- 1. An order will follow in the Hebrew prophets to “come out from her My people.” Jer 51:45; Rev 18:4**
- 2. This is a nation made up of people from all over the earth who are told to return home.**

15 Anyone who is found will be thrust through, and anyone who is captured will fall by the sword.

16 Their little ones also will be dashed to pieces (**Piel PF RAtASH cf 13:18**) before their eyes; their houses will be plundered and their wives ravished (**Niph IPF SHAGAL**)

**Summary:**

- 1. These are descriptions of complete destruction in terminology that would be understood in Isaiah’s day.**
- 2. When Historical Babylon was defeated by the Persians in Daniel’s day while the Jews were held captive in Babylon, this is NOT how it was conquered. Dan 5**

**c. The Medes will destroy the future Babylon. 13:17-22**

17 Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them, who will not value silver or take pleasure in gold,

18 And their bows will mow down the young men, they will not even have compassion on the fruit of the womb, nor will their eye pity children.

19 And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

20 It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there.

21 But desert creatures will lie down there, and their houses will be full of owls, Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there.

22 And hyenas will howl in their fortified towers and jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come and her days will not be prolonged.

**Summary:**

- 1. The Medes were driven by ideology rather than greed.**
- 2. This ideology is sociopathic.**
- 3. Babylon will be turned into an “animal house.”**

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cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.