

Isaiah: Jesus the Suffering Servant

I.) Chp. 1-35 The throne of God

II.) Chp. 36-39 The throne of man

III.) Chp. 40-66 The throne of grace

So far in our study we have gone through:

- **The Pentateuch the first five books of the Bible:** There we saw God's working in our lives.
- **Then we went through the 12 historical books:** There we saw the perils and pitfalls that await us as we seek to follow God.
- **Next are the five poetical books:** These books expressed the joys and sorrows of being human as well they revealed how to maintain a relationship with through out all of human emotions and experiences.

The final section of the Old Testament is the 16 books of the Prophets and in them we read of the promises of God. I suppose many don't think of the prophetic books in terms of God's promises but they are. Some of God's promises we like very much others such as when He promises to us that if we choose not to trust Him that harm will come to us we don't like very much. Thirteen out of the 16 prophetic books were written before or during the Babylonian captivity only the last three were after. What we learn through reading all 16 books is that God has kept all of His promises right down through history and because of this we can trust Him with His promises towards us now.

The book of Isaiah is like a miniature Bible: The first half has 39 chapters like the Old Testament and is filled with judgment as the pages are filled with immoral and idolatrous men. The first part of those 39 chapters centers on the throne of God and His

holiness. In the sixth chapter Isaiah writes that he had a vision of the throne of God during a time when Uzziah the king had died and Judah's earthly throne was vacant. Oh what a great perspective for all of us that during the times when it appears that none is on the throne in control of our lives God lets us know that He is still "*High and lifted and the train of His robe fills the temple*". But with the throne of God we will be made aware of our shortcomings and the failure of our choices. All of us want a Savior few of us want a Lord who upon His throne judges our foolish attempts to rule our own lives. The final 27 chapters (40-66) resemble the New Testament as they declare hope and grace. It is in these chapters that we are introduced in the clearest way to the Messiah where judgment and mercy join together in God's only begotten Son, Jesus. The first 39 chapters reveals man's need for salvation and the following 27 chapters show God's provision for man's need in the Messiah.

Isaiah has been called the apostle Paul of the O.T. and was from a very important family and his education is evident by use of his vocabulary. He maintained close contact with the royal court. He was married and had two sons based upon 8:3 and 7:3 and prophesied during the reigns of four kings of Judah for around 40 years 740 years before Jesus. He spoke right at the time when the 10 northern tribes were taken captive by the Assyrians and prophesied of Judah's future captivity to Babylon even before it was a world power. He was not the lone voice speaking to the nation as his ministry overlapped that of Amos, Hosea, and Micha. Jewish tradition has him fleeing the wicked king Manasseh hiding in a hallowed tree and being sawn in two which is most likely referenced in Hebrews 11:37. His name means "the salvation of Jehovah" and it seems through these 66 chapters that he is either looking for such salvation or speaking of it.

I.) Chp. 1-35 The throne of God

The first chapter summarizes the whole book as he starts with the rebellion of the nation and finishes with the grace of God. In Isaiah 1:4 he says, *“Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward.”* The nation had maintained religion but had abandoned their relationship with God to which God responds in 1:11 *“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me? Says the Lord. I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs or goats.”* Then in 1:16-17 God says, *“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.”* Then in a wonderful glimpse of what Isaiah will speak of more in the 53rd chapter God breaks through with these pleading words in 1:18 *“Come now, and let us reason together, Says the Lord, Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”* He speaks of a future time when all of humanity will allow God to rule a time when in 2:4 we are told that, *“He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”* A time when according too 4:6 that *“there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.”* It is from this that God warns of the consequences of those who according to

5:20-21 *“call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”*

And to this void of human leadership Isaiah in 6:1-3 *“saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”* Oh what comfort, what peace these should bring our weary hearts that not only is our God on the throne but He is Holy and His glorious will is going to win. With such a vision of God comes a call to proclaim His truths to a need world and Isaiah wants to know *“How long”* (6:11) to which God replies *“Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant”*. Facing the invading Assyrian army which had already defeated the 10 northern tribes God moves on Isaiah to reassure Ahaz the new king not to be fainthearted. And to show him that God was in control he asks in Ahaz to ask for a sign from the Lord but Ahaz refuses to which the Lord says in 7:14 *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”* Imagine Ahaz hearing this being fainthearted and going, *“Wow, I’m worry about a little invasion and God grants me a miraculous sign of a virgin giving birth to a Son named “God with us”*. In the 9th chapter Isaiah reveals more about this mysterious Savior as we read in 9:6-7 that *“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. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the*

throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” In the 11:1-2 we are told that *“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 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.”* Then in 11:5-10 we are told of Him that *“Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.”* That under His righteous rule *“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.”* *“And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.”* Though none shall defeat the Messiahs reign many will appose it no more than the description given us in 4:12-16 where we read *“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms?”* But not worry my friend as we are told in 22:22-23 that *“The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; so he shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut, and no one shall open. I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, and he will become a glorious throne to his father's house.”* Thee

for we can be still and rest in His glorious rule over our hearts. There as 25:1 sings His praises we too can say, *“O Lord, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, for You have done wonderful things; your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.”* That looks forward but what of the past and future heartbreaks? Well 25:8 tells that *“He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken.”* He will as 26:3 *“keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.”* He promises this and more saying in 26:19 *“Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”* O death where is your sting, where is your victory? Conquered by the Love of God for those who have surrendered their hearts to Him. But how shall the world know of such truths? Well we are told in 28:10 that they shall be taught *“precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”* And what shall be taught them 28:16 tells us that it is the promise that, *“Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily.”* To this Isaiah hears the Lord’s warning again in 29:13 saying *“Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men”*. But with that warning also comes this promise in 30:18 *“the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him.”* And 35:5-6 promises that *“the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of*

the deaf shall be unstopped. 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.”

Then in 35:8 we are told that “*A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others.*

Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray.”

II.) Chp. 36-39 The throne of man

Chapters 37-39 give us the story of Hezekiah’s stand upon the Lord during the Assyrian invasion found in 2 Kings 19 and how the Lord defeat 185,000 soldiers with one angel in one night. Then in the 38th chapter Hezekiah becomes ill and prays that he may live and does so for 15 more years but during that time shows God’s blessings in Israelis treasury to representatives of Babylon which will set up a future invasion. We will stop here and pick up the rest of this book next week!