



"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME"
ISAIAH 61:1

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

CHAPTER 61

AND HIS NAME
WILL BE CALLED
WONDERFUL COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING FATHER,
PRINCE OF
PEACE.
ISAIAH 9:6

Isaiah is called "The Book of Salvation." The name *Isaiah* means "the salvation of the Lord" or "the Lord is salvation." Isaiah is the first book containing the writings of the prophets of the Bible. And the author, Isaiah, who is called the Prince of Prophets, shines above all the other writers and prophets of Scripture. His mastery of the language, his rich and vast vocabulary, and his poetic skill have earned him the title, "Shakespeare of the Bible." He was educated, distinguished, and privileged, yet remained a deeply spiritual man. He was committed to obedience over the long haul of his 55-60 year ministry as a prophet of God. He was a true patriot who loved his country and his people. Strong tradition suggests that he died a martyr's death under the reign of King Manasseh by being placed within the hollow of a tree trunk and sawed in two.

Isaiah's calling as a prophet was primarily to the nation of Judah (the southern kingdom) and to Jerusalem, urging the people to repent from their sins and return to God. He also foretold the coming of the Messiah and the salvation of the Lord. Many of his prophecies predicted events that occurred in Isaiah's near future, yet at the same time they foretold the events of the distant future (such as the coming of the Messiah), and even some events still to come in the last days (such as the second coming of Christ).

In summary, the message of Isaiah is that salvation comes from God—not man. God alone is Savior, Ruler and King.

Commentary on the book of Isaiah is by noted theologian Rev. William G. Most (1914-1999). His contributions to theology have been recognized all over the world. He published 12 books and a host of articles on topics ranging from biblical studies to Mariology and Latin grammar.

Book of Isaiah

Summary of Chapter 61

Messenger of Good News. Chapter 61, Summary and Comments

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. - Who is it? A partial fulfillment may have been in the prophet himself. But the great fulfillment came when Jesus Himself said it was fulfilled in Him, in Luke 4. 16-19. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit. He was to aid those who were oppressed. This is much like the work of the Servant of the Lord in 42. 3 and 50. 4.

He is to proclaim a year of the Lord's favor, but also a day of setting things right -- the word here is <naqam> which means action by the one in charge of the community to put things right. It is often translated vengeance, but improperly, for vengeance is immoral. Rather, it is rectifying the objective moral order.

There is an allusion here to the Year of Jubilee, every 50th year, when those who had defaulted on debts and been sold into slavery had to be set free: Lev 25. 39ff. It is also called the Year of freedom: Ezek 46. 17. Then there would be a beautiful crown, a fine turban, for all who grieved in Zion, instead of ashes, will put on their bare heads in sign of mourning. They will be called oaks of righteousness, planted by the Lord.

They will rebuild ancient ruins, most likely those left from the Babylonian invasion of 596 and 586. But now outsiders will shepherd their flocks for them, for the people of Israel will be called priests of the Lord: cf. Exodus 19. 6. They will feed on the wealth that the nations will bring - cf. 60. 6ff above.

In his faithfulness the Lord will reward them with a double portion, and make an everlasting covenant with them, to compensate them for all the suffering of the exile.

So he - Isaiah or the Messiah - says: I delight greatly in the Lord, He has clothed me with garments of salvation. - These lines are given as optional readings for the common of Masses of the Blessed Virgin, there to be understood as referring to her. This is not mere accommodation, for because of her close union with Him in all His mysteries (as chapter 8 of <Lumen gentium>, brings out) what is said of Him, applies in a way to her also. As Pius XII said, in <Munificentissimus Deus> she is "always sharing His lot. "

As the soil makes plants sprout and come up, so the almighty Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

End of Chapter 61