



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

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

CHAPTER 31

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 31

Follow not Egypt but the Lord. Chapter 31, summary and comments.

The diplomats of Judah have been dealing with the Egyptians, and probably, it seems, in secret, and are proud of their cleverness. Isaiah says the Lord too is wise: He can bring His plans to realization. The others do not. It is vain to trust in Egypt. Judah especially wanted the help of horses from Egypt, which had many. Judah too had many, but far too few for the Assyrian threat.

He makes a comparison: A lion that is holding and eating his prey will not be deterred by shouts. He will continue to eat. But the Almighty Lord will hover over Jerusalem and shield it, if only they trust in Him. So they should return to Him, and give up

their idols. Assyria is doomed to fall by a sword that is no mere human sword. God will devour the Assyrians like a fire.

The Messianic State: true and false security. Summary and Comments.

The prophet looks forward to an ideal king- who must be the Messiah. The king will rule in righteousness, like the king foretold in Isaiah 9:5-6 and 11. and his subordinate authorities will do the same - in contrast, to the corrupt government of Judah. God will be like the shade of a great rock in a thirsty land. In the sun-scorched places, such shade was very welcome.

At that time the eyes which were once failing to see will then really see; and the once deaf ears will hear. He thinks of the terrible prediction in his own chapter 6 which said that seeing they will not see, and hearing they will not understand.

In Isaiah's day, and in many other periods too, those who were base and foolish were called noble. Under the ideal king it will be otherwise.

But then Isaiah remembers the sad fact that the ideal King is not yet at hand, and God will punish those who are disobedient.

He singles out here the one whom he calls as sinners, the complacent and ostentatious women- he had spoken of them earlier in 3:16-4:1. These women are vain, and severely tempt men by their displays. He tells them that "in little more than a year" the harvests will fail. Of course, on God's time scale, one day is like 1000 years, and 1000 years like one day: cf. 2 Peter 3:8 and Isaiah 29:17-21.

He urges the women to do penance in sackcloth and to beat their breasts for the fertile fields are going to turn into thorns and briars, and Jerusalem, the city of revelry will be a wasteland, where donkeys enjoy wandering.

Since the prophet sees all time on God's scale, this fulfillment came more than once. It began with Sennacherib in 701, who did not take the city, but afflicted it. The Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar II did sack the city in two waves, 596 and 486 BC. And the Romans did much worse in 70 A. D.

End of Chapter 31