

Introduction to Isaiah

Isaiah 1:1

“Isaiah” – Salvation of the Lord. “Prophet” – Mouthpiece of God.

- A Prophet in the Southern Kingdom of Judah from about 739 – approx. 680 B.C.
- Isaiah considered The Major book of the Prophets. The Prince of Prophets. The Bible in Miniature, Ch. 1-39 – Judgment 40-66 – Hope.
- Isaiah’s contemporaries were Hosea and Amos in Israel and Micah in Judah.
- Isaiah grew up and lived in Jerusalem and served the Kings in the Palace.
- Major theme of Isaiah is “Salvation is in the Lord”.

Background

Since the time of Moses and the exodus Israel (one nation, twelve tribes) was ruled by a theocracy (God as King). God would rise up on occasion a “Judge” to guide the people. Often they would lead militarily but were designed to bring the people back to God spiritually. Israel made many covenants and agreements with God about behavior, religious practices and interacting with other nations. Most of these they broke over time and rebelled against God.

Around 1052 B.C. the people cried out for a King like the other nations and Saul was anointed King and ruled until 1011 B.C. This ended the age of the Judges and began the Prophetic age as prophets were raised up under the Kings rule to bring Israel back to God. Saul was a military leader and sought to not only bring the twelve tribes of Israel under one rule but to conquer the surrounding nations as well. During Saul’s reign the nation of Israel split and Saul became more ungodly and unfocused.

In 1011 B.C. David assumed the throne after Saul’s death. During David’s reign the nation was reunited and expanded its borders far beyond Saul. At David’s death in 971 B.C. Solomon (David’s son) became King and the land flourished in wealth, peace, and was the world power.

Upon Solomon’s death in 933 B.C. chaos ensued. Solomon’s son Rehoboam assumed the throne but a coup was staged by Solomon’s general Jeroboam and the Kingdom split in two, Rehoboam over Judah (the tribes of Benjamin and Judah) in the South and Jeroboam over Israel (the other ten tribes) in the north. Jerusalem was the spiritual capital but was in the land of Judah, so Jeroboam set up an alternate spiritual capital in the north (Bethel & Dan) and made golden calves to worship, returning to idolatry and pagan worship.

Between then and Isaiah was a long line of Kings in both countries, most of which were not good, each worse than the one before (especially Israel). Judah was enmeshed in the geo-political scene of the day and played a key role among the nations of Assyria, Egypt, Syria, Philistia, and Babylon.

The nation was experiencing wealth and prosperity, but spiritually was almost bankrupt. Idolatry and pagan worship was rampant and generational. Many pagan temples practiced Human sacrifice and temple prostitution. Judgment was coming, captivity was certain, but redemption was promised.

Why study this History? *Ecclesiastes 1:9-10, John 3:9-15*

Discussion Questions

Why is it important to study events from 3000 years ago?

How are the events and geo-political climates the same?

As a Christian and an individual what can you do in this global view?

Homework

Read *Isaiah 1*

Answer the following questions:

1. What does God's Word say? List the facts.
2. What does God's Word mean? Learn the lessons.
3. What does God's Word mean to me? Listen to His voice.
4. How will I respond to God's Word today? Live it out.

Identify one way each day that you can see God at work on a global scale.