

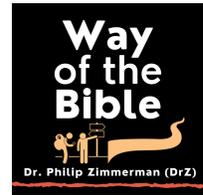
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Podcast Episode: 1st of 8 in Mini-Series 8

Episode #057
Servanthood | Isaiah

Mini-Series 8

Major and Minor Prophets
Isaiah to Malachi



Welcome to Episode #057 of Way of the Bible podcast. This is our first of eight episodes in our mini-series entitled, Major and Minor Prophets | Isaiah to Malachi. On this episode we're going to briefly introduce this mini-series and then tackle the book of Isaiah. Isaiah is the only book in the Bible that presents the complete plan of God to reach people of all nations through the servanthood of Israel, his chosen people. It is a huge and vitally important book both for the Jews and the gentiles.

In this mini-series covering the prophets, we're going to have one episode each for the four major prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Of these major prophets, Jeremiah has two books we'll cover in the same episode, Jeremiah and Lamentations. On the fifth episode we're going to combine the first six minor prophets Hosea to Mica. And on the sixth episode of this mini-series we'll look at the last six minor prophets Nahum to Malachi.

In each mini-series we try to tie in the Way revealed in the Bible that leads to salvation. Central to that Way is Israel.

Exodus 19:5-6 – *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.* God's desire is that all mankind would see his glory and know that He alone is God. His servant Israel was given that task.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 – *“For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7 It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers,*

Deuteronomy 26:18-19 *And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, 19 and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.”*

Prophets were active within Israel from the beginning revealing to the people the words of God, reminding people and their leaders to obey God, and recording their words in writing. As the wickedness of both the northern and southern kingdoms heated up to the

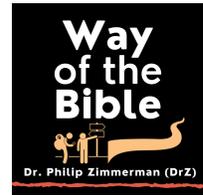
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point of bringing judgment, God sent prophets into both kingdoms to boldly announce to the rulers and people judgment was coming.

The people's expectations since the times of king's David and Solomon was God was going to establish a descendant of David as the ruler of the world. As the wickedness and apostasy of the northern kings went from bad to worse, the southern kings while they had times of revival, in the end ended badly.

This is where we find ourselves as we begin this mini-series overview. These prophetic texts were not written in a vacuum, but rather address very specific people, and a very specific plan of God to reach people of the nations through Israel. The prophets are continually pointing out the failures of the people and their leaders to trust God. And the coming judgment because of their lack of trust and obedience. Isaiah and others also remind the people that God's is going to keep his covenant and commitment reach people of the nations through Israel in the future.

With that as an introduction let's start looking at the book of Isaiah. Isaiah is claimed by many to be the Bible all presented in one book. The Bible has sixty-six books. Isaiah has sixty-six chapters. The Old Testament has thirty-nine books. Isaiah has thirty-nine chapters that deal with the law and the governance of God. The New Testament has twenty-seven books. Isaiah has twenty-seven chapters that deal with the grace and salvation of God.

There are sixty-six direct quotations in the New Testament taken from Isaiah. Twenty of the twenty-seven New Testament books refer to Isaiah, and twelve New Testament books have direct quotations. Isaiah ranks only behind Psalms as the most quoted Old Testament Book in the New Testament. The next two after Isaiah being Exodus and Deuteronomy.

There is much we learn about the role Jesus Christ plays in Israel in the book of Isaiah. In addition, for the Christian, Isaiah reveals prophetically Christ's virgin birth, his character, life, death, resurrection, and second coming. The Gospel of God is clearly presented in the New Testament is also found in Isaiah.

There is a great thirty video series by Dr. John Oswalt, on the book of Isaiah available for free on YouTube. Dr. Oswalt, one of our earlier mini-series guest speakers, literally wrote the two-book set for Isaiah found in The New International Commentary Series.

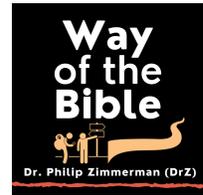
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When you read Isaiah, you'll discover he had very easy access to the kings of Judah and other members of the high court both religiously and politically. Many speculate he was a member of the royal family of David although this is not specifically mentioned in the text.

The first five chapters of Isaiah address Israel's call to servanthood and that their rebellion against this call was going to result in judgement. In Chapter 2, God reminds Israel of His desire to be reconciled with the people of the nations. **Isaiah 2:1-5** – *The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, 3 and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and 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. 5 O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.*

Then for the next three chapters, God tells of the coming judgment upon Judah for their rebellion against God and their charge to display God's glory to the nations. Judah and Jerusalem thought themselves high and supreme among men and nations yet God was going to cast them down for lack of reverence and haughtiness. By the end of chapter 5 it looks pretty bleak.

The call of Isaiah into servanthood as a prophet for God to the people comes in chapter 6. **Isaiah 6:13** – *In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of*

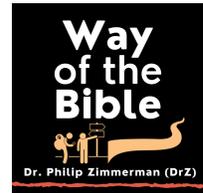
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unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for." 8 And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." 9 And he said, "Go, and say to this people: "'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." 11 Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, 12 and the LORD removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. 13 And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy seed is its stump.

God was not expecting Israel to repent and turn back to God. God was allowing those about to be judged in Judah and Jerusalem to know the reason before God brought the hammer down using Babylon. The only thing to remain when God's through will be the stump. And we'll soon see the holy seed stump is going to put out a shoot!

Chapters 7 to 39 concern Trusting God. Broken down a little further, Chapters 7 to 12 describe Israel with no Trust in God. Chapter 13 to 35 provide Israel lessons on trust. And Chapters 36 to 39 describe the fruit of Trust but also how soon we forget.

The overarching trust issue Isaiah is addressing for Judah's King Ahaz is that God will protect them. Regionally, the Assyrians are making their way south toward Egypt to conquer the world. In the way of their conquest are nations that lay in between (Syria, Israel, and Judah). Judah refused to enter into league with the king Syria and the king of Israel against Assyria. So the two kings made a pact to invade Judah and set-up a puppet king who would add Judah to their nations opposing Assyria.

God sent Isaiah to tell Ahaz to trust God and know that the plans of Syria and Israel to invade will not come to pass. And within 65 years both Syria and Israel will be no more. Isaiah then asks Ahaz to name a sign as deep as Sheol or as high as heaven for God to confirm his word. Ahaz feigns humility and refuses to ask for a sign to which Isaiah responds. **Isaiah 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 [God with us].*

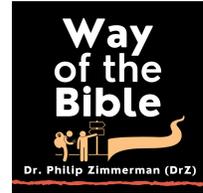
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God then tells Isaiah how the Assyrians will sweep over Syria and Israel right up to the walls of Jerusalem. And that the people are not to fear nor be in dread. **Isaiah 8:13-15** – *But the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. 14 And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 And many shall stumble on it. They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken.*” In the end, the people will not trust or seek God but seek the occultic for answers, speak arrogantly about their king and God. When they look toward heaven, they see only darkness.

In Chapter 9, Isaiah reveals that in the latter times a glorious way of the sea will be found beyond the Jordan in Galilee of the nations. **Isaiah 9:2-7** – *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. 3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. 5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

Isaiah again speaks of Assyria's destruction and that there is coming a righteous branch from the stump of Judah and Jerusalem mentioned earlier. **Isaiah 11:1-5** – *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 2 And 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 the fear of the LORD. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, 4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.* Isaiah then goes on to extol the peoples worship of the LORD in Chapter 12.

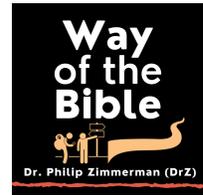
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Beginning with Chapter 13 thru Chapter 35 we find lessons on trust. Not to be trusted are political leaders, military nations, wealth, and/or reputation. In the end and all along the way to the end, God will be sweeping into utter destruction all who oppose him. God will return the ransomed of the LORD back to Zion with singing and everlasting joy.

The lessons in trust end in Chapters 36 to 39 with the account of Assyria's demand for Israel's surrender made to the people on the wall and delivered to king Hezekiah. When Hezekiah with much repentance, humility, and clarity in prayer of the LORD to be honor his glorious name disparaged by the king of Assyria, God answers his prayer. That night, God sent out one angel who slew 185 thousand Assyrian soldiers as they slept in their tents. The king of Assyria withdrew his troops, returned home and years later was killed by his own sons. But, how soon we forget...

Hezekiah was suffering an illness leading to death and he pleaded with God to be spared. God granted him 15 more years which turned out not as good as could have been. When visited by envoys from Babylon under the guise of checking on his health, Hezekiah boastfully showed the envoys all the riches of his kingdom. **Isaiah 39:5-8** – *Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 6 Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the LORD. 7 And some of your own sons, who will come from you, whom you will father, shall be taken away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." 8 Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days."*

Chapters 40 to 66 makes a huge switch to the future. These chapters seem to be written to the captives in Babylon more than 150 years in the future. God knew that the people in captivity in the future would think all was lost. Their thought had been God established Israel as a nation for himself, and that Jerusalem would never be destroyed as it was the home of God's temple. God lived in Jerusalem. No matter how wicked they became, they thought God would never destroy his city or temple called by his name.

Once they would be taken captive into Babylon, all hope of the exiled remnant would be lost of any future kingdom for themselves. Historically no one taken into captivity was ever allowed to go home. Their loss of hope in Babylon was not to be unexpected. When Cyrus let Israel return to their land that was the first time in history such a thing happened.

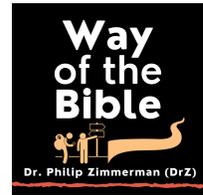
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God used Isaiah to give them hope and remind them of their call once returned to the land of their servanthood to display the glory of God to the nations.

Chapters 40 to 55 teach about God's grace and the motives and means for servanthood of the nation. Judah's deliverance and their future had nothing to do with how good they had been, for they had not been good. Rather, by God's grace, he was going to do for them what they were unable and/or unwilling to do for themselves.

Chapter 40 introduces the section. Chapters 41 to 48 describe the motives for God's deliverance. And Chapters 49 to 55 describe the means by which God will deliver them.

The first part of Chapter 40 answers the exiles question, Does God want to deliver Israel from their bondage? The answer is yes. **Isaiah 40:9-11** – *Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" 10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*

Beginning in verse 12 of Chapter 40, Isaiah answers the question, Can God deliver them? Again, the answer is yes. **Isaiah 40:27-31** – *Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? 28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. 30 Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; 31 but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

Chapter 41 begins the description of God's motives for delivering from bondage. **Isaiah 41:8-10** – *But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend; 9 you whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, "You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off"; 10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

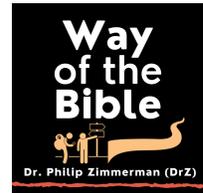
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In Chapter 42 Isaiah describes God's chosen servant. **Isaiah 42:1-9** – *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; 3 a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. 4 He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law. 5 Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: 6 "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. 8 I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."*

In Chapters 43 and 44 Isaiah lets the people know the LORD is their only savior. **Isaiah 44:6-8** – *Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. 7 Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. 8 Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any."*

God calls king Cyrus by name in **Isaiah 44:28** – *who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'"* It was king Cyrus who released Israel to return to Jerusalem.

God makes his plea to the people in the nations to the ends of the earth in **Chapter 45:22-23** – *"Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. 23 By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'*

God describes his vengeance upon Babylon and his instruction for his people to leave. Isaiah **Chapter 48:20-22** – *Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea, declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it out to the end of the earth; say, "The LORD has redeemed*

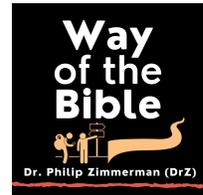
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his servant Jacob!" 21 They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts; he made water flow for them from the rock; he split the rock and the water gushed out.

22 "There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked."

Chapters 49 to 55 describe the means of God deliverance. I'll start spot quoting here. But I encourage you to read the full text as it is amazing.

Isaiah 49:1-6 – *Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. 2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. 3 And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." 4 But I said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the LORD, and my recompense with my God." 5 And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him—for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength—6 he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."*

Isaiah 50:4-6, 10-11 – *The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. 5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. 6 I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. 10 Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. 11 Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who equip yourselves with burning torches! Walk by the light of your fire, and by the torches that you have kindled! This you have from my hand: you shall lie down in torment.*

The people were not expecting a servant but a warrior king to sit on David's throne. God reveals a different plan in **Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12** – *Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted. 14 As many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—15 so shall he sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths because of him, for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they*

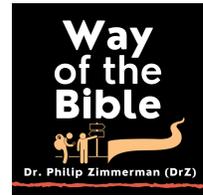
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have not heard they understand. 53:1 Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? 9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 55:4-8 – *“Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more. 5 For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. 6 For the LORD has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God. 7 For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you. 8 In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer.*

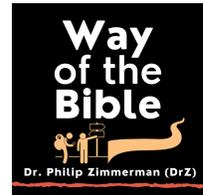
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Isaiah 55:1-11 - *“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. 3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. 4 Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. 5 Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. 6 “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; 7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

Chapters 56 to 66 make up a chiasm. This is an important observation and concept, that if you don't think in these terms the text seems to be jumbled up. Think of two legs of an equilateral triangle extending to meet at the top. On the left imagine three steps up the leg of the triangle between Chapters 56 to 59, then a fourth step to the top which occurs between chapters 60 to 62. The pinnacle of the chiasm in Isaiah 61:1-3. From this top step we descend the leg on the other side three steps occurring between Chapters 63 and 66. Dr. Oswalt calls the theme of this section, Righteousness the Character of Servanthood.

The opposing steps on the left and right are addressing the same topic. Starting on the left going up we have step 1: righteous foreigners, step 2: unrighteous Judeans, step 3: Divine Warrior, and step 4: Glorious Zion. On the top step is the pinnacle called Anointed One. Then stepping down on the right we have step 1: righteous Zion, step 2: divine warrior, step 3: unrighteous Judeans, step 4: unrighteous/righteous Judeans and righteous foreigners.

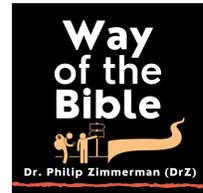
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The thought of the chiasm in this case is the main idea is at the bottom, righteous foreigners. This is a concept the Jews would have totally rejected. So Isaiah leads them up the ladder of how righteous foreigners are possible. Unrighteous Judeans have abandoned even trying to please God. A Divine Warrior solves the sin problem and restores Zion. Zion becomes the display of the glory of the LORD and attacks people of the nations. The Anointed One brings healing to nations and teaches.

Once at the top, the Judeans may just want to stay there in God's presence. But Isaiah takes them back down using the stair steps to the right. Step 1: Glorious Zion has now become Righteous Zion. Step 2: The Divine Warrior has conquered sin of all of mankind. Step 3: unrighteous Judeans remain frustrated that even their own righteousness is not acceptable to God. Step 4: Some Judeans accept the righteousness that is by grace others do not, and foreigners accept the righteousness that is by grace. Righteousness of people of all nations has been what God's been after since man was expelled from the garden of Eden.

In this text you'll see several times righteousness and salvation being mentioned together. There is no salvation without righteousness. And with salvation there is both positional righteousness and the ability to do righteousness.

Let me just give a glimpse of some of the ascending and descending passages and of course the pinnacle.

Isaiah 56:6-8 – *“And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—7 these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.” 8 The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, “I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.”*

The people soon return to idolatry while going through the motion of religious practices such as fasting to earn God's favor. Led by their leaders into apostasy, the people once again abandon God who sees through it all and rejects it all. God will bring judgment and redemption with the coming of Christ. The nature of the redemption points to the millennial kingdom and not the first coming of Jesus.

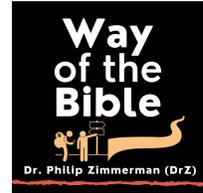
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The pinnacle of the chiasm is the announcement of the year of the LORD's favor. **Isaiah 61:1-3** – *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.*

Isaiah 63:1-6 – *Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me; trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath; their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained all my apparel. 4 For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. 5 I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. 6 I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."*

Isaiah 65:17-18 – *"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. The text goes on to explore the blessing of life in the Millennial kingdom.*

Isaiah 66:1-2 – *Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? 2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. The remainder of chapter 66 describes that even in the midst of idolatry of the nation, God will in fact deliver the remnant.*

The chapter book ends with the final judgment when God renovates the earth with fire bringing in the eternal state and glory of the LORD on display. **Isaiah 66:15-16, 22-24** – *15 "For behold, the LORD will come in fire, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render his anger in fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. 16 For by fire will the LORD enter into*

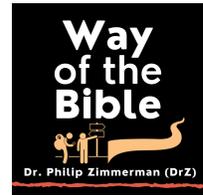
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judgment, and by his sword, with all flesh; and those slain by the LORD shall be many. 24 "For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. 23 From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD. 24 "And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."

And that ends our overview of the book of Isaiah. It is packed full of salvation for the Jews, salvation for gentiles, judgment of the earth, establishment of the Millennial kingdom when King Jesus and Israel under him rule the world, and finally the final judgment and renovation of the earth and entrance of all the redeemed into the eternal state.

Most sobering is the realization at the very end that rebellion against God results in eternal separation and literal presence in the lake of fire forever and ever. May the love of God compel all of us to make a concerted effort to share the good news of God with those we know who know not. And allow God to apply the word he's sent forth to accomplish its purpose.

On our next episode we'll look at the book of Jeremiah and the book of Lamentations. Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet, and next episode we'll see why.

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