

Isaiah

In Isaiah, Jesus is our Messiah

His prophecy is one of the longest, is quoted more frequently than any other in the New Testament, and he more often than any other prophet tells of the coming Messiah.

His name means “Jehovah saves.”

An easy way to remember the broad organization of Isaiah by chapters is to note these likenesses to the entire Bible:

Isaiah	Bible
66 chapters	66 books
2 main divisions (39 chapters and 27 chapters)	2 covenants (OT=39 books; NT=27 books)
Judgment/Comfort	Law/Grace
In first part, frequent allusions to and predictions of the Messiah	Frequent allusions to Christ in types and prophecies
In the second part, the Messiah is described with great fullness.	Christ is presented in all fullness.

Jeremiah

In Jeremiah, Jesus is the Righteous Branch.

Jeremiah lived to witness the Babylonian invasions of Judah that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Since it was his lot to prophecy to the nation during the final years of its decline and fall, the book is understandably filled with much gloom and foreboding.

Jeremiah was born to a priestly family and raised in the priestly village of Anathoth (4 miles from Jerusalem). He was often called “the weeping prophet”—a man with a harsh message but a sensitive and broken heart. (*Look at Jeremiah 8:21-9:1*).

His tender spirit made his suffering more intense as his family and friends, priests and kings, and the people of Judah as a whole, spurned God’s prophetic word. Though lonely and rejected ALL of his life, Jeremiah was nevertheless one of the boldest and bravest of all the prophets. In spite of great opposition, he faithfully carried out his prophetic call to warn his fellow citizens that God’s judgment was at hand.

In summarizing Jeremiah's life, one writer (Farley) says, "A more crushing burden was never laid upon mortal man. In the whole history of the Jewish race there has been no such example of intense sincerity, unrelieved suffering, fearless proclamation of God's message, and unwearied intercession of a prophet for his people as is found in the life of Jeremiah. But the tragedy of his life was this: he preached to deaf ears and reaped only hate in return for his love to his fellow countrymen."

The book was written:

1. To provide an enduring record of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry and message.
2. To reveal God's inevitable and inescapable judgment when his people broke the covenant and persisted in rebellion against God and His Word..
3. To demonstrate the authenticity and authority of the prophetic word. Many of Jeremiah's prophecies were fulfilled in his own lifetime. (16:9; 20:4; 25:1-14...)

Like Ezekiel, Jeremiah uses a variety of parabolic and symbolic actions to illustrate graphically his prophetic message—the useless belt (13:1-14); the drought (14:1-9); his being forbidden by God to marry or have children (16:1-9); the potter and the clay (18:1-11); the potter's smashed jar (19:1-3); the two baskets of figs (24:1-10); the yoke around his neck (27:1-11); and more.

Special Features of Jeremiah

1. It is the second longest book in the Bible.
2. The personal struggles and persecution of Jeremiah as a prophet are revealed in greater depth and detail than those of any other Old Testament prophet.
3. It is permeated with the sadness, heartache and sobs of the "weeping prophet" over Judah's rebellion. His deepest grief was God's hurt.
4. One of its key words is "backsliding" (used 5 times), or "unfaithful" (used 10 times).
5. Its greatest single theological revelation is the concept of the "new covenant," which God would establish with his faithful people at a future time of restoration (31:31-34).
6. There are more references to the nation of Babylon in Jeremiah's prophecies (164) than in the remainder of the Bible.

New Testament Fulfillment

The foremost use of Jeremiah in the New Testament concerns his prophecy of a "new covenant."
(Look at 31:31-34)

Jesus is the Good Shepherd and the Righteous Branch of David (*Jer. 23:1-8; Matt. 21:8-9; John 10:1-18; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21*)

Great weeping in Ramah (*Jer. 31:15*) was fulfilled at the time when Herod attempted to destroy the baby Jesus (*Matt. 2:17-18*)

Messianic zeal for the purity of God's house (*Jer. 7:11*), was demonstrated in Jesus' cleansing of the temple (*Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46*).

Lamentations

In Lamentations, Jesus is the Righteous Branch.

Jeremiah wrote a series of five laments to express his intense sorrow and emotional pain over Jerusalem's tragic devastation

Each of these five was traditionally read at a set time in the Jewish liturgical year (ninth day of Abib—mid July), when the Jews commemorated the destruction of Jerusalem.

Each of the five laments are complete in themselves. These are grief-filled poems.

1. The first one describes Jerusalem's devastation and the prophet's lament over it as he cries out to God in anguish of soul.
2. In the second lament, Jeremiah describes the cause of this devastation as God's wrath toward a rebellious people who refused to repent. Judah's enemy was God's instrument of judgment.
3. The next poem urges the nation to remember that God is indeed merciful and faithful, and that He is good to those whose hope is in Him.
4. The fourth one reiterates the themes of the previous three.
5. In the final poem, after a confession of Judah's sin and need for mercy, Jeremiah petitions God to restore His people to His favor.

New Testament Fulfillment

Though Lamentations is nowhere quoted in the New Testament, it does have direct relevance for those who believe in Christ.

Like Romans 1:18-3:20, these five chapters call believers to reflect on the seriousness of sin and the certainty of divine judgment. At the same time, they remind us that the cause of the compassion and mercy of the Lord, salvation is available for those who repent of their sins and turn to him.

The prophet's tears call to mind the tears of Jesus Christ, who wept over the sins of Jerusalem as He foresaw its coming destruction at the hands of the Romans (*Matt. 23:37-38; Luke 13:34-35; 19:41-44*)

What is the definition of a prophet?

A prophet is one who is called by God, given God's words, and sent with God's authority. The work of the prophet is recognized by God's authoritative word. It is not to be confused with the mystical or clairvoyant means often used by others who also claim to be prophets. These could be labeled as ***cult prophets***. (*They Spoke from God*, by William C. Williams, p. 692).

Ezekiel

In Ezekiel, Jesus is the Son of Man.

Nebuchadnezzar took Jewish captives from Jerusalem to Babylon in three stages:

1. In 605 BC, select Jewish youth were deported to Babylon, among whom were Daniel and his three friends.
2. In 597 BC, 10,000 captives were taken to Babylon, among whom was Ezekiel.
3. In 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar's forces totally destroyed both the city and the temple, with most of its surviving inhabitants carried off to Babylon. Ezekiel's prophetic ministry occurred during the darkest hour of Old Testament history.

Ezekiel's name means, "God strengthens," and he was from a priestly family. In fact, he was in priestly training for serve in the temple when he was taken captive to Babylon. He was about the age of 17 when Daniel was deported, making the two men virtually the same age. By the time Ezekiel arrived in Babylon, Daniel was already well-known as a man of extraordinary prophetic wisdom. Ezekiel refers to him by name three times in his book.

14:14, "even if these three men—Noah, Daniel and Job—were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign Lord."

14:20, "as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness."

28:3, "Are you wiser than Daniel? Is no secret hidden from you?"

Unlike Daniel, Ezekiel was married and lived as a private citizen among the Jewish exiles by the Kebar River.

The purpose of Ezekiel's prophecies was primarily two-fold:

1. To deliver God's message of judgment to apostate Judah and Jerusalem (*chs. 1-24*) and to seven foreign nations around her (*chs. 25-32*).
2. To sustain the faith of God's remnant in exile concerning the restoration of His covenant people and the final glory of His kingdom (*chs. 33-48*).

The prophet also emphasized the personal responsibility of each individual before God rather than passing off the exilic judgment as simply the result of their ancestors' sins.

7 major features characterize the book of Ezekiel:

1. It abounds in mysterious visions, daring parables and weird symbolic actions as media for God's prophetic revelation.
2. Its contents are carefully arranged and dated; it contains more dates than any other OT prophetic book.
3. Two distinctive phrases occur throughout the book—
“Then they will know that I am the Lord” (65 times)
“The glory of the Lord” (19 times)
4. Ezekiel is characteristically addressed by God as “Son of man” or “watchman.”
5. This book records two extraordinary visions of the temple—one as desecrated and awaiting destruction (*chs. 8-11*), and the other as purified and perfectly restored (*chs. 40-48*).
6. More than any other prophet, Ezekiel was required by God to identify himself personally with the prophetic word by acting it out in prophetic symbolism.
7. Ezekiel emphasizes the individual's personal responsibility and accountability to God.

New Testament Fulfillment

The message of chapters 33-48 essentially concerns God's future redemptive work as revealed in the New Testament. It speaks not only of Israel's physical restoration to their land, but also of a final future restoration that involves the full realization of God's destiny for spiritual Israel in relation to God's glory in power in the temple (worship), and God's destiny for the nations as a result of missions.

Daniel

In Daniel, Jesus is the Fourth Man in the Fire.

Daniel would have been a teenager when the events of chapter 1 began, and in his late 80's when receiving his visions in chapters 9-12. The book records events from Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of Jerusalem (605 BC), to the third year of Cyrus (536 BC). Thus, the historical setting for the book is Babylon during the 70-year Babylonian captivity prophesied by Jeremiah.

Jer. 25:11, “This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.”

He is the OT counterpart of John the Beloved. Both received apocalyptic revelations in the last years of their elderly lives.

Perhaps Daniel was a descendent of King Hezekiah. Certainly he was from an upper-class educated family in Jerusalem, for Nebuchadnezzar would not have selected young foreigners from a lower class for his royal court.

Daniel's success in Babylon is attributed to:

1. His transparent integrity of character;
2. His diligence in praying, fasting, the Word and holy intimacy with God;
3. His prophetic wisdom and gifts;
4. God's interventions that resulted in his rapid advancement to places of prominence and responsibility.

Purpose of this book

1. To reassure the OT covenant people that their judgment of captivity under Gentile nations was not to be their permanent destiny.
2. To bequeath to God's people throughout history, the prophetic visions of God's sovereignty over nations and the final triumph of His kingdom in the earth.

Special Features

1. It is the shortest of the four major prophetic books and the most read and studied of all the OT prophets.
2. In prophetic passages of the NT, Daniel is quoted or alluded to more often than any other OT book.
3. It is "the Apocalypse" of the OT, as the book of Revelation is of the NT, revealing great themes of prophecy that are vitally important to the end-time church.
4. It contains the most detailed prophetic summary of history in the OT. It is the only OT prophecy to set the time of the Messiah's first advent. (9:24-27)
5. It discloses more about its author than any other OT prophetic writing (with the possible exception of Jeremiah).
6. It contains the Bible's foremost model of intercession for the restoration of God's people, based on the inspired promises of God's Word.
7. The powerful testimonies about Daniel and his friends are among the best-loved and most memorable stories in the Bible.
8. The drama of "the handwriting on the wall" at Belshazzar's banquet has made that phrase a proverbial part of human language to this day wherever there is a Jewish and/or a Christian presence in the world.

New Testament Fulfillment

Much of Daniel's history and prophecy reappears in the prophetic passages in the Gospels, Letters and Revelation.

Daniel's prophecy about the coming Messiah includes a description of Him as:

1. The huge rock that would crush earthly kingdoms (2:34-35, 45)
2. The Son of Man, who would be given dominion, glory and a kingdom by the Ancient of Days (7:13-14)
3. "The Anointed One, the ruler," who would come and then be cut off (9:25-26).

Some interpreters believe that Daniel's vision in 10:5-9 is a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ (*Rev. 1:12-16*).

Daniel's prophetic themes are more fully developed in the New Testament:

1. The great tribulation and the antichrist
2. The second coming of our Lord.
3. The triumph of God's kingdom
4. The resurrection of the righteous and the wicked
5. The day of judgment

The lives of Daniel and his three friends demonstrate the NT teaching about personal separation from sin and the world (living as lights in the unbelieving world by not participating in its spirit and ways.)