

## **Isaiah 1:1-10**

### **Isaiah Summary [by Jay Smith](#)**

“The book of Isaiah is Narrative History, Prophetic Oracle, and even a Parable (*chapter 5*). The prophet Isaiah wrote it at approximately 700 B.C. (Chapters 40-66, written later in his life approx. 681 B.C.). Isaiah is the first book in the section called Major Prophets. They are called Major Prophets because of the large amount of material they wrote not because their message was more important than any other prophet’s was. Key personalities are Isaiah, his two sons, Shearjashub and Maher-shalal-jash-baz.

Isaiah contains some of the most incredible prophecies of any book. It contains foreknowledge, in incredible details about the Messiah, and the future reign of Jesus Christ. The purpose of the book of Isaiah was to call God’s nation, the nation of Judah, back to faithfulness and to declare the coming Messiah “Immanuel”. God calls and commissions His prophet to declare to Judah and Israel condemnation, conviction, and ultimately great hope.

- In Chapters 1-39, Isaiah points out the sins of both North and South Kingdoms. He then declares severe punishment to them and all the neighboring nations around them, “*Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from My sight Cease to do evil*” (1:16). He proclaims great hope of the coming Savior, “*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel*” (7:14), this passage was fulfilled in Matthew 1:22-24, in the New Testament.
- Chapters 40-55, speak of the return and restoration after the exile from Babylon. Isaiah repeatedly claims the premise, “*There is no God beside Me*” (44:6,8; 45:5,6,14,18,21). There is also another foretelling of the Messiah, who will come and bring new life through His death, “*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth*” (53:7).
- In chapters 56-66, Isaiah writes of the new Heavens and Earth, This is that great reward for all those who trust and obey God. He proclaims the hope for the afflicted and judgment for the evil. “*For*

*behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be remembered or come to mind" (65:17)."*

Sixty six chapters make it a daunting task to move through in a Survey style, but we'll try and get through it as we stop periodically with some of the more famous passages.

The first chapter sets the stage for what is to follow. And the stage is one of condemnation and wrath for an unrepentant people called out by God to follow Him.

Isaiah begins with where this entire book comes from.

**Isaiah 1:1-2** <sup>NAU</sup> The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. <sup>2</sup> Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks,

Visions in the bible often enable the one receiving a word from the Lord to actually see and hear those things that God wants to convey to His prophet. Abram is one who had received visions from God.

**Genesis 15:1-6** <sup>NAU</sup> After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup> Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir." <sup>4</sup> Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." <sup>5</sup> And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." <sup>6</sup> Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

So, in this particular vision Abram hears from the Lord and sees things that God reveals to him. Notice too, that in this vision God actually moves Abram from one place to another to show him something different.

We see this in verse 5. And He took him outside. Now, if this vision is simply a big movie screen or picture inside Abrams head, as God reveals certain things to Abram, the Lord would not have to move Abram anywhere.

So, what appears to be happening in this vision is God's actual presence with Abram as the Lord shows him certain things both inside a house and then out under the stars as Abram is literally moved from one location to another.

So, the reason this can be called a vision is not because it is some magical make believe environment where people are simply dreaming about these things, rather it is a vision because of the supernatural agent who is making this communication possible, namely the Creator God of the universe.

Now, there are means of communication where God will speak through dreams but that is not what a vision is. In fact, both visions and dreams are the main means by which God tells us that He will speak to His prophets.

**Numbers 12:6** <sup>6</sup> He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream.

And so, when we come to Isaiah, we see that God has chosen to reveal certain things to the prophet through visions where he hears actual words of God and sees actual stars as God directs his eyes heavenward.

The time line for Isaiah's ministry takes place during the reigns of four different kings of Judah, which is the southern kingdom, from about 762 BC to around 680 BC.

It is during the ministry of Isaiah that the northern kingdom of Israel is taken into captivity by Assyria. Other prophets of God writing during the time of Isaiah's ministry are Micah, Amos and Hosea, all of whom also bring the word of the Lord in judgment upon His people.

So, we begin with God's very words to Israel in the beginning of Isaiah's vision.

**Isaiah 1:2-7** <sup>2</sup> Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, "Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me. <sup>3</sup> "An ox knows its owner, And a donkey its master's manger, *But Israel does not know, My people do not understand.*" <sup>4</sup> Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him. <sup>5</sup> Where will you be stricken again, As you continue in *your* rebellion? The whole head

is sick And the whole heart is faint. <sup>6</sup> From the sole of the foot even to the head There is nothing sound in it, *Only* bruises, welts and raw wounds, Not pressed out or bandaged, Nor softened with oil. <sup>7</sup> Your land is desolate, Your cities are burned with fire, Your fields-- strangers are devouring them in your presence; It is desolation, as overthrown by strangers.

**Notice that the Lord is speaking judgment against Israel. But why do you suppose He begins by the declaration, “Listen O heavens, and hear, O earth?”**

God’s judgment in this context may be directed to a particular group of people for a particular reason, but it does not exclude the rest of the world, who also fall into the category of not following the one true God.

This message of judgment is for all people, as God draws attention to Israel, and this same theme is seen again as Paul explains that no one escapes God’s judgment including the household of God who claims to know God but abandons Him as does Israel in our passage.

**1 Peter 4:15-18** <sup>15</sup> Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; <sup>16</sup> but if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. <sup>17</sup> ***For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God;*** and if *it begins* with us first, what *will be* the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup> AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER?

What Peter is describing is what Paul teaches about the church in the latter days, who names the name of Christ, but who abandons the one true God and Savior.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-7** <sup>NAU</sup> Now we request you, brethren, ***with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,*** <sup>2</sup> that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one in any way deceive you, for ***it will not come unless the apostasy comes first,*** and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. <sup>5</sup> Do you not

remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? <sup>6</sup> And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. <sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains *will do so* until he is taken out of the way.

What Paul is describing here is an apostasy.

**And what is an apostasy in the context of the church to whom Paul is addressing?**

It is an abandoning of the faith. And by default if the faith is abandoned it must have been associated with the church which was given the faith by Jesus Christ.

**Can a true Christian apostasize?**

**Romans 8:38-39** <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Then who apostasizes?**

**1 John 2:19-22** <sup>19</sup> They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us. <sup>20</sup> But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. <sup>21</sup> I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. <sup>22</sup> Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

I don't know if you've noticed but this is precisely what Isaiah is describing. Let's look at it again.

**Isaiah 1:4** <sup>4</sup> Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him.

Do you see it?

God has explained it in three ways: abandoning the Lord; despising the Holy One of Israel; turning away from Him. This is what apostasy is.

And so, what we see here in Isaiah is a precursor of what will happen in the last days where that group, called the church, will abandon, despise and turn away from the Holy One of Israel, the Israel of God.

And the only way this can happen is if these people are still in the church as they usurp the authority of Christ who is the true head.

This is what Paul was speaking of when describing the man of lawlessness.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** <sup>3</sup> Let no one in any way deceive you, for it ,*(the return of Christ), will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

Listen to that again, and then remember the words Isaiah speaks to the nation of Israel.

**Isaiah 1:2-4** <sup>2</sup> Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, "Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me. <sup>3</sup> "An ox knows its owner, And a donkey its master's manger, *But Israel does not know, My people do not understand.*" <sup>4</sup> Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him.

God clearly identifies this group as "Sons I have reared and brought up."

### **What group is that?**

And yet, this nation of Israel, according to Isaiah, is a sinful nation that has abandoned, or apostasized from the Lord.

But notice what Isaiah says of this people, this nation of Israel.

**Isaiah 1:3** <sup>3</sup> "An ox knows its owner, And a donkey its master's manger, *But Israel does not know, My people do not understand.*"

**Well, if an ox knows its owner and a donkey its master's manger, what does this suggest about these two animals' response to their master when he calls them?**

They immediately respond because of the one who owns them and calls them.

**If Israel does not know or understand who her master is, or respond to His call, what does this tell us as to whom they belong?**

What Isaiah is describing here of the nation of Israel, almost 700 years before the birth of Christ, is the identical spiritual condition of the nation of Israel during the ministry of the Messiah.

**John 8:42-44** <sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. <sup>43</sup> "Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. <sup>44</sup> "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

**How is it possible for God to call the nation of Israel a group that belongs to Satan and still have some within that group follow Him?**

Because He calls out a remnant from that group.

**Isaiah 1:8-10** <sup>8</sup> The daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard, Like a watchman's hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. <sup>9</sup> Unless the LORD of hosts Had left us a few survivors, We would be like Sodom, We would be like Gomorrah. <sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the instruction of our God, You people of Gomorrah.

The larger group, Israel, is identified as Sodom and Gomorrah, two cities that were judged and burned out of existence.

But in God's mercy and grace He left a few survivors. Not that a few survived because of their survival skills, but because God left a few survivors. It's all God. Just ask Lot how that worked out when he wanted to stay in Sodom. God forcefully took him out of there to save his life and that of his family.

In the same way, the church will also find itself in the same situation in the latter days and again God will set aside a few survivors from the larger group, still identified as the church, in those days.

**1 Timothy 4:1-6** <sup>NAU</sup> But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to

deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,<sup>2</sup> by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,<sup>3</sup> men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.<sup>4</sup> For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;<sup>5</sup> for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.<sup>6</sup> In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

This falling away, this apostasy, is characterized by a number of things as these false teachers pay attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.

Let that sink in. God specifically says that in the later times this will be norm in the church in those days. In other words, the word of God will not be the final authority in the church in those days.

Now, there have been periods in the church's history where this has already occurred; the Roman Catholic church would be one example as they still insist on the ecclesiastical authority of the leaders of Rome to be the final arbiter of what the word of God means.

So, when they teach that the Pope is carrying out the power of Peter to speak infallibly on behalf of God, they are not taking that teaching from exegeting the word of God. They simply assume that power.

When they teach that the sacramental system of Rome, especially the Mass in the bloodless sacrifice that takes place at each Mass, in the eucharist, as a means to your salvation, they are not taking that from a proper teaching of the word of God.

These are doctrines of demons as they pay attention to deceitful spirits. But since the time of the Reformation there has been another group that calls itself the church whereby they also name the name of Christ as they teach salvation alone through faith in Christ alone.

These people protested against the established church of their day thus they were and are identified as Protestants. But the Protestant church has now become the established church and within its walls it too has begun to abandon the teaching of the word of God as they replace it with their own brand of doctrines of demons.

This includes every major doctrine, not the least of which is the doctrine of soteriology, the doctrine of salvation.

There are Protestant seminaries where the blood of Christ is downplayed or in some instances, denied. Do the names Princeton, Yale, Harvard come to mind?

These were Institutions that were originally erected for the ministry of Christ. In fact, Harvard, the oldest Institution of higher learning in America, has these words flanked on the Johnston Gate at Harvard.

“After God had carried us safe to New-England, and wee had builded our houses, provided necessaries for our livelihood, rear’d convenient places for Gods worship, and setled the Civill Government: One of the next things we longed for, and looked after was to advance Learning and perpetuate it to Posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust. And as we were thinking and consulting how to effect this great work, it pleased Got to stir up the heart of one Mr. Harvard (a godly gentleman and a lover of learning; then living amongst us) to give one-half of his estate (it being in all about £1,700) towards the erecting of a Colledge, and all his library. After him, another gave £300; others after them cast in more; and the public hand of the State added the rest. The Colledge was by common consent appointed to be at Cambridge (a place very pleasant and accommodate), and is called (according to the name of the first founder) Harvard Colledge.”

*"New England's First Fruits" (1643)*

Yale was created in 1701, in major part, due to what many thought were the liberal leanings of Harvard at that time as they felt the word of God was not the primary source for faith and godliness.

All of these have bowed the knee to modernism and a man-centered approach to God and His word. And what we will see as we go through the book of Isaiah is that there is nothing new under the sun, and if it were not God calling out a people for Himself and setting that remnant aside, every religious institution that names the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and yes the name of Christ, will ultimately end up in the same place, abandoning the God of Israel to set themselves up in the temple of God called the church, to their own destruction.