

Isaiah

The Willing One

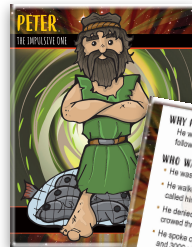
Who was this person?

- Isaiah was the son of Amoz. Isaiah's name means, "the Lord Saves".
- Isaiah was a prophet who lived in Jerusalem and spoke for the Lord. The role of prophet was instituted during the days of Samuel, the last of the judges. Prophets like priests worked as God's special representatives. The role of the prophet was to speak for God, confronting the people and their leaders with God's promises, judgement and commands. Prophets weren't very well liked because they usually would deliver 'bad news' to people, however they faithfully declared the message God prompted them to deliver.
- The Old Testament book of Isaiah that bears his name was written by him between the years of 700 B.C. and 681 B.C.

What is this person known for?

- Isaiah was an Old Testament prophet who served a country that was in trouble. Judah (Israel) went through 4 kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah during Isaiah's time as well as three prophets; Hosea, Amos, Micah who ministered to the people of this nation.
- There are many examples in scripture where we can read about God calling people into ministry. Isaiah had a remarkably, divine encounter that proceeded his invitation into ministry (Isaiah 6:1-8). Isaiah didn't feel he was worthy to do what God asked. But God removed Isaiah's sin making him ready to serve. Isaiah was about to deliver a message that the people didn't want to hear. He was to call the nation of Judah to repent from their sin God or else God's Judgement would fall. He was also to the people of God is salvation that was coming through the Messiah.
- Many of the prophecies in the book of Isaiah contain predictions that tell of a soon-to-occur event as well as events that would take place in the future.
- Isaiah told the people that a king would be coming. He told the people this king would be a descendent of Jesse. Jesse was the father of one of Israel's greatest Kings, King David (Isaiah 11:1-4). After hundreds of years of, war, death, exile, hardship and suffering, hearing Isaiah say that this king will bring about a peaceful kingdom, with harmony was music to their ears!

Making The Bible Come Alive





Unfortunately what they didn't know, is it would be 700 years before "Immanuel" (Jesus) would be born. You and I are still waiting for his Kingdom of peace and harmony to be fully established, that day is coming soon!

- The book of Isaiah was uniquely written using two styles of writing: poetry and prose. The book of Isaiah also has two distinct parts.

Part One

Words of Judgement (Chapters 1-39). Isaiah bring the message of Judgement to Judah, Israel and the other surrounding nations who didn't follow the ways of God. Isaiah's warnings are intended to purify the people and help them get 'back on track' with God's messages, however they continue to ignore the warnings Isaiah shares. Isaiah continually reminds the people that there are consequences to ignoring God's rules.

Part Two

Words of Hope/Comfort (Chapters 40-66). Isaiah presents themes of forgiveness, comfort and hope. This message of hope points people to the coming of Jesus-The Messiah. The book of Isaiah gives reference to the Messiah more than any other book in the Old Testament. Isaiah is referred to twenty times in the New Testament because so many of his prophecies about Jesus came true. These chapters are filled with hope as Isaiah unfolds God's promise of future blessings to come because of Jesus.

- There are some very important themes in the book of Isaiah.

HOLINESS

God is the Ultimate to be praised! There is no one and nothing higher, mightier, stronger and more worthy to be praise above all He has created. God alone is perfect and sinless and set the standard for what is right and what is wrong. Because God is perfect and sinless, He is the only one who can help us with our sin. We must never think that God is ordinary, He is holy and just and deserves our praise and honour.

(Isaiah 1:4, 5:16, 24; 6:1-8; 10:17-20; 30:11-17; 41:14, 16, 20; 43:3, 14-28; 45:11; 63:10-18)

PUNISHMENT

Because God is holy he has set a standard for how we need to treat one another. He promised that He would punish the nations for turning their back on him unless they repented

and turned from their idol worship. He gave them numerous chances and they paid the consequences. Trust and obey for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey are lyrics to an old hymn and it sums up God's plan for a 'good life'. When we choose to disobey and sin we suffer the consequences.

(Isaiah 1:24-25;3:1-4:1; 5:1-30; 7:17-25; 8:5-8: 10:5-34; 14:24-32; 18:1-7;28:23-39;32:9-14; 40:2; 51:17)

SALVATION/MESSIAH

God promised to send the Messiah as that would be the only way for the people of the world be redeemed. Christ's life was foretold by the prophet Isaiah 700 year before he was born. It is through Christ's sacrifice the promises of redemption and restoration are fulfilled. Jesus died to save people from sin. For the believer Jesus provides all we need as he is our wonderful counsellor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and our Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Hallelujah! in Jesus we have all we will ever need.

(Isaiah 1:16-20; 7:9; 28:16; 30:15; 42:1-7; 43:25; 44:22; 45:6,22-24; 49:1-9; 50:4-11; 51:21-22; 52:13-53:12)

HOPE

Heaven is a beautiful place God has promised for his followers. It is a place that will be free of sickness, trouble, war, heartache and all those things that weigh us down on this earth. We can have Hope to endure these challenges on earth because we believe that Jesus is coming again to take us home to Heaven. As difficult as our current situation may be, we need to continually show the love and compassion of Christ to the people around them. It is through our words and actions that we can tell people about the mercy and love of God. We are called to share about the Hope (eternal life) that we have because of Jesus with our friends and family. We need to pray that they too will receive the Hope that is found in Christ. (Isaiah 8:11-22; 9:10; 10:20-27; 11:1-12:6; 25:1-26:21; 31:5-7; 37:21-38; 40:1,31; 42:4; 49:23; 51:3,7; 57:18; 61:2; 66:13)

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PERSON HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN GOD'S STORY?

- **To remind us that God will punish evil.** God sees all things, our actions that are done in the open and those things that we think are done in secret. God has set a standard for living which he clearly has laid out in His word. When people disobey, sin and reject God there is a price to pay. There are consequences to our actions and there is punishment for evil. This isn't a new thing as we can see this to be true all the way back to when sin entered into the Garden of Eden. However, we don't have to be lost in our sin, God has made a way through Jesus for people to receive forgiveness for their sin.





- **To remind us what God says will last forever.** In this world we can see how quickly things can change. Baggy jeans, skinny jeans, pink hair, green hair, an ice cream cone, best friends one day and then someone new the next. We get to enjoy something for a little while and then a new thing comes along and the 'old' is forgotten or tossed to the curb. The people of Judah had endured so much change and instability that they were having a hard time trusting. Isaiah reminded them that sky and clouds were always there, but something even more permanent is God's word. Today, one thing that we can count on when every-thing around us seems unstable is God's Word. What God says in His Word will last forever. We can believe what He says will come to pass. After all, "God said, I believe and that settles it". (Isaiah 51:6)

- **To remind us God is with us.** Many times a Christmas we hear the word, "Immanuel" did you know that it means, GOD IS WITH US. The name Immanuel appears twice in the Old Testament (Isaiah 7:13-14) and once in the New Testament (Matthew 1:22-23) but it sure is one of the most comforting of all the names of Jesus. To know that God is with us in the scary times and well as the happy times.

- **To remind us to never forget what God has done.** When God delivered the children of Israel from years of slavery He reminded them to not forget what He had done for them. When times are tough we need to look back and remember God's goodness and faithfulness in our lives. Many times Israel would forget about God's provision in their lives and think it was all about their efforts. Pretty soon they would turn away from God and even begin worshipping idols. This made God angry. It is important for us to pray and thank God for his help every day. When we make 'thanking God' a priority it helps us remember that God is our source for every good thing. It also bolsters our faith in tough times, to remember how God helped us in the past and He will do it again to-day. He is faithful. (Isaiah 17:10-11; James 1:17; Colossians 3:17)

- **To remind us to praise God even when it is hard.** In the middle of a terrible time, God gave the people of Israel something to be thankful for. Isaiah told them to 'shout out loud' and praise the all-powerful God, regardless of things may look on the outside. It is so important to get our eyes off of the trouble around us. We should praise God because we trust God to workout the details and troubles in our lives. Praise is a very powerful weapon that a Christian needs to use everyday, not just save for Sunday when at church! (Isaiah 24:14-15)

- **To remind us that God is our strength.** In those times when life seems really overwhelming we need to remember to spend time with God through prayer, worship and bible reading. When we 'wait' on God our hearts are encouraged and we receive strength from the Lord to keep going. Isaiah compares our time with God to that of an eagle. You see an eagle flies on the currents of the wind, they don't have to flap their wings they simply appear to effortlessly soar. As we spend time with God we are able to rise above our circumstances and rest in what God is going to do. (Isaiah 40:31)
- **To remind us that God loves us.** As a prophet Isaiah spoke on behalf of God to the people. No one likes to receive bad news and the people of Judah were no different. Isaiah told them that God was disappointed with them and judgement would come (boo). However, he also told the people that he was sending One who would save them from their sins (yay!). When your parents have to discipline you for doing something wrong, it doesn't mean they no longer love you. Actually, it shows they do love you. God provided Jesus as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. (John 3:16)
- **To remind us that God is our leader.** Every team has a captain or a coach. Every musical band has a conductor. Without good leaders, it would be hard for a group of people to know what do and how to work together. God is really clear on how we need to live, He is also clear on what happens when we sin. God our leader has given us the perfect 'playbook or manual' it is called the Bible and we need to use it daily to help us live and make proper choices. We also need to trust the leader. Many times throughout the book of Isaiah he reassures the people of Israel that God will not abandon them. So, we don't need to be afraid because God will never leave us in our time of need and He will be there comfort us when we need it. (Isaiah 12:2, 40:1, 41:10; Isaiah 48.17, 57:1-2; Psalm 34:4)
- **To remind us to celebrate God's Goodness.** Isaiah said that one day the people would realize that God had shown them love, even though they had sinned. Their joy over God's goodness would cause them to give thanks and trust God. We can rejoice over God's goodness by praising God for the great things he has done. Having joy doesn't mean everything is perfect or always goes our way. Joy comes from our hearts when we realize that the God we serve a God who always does what is best for us. (1 John 4:7;17-19; Romans 5:5)
- **To remind us that God can use evil people for His Glory.** Cyrus was a young ambitious man that Isaiah claimed would be used by God. Cyrus was a Mede who came from an area which is a part of present day Iran. However, Cyrus was not a follower of Jehovah as he had been raised in a pagan nation which followed various idols.





Having been trained up in the worship of idols, he had heard about God yet he didn't know Him in a personal way. God desires that all people should come to faith in Him. However, God still used Cyrus to bring about His purposes and ultimately showing kindness to God's people, rebuilding the temple and seeing their freedom from captivity. (Isaiah 44-45)

• **To remind us that the day of the Lord is approaching.**

Many of Isaiah's prophecies have come to pass. However the one great message that the church of Jesus Christ is anticipating is the second coming. Isaiah talked about how the Messiah would come and set up a new Kingdom. The people of that day, were hopeful that this new kingdom would be established right away because they wanted freedom from that horrible conditions that they were living under. However, we believe that the return of Jesus Christ is yet to happen. Scripture reminds us to watch for the signs to remind us that his coming is near. (Isaiah 27:12-13 ; Matthew 24; Revelation 11:15)

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Pose the following two questions to your children, one at a time. Allow for interaction and discussion, letting them share their thoughts while you guide the conversation.

- What life lessons can I learn from this Bible character about how I should and should not live?
- Based on what I have learned from this Bible character, how can I live in a way that is pleasing to God.

MORE IN GOD'S WORD

Find a copy of a printed newspaper or ask a parent to go online with you to find a digital version of a local or national newspaper. Read some of the headlines and the key articles in the news. Can you think of what God's Word says and see how it aligns with what you are reading in the news?

- Does the news talk of fighting or war?
- Does the news speak of plagues and sicknesses?
- Are there articles of people who do not treat one another as they should?
- Are there reports of people who have been fined or thrown in jail because of sins they have committed?

We should always read the newspaper in one hand, and God's Word in the other hand. Or read the news on the computer screen with our Bible laid open in front of us.

It's important to know what the Scriptures say so we can understand what is going on in the world and how it relates to what God has said, through His prophets, that will still come to pass.

We must never be fear-filled as we read the daily news. We trust in God that He is always with us and will bring us through. His plans for us are always perfect. Revelation 12:11, says this, *'They gained the victory over him on account of the blood of the Lamb and the word of their witness. Love for their own lives didn't make them afraid to die.'* (ESV)

Think of Paul the apostle's words in Philippians 1:21 where he says, after all kinds of hardships, *"For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better."* (NLT) That is the kind of attitude we should take into every day, knowing that our lives belong to the Lord, and that He has perfectly numbered our days on this earth. Life on this earth is limited to a certain length of time, but life with Jesus in Heaven is eternal—that means forever!! Let's look forward to that great day with joy and anticipation!

