



"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME"
ISAIAH 61:1

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THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

CHAPTER 58

AND HIS NAME
WILL BE CALLED
WONDERFUL COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING FATHER,
PRINCE OF
PEACE.
ISAIAH 9:6

Isaiah is called "The Book of Salvation." The name *Isaiah* means "the salvation of the Lord" or "the Lord is salvation." Isaiah is the first book containing the writings of the prophets of the Bible. And the author, Isaiah, who is called the Prince of Prophets, shines above all the other writers and prophets of Scripture. His mastery of the language, his rich and vast vocabulary, and his poetic skill have earned him the title, "Shakespeare of the Bible." He was educated, distinguished, and privileged, yet remained a deeply spiritual man. He was committed to obedience over the long haul of his 55-60 year ministry as a prophet of God. He was a true patriot who loved his country and his people. Strong tradition suggests that he died a martyr's death under the reign of King Manasseh by being placed within the hollow of a tree trunk and sawed in two.

Isaiah's calling as a prophet was primarily to the nation of Judah (the southern kingdom) and to Jerusalem, urging the people to repent from their sins and return to God. He also foretold the coming of the Messiah and the salvation of the Lord. Many of his prophecies predicted events that occurred in Isaiah's near future, yet at the same time they foretold the events of the distant future (such as the coming of the Messiah), and even some events still to come in the last days (such as the second coming of Christ).

In summary, the message of Isaiah is that salvation comes from God—not man. God alone is Savior, Ruler and King.

Commentary on the book of Isaiah is by noted theologian Rev. William G. Most (1914-1999). His contributions to theology have been recognized all over the world. He published 12 books and a host of articles on topics ranging from biblical studies to Mariology and Latin grammar.

Book of Isaiah

Summary of Chapter 58

True Fasting and True religion. Chapter 58. Summary and Comments

God speaks: Shout out to the people that they are rebellious. They seek God, and expect Him to hear. They want to know precisely the <external> things required: cf. Zech 7. Cf. also the distressing nit-picking they went in for in regard to Levitical Purity, as explained in J. Neusner, <Invitation to the Talmud> (Harper & Row, 1984, esp pp. 53-62) On p. 53 Neusner, a great Jew, calls such things "monumental nonsense." For example, on pp. 75-76 he tells of the debate between the Houses of Hillel and Shammai -- the chief schools at the time of Christ - over washing hands. Shammai said they wash hands before mixing the cup: the liquid on the outer surface of the cup might be made unclean on account of the hands, and then in turn that would make the cup unclean. But Hillel said that the outer surfaces of the cup are always

considered unclean. Neusner explains that hands are presumed to be unclean, but they are only in "the second remove of uncleanness." So they would make the Heave-offering unclean but could not make vessels unclean. But they do make liquids unclean, and the liquids' uncleanness is in "the first remove." So liquids will make the cup unclean.

But now comes the real explanation why God does not hear them: On the very day on which they fast they commit uncharitable and unjust acts against workers and the poor. Their fasting ends in quarrels - excessive physical stress can weaken one, and make him quarrelsome.

Instead, God wants the corporal works of mercy. They should rend their hearts, not their garments: Cf. Joel 2:13. If they do this, then their light and their healing will come quickly. When they call, God will answer quickly. They will have the name of those who rebuild ancient walls -- apparently after the ruin of the destruction of Jerusalem in 596 and 586 BC.

They must also keep the Sabbath and instead of considering it a burden - cf. Amos 8:5, where the wicked are eager to see the end of the Sabbath so they can sell their grain, and use false measures.

Then they will find their joy in the Lord. They will ride triumphant over the heights of the land: cf. Dt. 21-23.

End of Chapter 58