



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

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

CHAPTER 23

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 23

Prophecy against Phoenicia. Summary and Comments. Chapter 23

Isaiah asks the ships of Tarshish to wail for Tyre, where they might have come in, is destroyed. Tarshish is probably in Spain, part of the far flung mercantile empire of Phoenicia.

He says they learned of the ruin when they came to top Cyprus on their return voyage. Grain from Egypt had come there on such ships. He calls the Nile Shihor. Tyre is called a fortress of the sea. Part of Tyre was built on a rocky island near the coast. Tyre had given crowns - that is, it seems that some of its settlers became kings or powerful rulers. So they should wail for Tyre.

Then he asks Tyre to till its land, to become agricultural instead of mercantile as it had been, The words "Daughter of Tarshish" and Daughter of Sidon" mean merely those cities, called daughters. The word <of> is a usage like that in our expression the city of Washington. It does not mean Washington has a city, but merely the city that is Washington. Similarly we often find the words "Daughter of Zion", which means merely Zion.

The text of verse 13 is in poor condition. It could be translated: Look at the land of the Kittim [the people of Cyprus] he made it a heap of ruins". Or: "Look at the land of the Babylonians." which Assyria has struck. If we take the second translation given here, it would refer to the attack on Babylon by Sargon in 710 or by Sennacherib in 703, both of which came before Sennacherib struck Tyre in 701.

Then the prophet says Tyre will be desolate for 70 years, the span of a king's life. But then Tyre will return to her work as a prostitute, improper commerce with the nations. The profits of Tyre will go to Jerusalem.

The fulfillment of these prophecies began under Shalmaneser of Assyria. The seventy years probably means the period 700 to 630 when Assyria would not let Tyre engage in business activities. Nabuchadnezzar besieged the new city of Tyre for 13 years. How much success he had is not clear: Ezek 29:17-18 seems to imply he took it, but Ezek 26 seems to imply the opposite. But neither passage is fully clear. Alexander the Great did take the city after a siege of seven months. Then 8000 inhabitants were killed outright, and 30, 000 were sold as slaves. Still later, Tyre again prospered, but not as before.

As for wealth coming to Jerusalem: David had arranged with King Hiram to supply materials and workers to build the great temple, constructed under his son Solomon. Still later, by authorization of Cyrus, conqueror of Babylon, the people of Tyre and Sidon helped the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 3:7).

End of Chapter 23