



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

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THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

CHAPTERS 15-16

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 15-16

Prophecy against Moab, Summary and Comments. Chapters 15-16

Moab was a small state east of the Dead Sea, people descended from Lot (cf. Gen 19:37). They were related to Israelites, but not subject to them.

Isaiah mentions quite a number of place names, cities that are destroyed in a night, that is, suddenly. The locations of many of these are not known. But the point of the prophecy is still clear.

Every head is shaved, every beard is cut off. Among the Israelites to shave a beard was a sign of disgrace (2 Sam 10:4-5) or mourning (Is 15:2; Jer 41:5) or sadness (Ezra 9:3). Israelites, like Semites in general had full rounded beards. Philistines and Egyptians were usually clean shaven. Leviticus 19:27 and 21:5 says the Israelites should not shave or trim the edges of the beards -- too closely resembling gentile mourning customs (Dt 14:1). They also avoided the gentile practice of sacrificing hair to deities.

In 15:5 Isaiah shows a feeling of sympathy for Moab, something unusual in a prophet for an outside people. They flee as far as Zoar (SE tip of Dead Sea). The rulers of Moab seem to have sent lambs to acknowledge the over-lordship of the King of Judah, in hope he would accept them as refugees. The reply from Jerusalem may be the lines 4b-5: Jerusalem is protected by God, and the Messiah will come. This reminds us of Is 9:7, speaking of the extension of the power of the future Messiah.

The refugees go as far as the Ravine of the Poplars, the southernmost boundary of Moab. Then they go into the land of Edom. The lament is heard everywhere. The waters of Dimon (or Dibon) seem to be those of the nearby Arnon river - they already run red with the blood of the slain, and worse things are yet to come. The enemy is as fierce as a lion, and about to fall on Moab.

Next Isaiah speaks of the reason for the crushing of Moabites pride and insolence against Judah's God.

Remarkably, again Isaiah weeps for Moab in 16:9.

But in 16:13-14 he reports the Lord has said that within three years, counted as carefully as a servant bound by contract would count them, Moab will be despised, with few feeble survivors.

The fulfillment came fully with the Messiah, and there was a foreshadowing of Him in the incorporation of Ruth of Moab into the lineage of the coming King Messiah.

End of Chapters 15-16