

# The Prophets

Lesson #13

Isaiah 1:1-12:6

## Outline

### I. **Denunciation (1:1-39:8)**

#### A. Denunciation of Judah (1:1-12:6).

1. The condemnation of Judah (1:1-5:30).
  - a) God's indictment (1:1-23).
  - b) God's promise of restoration after judgment (1:24-31).
  - c) The Messiah's reign and judgments upon the people (2:1-4:6).
  - d) The parable of the vineyard (5:1-30).
2. The commission of Isaiah (6:1-13).
3. The coming of the Messiah (7:1-12:6).
  - a) The sign of Immanuel (7:1-25).
  - b) The sign of Maher-shalal-hash-baz (8:1-22).
  - c) The sign of Messiah (9:1-7).
  - d) Judgment on Samaria (9:8-10:4).
  - e) Retribution of Assyria and return of Israel (10:5-34).
  - f) The rule of the Branch of Jesse (11:1-16).
  - g) A hymn of praise (12:1-6).

## Notes

### **Isaiah 1:1-5:30**

- God's indictment (1:1-23).
  - The corruption of the nation (1:1-9).
    - Although God had brought up Judah as a father raises his sons and had smitten them as a master flogs his servant who persists in disobeying to his own hurt, His people have persistently rebelled against Him.
    - The form of the rebuke is the "covenant lawsuit," in which God is the plaintiff, judge and jury, the prophet is His lawyer, Judah is the defendant, and the heavens and the earth are witnesses.
- Religious rites, performed with no heart, are useless (1:10-20).
  - Whereas vss. 2-9 come from a time when the cities of Judah are lying in ruins and Jerusalem is under siege, vss. 10-20 presuppose a period in which the Jews feel no danger of invasion.
  - The people live as immorally as did the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and they oppress the poor, the fatherless and the widow.
- The present moral corruption of the city (1:21-23).
  - For a while, Judah had been faithful, but now she has abandoned God by mistreating the poor and helpless.

- God cannot be silent and let his beloved “wife” destroy herself by such ungodly behavior.
- God’s promise of restoration after judgment (1:24-31).
  - The Jews had become a burden to the Lord by pretending to be faithful with their many sacrifices, feasts and prayers, while mistreating their fellowmen in daily life.
  - So the Lord announces that He will ease Himself of this burden by punishing His people.
- The Messiah’s reign and judgments upon the people (2:1-4:6).
  - The exaltation of God’s people (2:1-4).
    - From the dark picture of Zion as a forsaken shed in the midst of desolation and as an unfaithful wife, the prophet turns to the future and sees Zion glorified above all cities and nations.
    - The word “Zion” came to be used in prophecy to refer to the spiritual Zion to come, that is, the dwelling place of God among His redeemed people where they find security and peace.
  - The condition of God’s people in the present time (2:5-8).
    - As if smitten by the hard fist of reality, the prophet looks from the ideal of Israel’s future glory to the corruption of his days.
    - The accumulation of material wealth and power had led the Jews to forget their dependence on God.
  - A humbling of the people (2:9-11).
    - The sins leading to the aforementioned conditions would bring judgment upon all.
    - Because of their idolatry, their pride and arrogance, their accumulation of wealth and the consequent removal of God from their thoughts, the people must be brought low; the nation must be debased.
  - The day of the Lord in which God will be exalted (2:12-17).
    - The day of judgment will be a day chosen by the Lord; the execution of God’s wrath upon the wicked and the deliverance of the righteous.
    - The prophet enumerates four pairs of the high things that will be brought low when the day of the Lord shall fall.
  - The destruction of Judah’s idols (2:18-22).
    - All that man has looked to and prized as mighty and lofty, together with his own pride and haughtiness, will be abased.
    - When God shakes the earth, the people will cast even their most expensive idols to the moles and the bats which hide in burrows beneath the ground or in caves.

- Removal of the proud leaders of Judah (3:1-15).
  - The prophetic message moves from a threat that God is about to punish the people of Judah to a warning that He is about to punish the leaders.
  - The Lord does not place man's treatment of his fellows in a separate category of "social behavior," as the leaders of Judah did, but considers it man's "religion" (cf. James 1:27; 1 John 3:17-18).
- The women of Judah delight in pride and luxury (3:16-4:1).
  - The consuming passion of the wealthy wives of Judah's leaders is to possess things that please them at the moment.
  - They have no concern for Judah's apostasy or for the oppression of the poor. This is a symptom of a much more serious disease -- pride.
- The internal condition of the church when the Messiah reigns (4:2-6).
  - Isaiah 2-4 ends as it began, with an oracle of hope. Beyond the judgment that must come, Isaiah sees Jerusalem the redeemed, cleansed and purified.
  - Isaiah seeks to establish that beyond God's punishment is a restoration of the penitent faithful who will not fall away when judgment comes.
- The parable of the vineyard (5:1-30).
  - The song of the beloved and his vineyard (5:1-7).
    - Isaiah compares God's relationship to Judah with a husbandman's relationship to his vineyard.
    - Despite all that God did for His people, they were not grateful; they had their hearts set on getting all they could for themselves, no matter whom they hurt in the process.
  - Six woes and a threat of judgment (5:8-30).
    - Woe to greedy landowners (5:8-10).
    - Woe to heavy drinkers (5:11-17).
    - Woe to them who are enslaved to sin (5:18-19).
    - Woe to those who confuse moral distinctions (5:20).
    - Woe to the self-deceived (5:21).
    - Woe to the perverters of justice (5:22-23).
    - A terrifying judgment (5:24-30).

### ***Isaiah 6:1-13***

- Isaiah's vision of the Lord (6:1-5).
  - Isaiah's vision was a manifestation of the glory of God in human form, adapted to the capabilities of the finite creature.
  - The people of Judah were inclined to put complete confidence in earthly kings like Uzziah and Ahaz. But Isaiah realized that God is the only real King.

- The consecration of the prophet (6:6-7).
  - It is not the hot coal or the seraph that forgives and abolishes sin; we have in the vision a symbolic picture of Isaiah's recognition and acknowledgment of his own sins and God's forgiveness of those sins.
  - The prophet was ready to respond to the Lord's need of someone whom He could send and through whom He could reveal in future visions and revelations the Servant of God.
- The prophet's commission from God (6:8-13).
  - Though the people will hear the prophet's words, in their frame of mind they will neither understand nor perceive the truth and application of his message.
  - Dark and bleak as the picture may be, the Lord allows a ray of light to break through the menacing storm clouds; there will be a remnant that will escape.

### ***Isaiah 7:1-12:6***

- The sign of Immanuel (7:1-25).
  - The Syria-Israel alliance (7:1-2).
    - When the faithless Judean king Ahaz became aware of the fact that Syria and Israel were allies, he was greatly agitated.
    - The power of Syria and Ephraim could not compare to the power of God. Perfect love and trust cast out fear, but Ahaz and the people had neither.
  - Confrontation between belief and unbelief (7:3-9).
    - The presence of a boy with this name should have sent a signal to the king concerning God's intention. It should have caused him to heed Isaiah's message.
    - The prophet's attitude stands in stark contrast to that of the king: Isaiah displayed courageous faith, whereas Ahaz was filled with terror.
- The sign of Immanuel (7:10-17).
  - Ahaz did not want a sign because he did not want to believe; his mind was already made up.
  - The prophet announced an unusual birth of a special child who would be the sign to the house of David and of Israel.
  - Bringing into the world someone who is both God and man necessitates a special means of entrance. How this can be done is solved by a miraculous conception in the womb of a woman, in this case a virgin.
- The devastation from Assyria (7:18-25).
  - Still attempting to dissuade Ahaz from sending to Assyria for help, Isaiah describes the terrible consequences of such a decision for Judah.

- As a result of the Assyrian domination, the land which was once cultivated will be neglected.
- The sign of Maher-shalal-hash-baz (8:1-22).
  - The overthrow of Syria and Israel in the form of a symbolical name (8:1-4).
    - The prophet tells the people of the Assyrian flood about to come upon them. He builds his hope of the remnant on the few faithful disciples gathered about him.
    - Isaiah earlier looked from the political house of David to the Immanuel to come; now he looks from the decadent nation to the few faithful individuals. In these, God will eventually accomplish His purpose.
  - Judah will also be punished for her trust in man (8:5-8).
    - There was no reason to rejoice or to relax, for Ahaz's effort to court the favor of Assyria would fail. Ahaz's move would only bring further misery.
    - The Lord is the one whom the people should fear and respect, for upon the land He will bring the king of Assyria and all the glory of his great army.
  - God shall be their fear (8:9-15).
    - Isaiah cries out with a taunting challenge to the heathen nations, the enemies of God's land and people.
    - An inevitable total destruction awaits the people who follow their own human delusions to the rejection of divine truth.
  - The testimony is bound up (8:16-18).
    - With his message rejected by the house of Jacob, the prophet will now wait for God, looking for Him to act in His own time.
    - The names were a sign and a wonder -- an assurance from God that He would act and produce wonder and awe in the eyes of the beholders when that which the names signified was fulfilled.
  - The law and the testimony (8:19-22).
    - Isaiah asks his disciples not to yield when unbelievers attempt to persuade the faithful to seek knowledge from those who have familiar spirits and from wizards.
    - Men shall find the truth, not among the dead, but within the law of God. They shall find it even in the hours of national calamity.
- The sign of Messiah (9:1-7).
  - Although gloom and anguish, distress and thick darkness would fill the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, these trials would eventually be done away with.
  - The real glory of the one to be born and His relationship to deity are revealed in the names by which He will be called. In the ancient

world, one's name was viewed as a reflection of all that one was, including qualities of character.

- Jesus sat upon the throne of David and established His kingdom of peace, and upheld it with justice and righteousness. Gabriel, Matthew, Peter and Paul clearly declare that Christ fulfilled this prophecy.
- Judgment on Samaria (9:8-10:4).
  - An oracle against pride (9:8-12).
  - An oracle against impenitence (9:13-17).
  - An oracle against internal strife (9:18-21).
  - An oracle against injustice (10:1-4).
- Retribution of Assyria and return of Israel (10:5-34).
  - Assyria is an instrument in God's hand (10:5-15).
    - The Lord through Isaiah rebukes the Assyrians because they think their victories in the west are due to their own wisdom and power, and proudly boast of their accomplishments.
    - Yet, they are but an instrument of God and when the Lord has finished punishing His people, he will overthrow the Assyrians and restore the remnant.
  - The doom of the enemy under the figure of burned forest (10:16-19).
    - Disease and want will consume the fat of the well-fed army and nation, and a crackling fire will devour their glory as it does a forest.
    - Like a man who has become ill and weak, the nation will be brought to nought. The trees will become so few that a lad can walk among them and count them.
  - Only a righteous remnant will escape God's judgments (10:20-23).
    - This remnant will not lean upon a heathen nation as had Ahaz, who sent to the kings of Assyria to help him.
    - As a whole people Israel had fallen far away from God, and He would make a full end of them. But there would be a remnant of Israel to return.
  - Words of encouragement to the remnant (10:24-34).
    - Isaiah urges the people that dwell in Zion not to be afraid of the Assyrian; for though he will smite and afflict them as did Egypt, the affliction will not last forever.
    - God is able to strike down the most arrogant and mighty of earth, cutting them down to size, for they are as mortal as the most lowly.

- The rule of the Branch of Jesse (11:1-16).
  - The shoot will spring up (11:1-4).
    - Isaiah now gives the people a fuller description of the descendant of David who had been promised to that king in 2 Samuel 7:11-16.
    - It will be the delight and joy of the Branch to render full and complete service in compliance with God's will and under His guidance.
  - The righteous reign of the Messiah will result in peace (11:5-9).
    - From a characterization of the King and His rule, Isaiah passes to a description of the character and subjects of His kingdom.
    - This description of peace and harmony drawn from the animal kingdom can no more be taken literally than can the description of a rod proceeding out of the mouth of Jesus.
    - Isaiah is speaking of the "animal" (carnal) nature of man as it is brought under subjection to the spirit and will of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).
  - The dispersed ones will be regathered (11:10-13).
    - In the day of the reigning Branch, God would set His hand a second time to recover the remnant from all parts of the earth. Under the gospel God has been doing this since Pentecost.
    - With the ensign set up as the rallying point of the nations, God will gather the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah from all quarters of earth.
  - The enemies of God will be conquered by the spread of God's kingdom (11:14-16).
    - The Philistines, former longtime enemies of Israel and Judah, will be entreated and persuaded to come along as the citizens of the kingdom.
    - The new order will be over all the earth, for the King's dominion will "be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zechariah 9:10). For those carried away, there will be a way of return.
- A hymn of praise (12:1-6).
  - The people praise God for His salvation (12:1-4).
    - The blessing of the redeemed is that their sins have been forgiven; the light has appeared and now shines upon the people in darkness.
    - Joy and rejoicing should characterize God's people at all times, causing them to travel the heavenly highway with continuous singing and perpetual praise.

- The people make known what God has done for them (12:5-6).
  - This is a new song that has never been sung before, for never before have men been so completely and gloriously redeemed (Revelation 5:9-10).
  - Before Isaiah's eye and in his mind is the spiritual Zion to which we have now come, and upon which now stand the Lamb and His jubilant ones, who sing as it were a new song (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 14:1-5).