

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

The Prophets

We will take the **Major Prophets** first and then the **Minor Prophets** in order as we go through these books. By very nature these books are prophetic in nature so we will not go through every verse but I will summarize the prophetic content of the books, most of which have been fulfilled in History already, and focus our attention on what is in the future.

I hope you have come to appreciate and accept that GOD's Word and prophetic truths have been fulfilled literally and those left to be fulfilled will also be fulfilled in the same way.

Major and **Minor** Prophet Designation has nothing to do with one being more important or more true than another. All are important and true. This designator has only to do with the length of the book itself. *Minor prophet books are shorter than the major prophet books. Also the Major Prophets usually cover broader topics that can be more generally applied. Minor prophet books are usually narrower in focus.*

The terms **Major Prophets** and **Minor Prophets** are simply a way to divide the Old Testament prophetic books. The **Major Prophets** are **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel.**

The Minor Prophets are **Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.** The Minor Prophets are also sometimes called **The Twelve.**

Both the Major and Minor Prophets are usually among the least popular books of the Bible for Christians to read. This is understandable with the often unusual prophetic language and the seemingly constant warnings and condemnations recorded in the prophecies. Still, there is much valuable content to be studied in the Major and Minor Prophets. We read of Christ's birth in Isaiah and Micah. We learn of Christ's atoning sacrifice in Isaiah. We read of Christ's return in Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. We learn of God's holiness, wrath, grace, and mercy in all of the Major and Minor Prophets.

Our attention will focus on key information and not every single prophetic part of the books.

In the past, many churches would do a prophetic book like Jeremiah or Daniel or Isaiah in a Winter Bible Study or in a special study done by the pastor or guest lecturer. Today these books are seldom preached or studied because the church emphasis is more general and little focus on discipleship for the member. My hope is that by our discussions you will seek to study these wonderful books yourself, and use the study aids that are readily available.

We will begin our study in Isaiah.

Isaiah is one of the longest and most quoted books of prophecy in the Old Testament. Isaiah was a prophet in the time between 790BC and 686BC. According to tradition, Isaiah was martyred during the reign of King Manasseh. His prophetic book has two general sections or themes:

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

Chapters 1-39 deal with Israel's *sin and the judgment for sin*. This part dealt with the sin in his generation and the punishment in the form of the Assyrian captivity of the northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes). He also dealt with the sin of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, and after his death the capture by Babylon. His prophetic word also discussed the dreadful and awful Day of the Lord, the Day of Judgment mentioned so much in the prophets.

Chapters 40-66 emphasize mainly *comfort and restoration*. Isaiah's prophecy covers not only the sin and judgment for sin for both Israel and Judah, but far beyond his time to the ultimate judgment of God and the restoration of righteousness on earth. He predicts the Messiah as a suffering servant and His Death in Ch 53, and also the Messianic Kingdom. Understand that Isaiah lived and prophesied 700 years before the birth of Christ.

I believe when you read sections of scripture you will see the stunning accuracy of prediction and detail. This is the way it is for Prophets of God. God tells them and they write what HE wants us to know and understand. Sometimes it is clear to us, and sometimes it is obscure in one generation but clear later.

What a wonderful and merciful God we serve!

Let's take a look at the book.

1 The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

A Rebellious Nation

² Hear me, you heavens! Listen, earth!

For the LORD has spoken:

***"I reared children and brought them up,
but they have rebelled against me.***

***³ The ox knows its master,
the donkey its owner's manger,
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand."***

***⁴ Woe to the sinful nation,
a people whose guilt is great,
a brood of evildoers,
children given to corruption!***

***They have forsaken the LORD;
they have spurned the Holy One of Israel
and turned their backs on him.***

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

⁵ *Why should you be beaten anymore?*

Why do you persist in rebellion?

*Your whole head is injured,
your whole heart afflicted.*

⁶ *From the sole of your foot to the top of your head*

*there is no soundness—
only wounds and welts
and open sores,
not cleansed or bandaged
or soothed with olive oil.*

⁷ *Your country is desolate,*

*your cities burned with fire;
your fields are being stripped by foreigners
right before you,
laid waste as when overthrown by strangers.*

⁸ *Daughter Zion is left*

*like a shelter in a vineyard,
like a hut in a cucumber field,
like a city under siege.*

⁹ *Unless the LORD Almighty*

*had left us some survivors,
we would have become like Sodom,
we would have been like Gomorrah.*

¹⁰ *Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom;*

listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

¹¹ *“The multitude of your sacrifices—*

*what are they to me?” says the LORD.
“I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals;
I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.*

¹² *When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you,
this trampling of my courts?*

¹³ *Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me.*

New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—

I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.

¹⁴ *Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being.*

They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

¹⁵ *When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you;*

even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening.

Your hands are full of blood!

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

¹⁶ *Wash and make yourselves clean.*

Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong.

¹⁷ *Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed
Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.*

¹⁸ *“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the LORD.*

*“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.*

¹⁹ *If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land;*

²⁰ *but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.”*

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

²¹ *See how the faithful city has become a prostitute!*

*She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her—
but now murderers!*

²² *Your silver has become dross, your choice wine is diluted with water.*

²³ *Your rulers are rebels, partners with thieves; they all love bribes
and chase after gifts.*

*They do not defend the cause of the fatherless;
the widow’s case does not come before them.*

²⁴ *Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares:*

“Ah! I will vent my wrath on my foes and avenge myself on my enemies.

²⁵ *I will turn my hand against you I will thoroughly purge away your dross
and remove all your impurities.*

²⁶ *I will restore your leaders as in days of old, your rulers as at the beginning.*

Afterward you will be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City.”

²⁷ *Zion will be delivered with justice, her penitent ones with righteousness.*

²⁸ *But rebels and sinners will both be broken, and those who forsake the LORD will perish.*

²⁹ *“You will be ashamed because of the sacred oaks in which you have delighted;*

you will be disgraced because of the gardens that you have chosen.

³⁰ *You will be like an oak with fading leaves, like a garden without water.*

³¹ *The mighty man will become tinder and his work a spark;
both will burn together, with no one to quench the fire.”*

This was accomplished and fulfilled in the book of Chronicles, which we have discussed already, specifically 2 Chr 36:14-21. Righteous Judges were restored to lead Israel, and the country prospered until the evil rose again. This is the bane of Israel’s existence. Come back to the Lord and prosper, drift away and get punished. This will be a theme in all the prophets.

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

Isaiah 2:1-11 The future Messianic Kingdom

The Mountain of the LORD

2 This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

² In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains;

it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

³ Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

⁵ Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

These verses clearly are talking about a time yet to come. From other passages in both the prophets and the New Testament, this is the time we call the Millennial Kingdom, where the Lord reigns, and all the Nations come to seek his judgments. It also prophesied that the Mountain of the Lord's Temple (The Temple Mount or Mount Zion) will be raised up higher than other mountains. We know that when the Lord comes again, He will set His foot on the Mount of Olives, and a great earthquake will split the Mount of Olives and the land will be reshaped by God. We believe at this time, the Temple Mount will be raised up higher than all the others.

Isaiah 4:2-6 The Glory of the Kingdom

The Branch of the LORD

² In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. ³ Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. ⁴ The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire. ⁵ Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over everything the glory will be a canopy. ⁶ It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.

In the book of Ezekiel, we shall see that the Glory of the Lord left the temple. This Glory has never returned except when the Lord was there. In this "day", the Day of Judgment and cleaning, the Glory will

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

return. To relate to us, we have been in churches where the Holy Spirit was not present. The church was going through the motions of a Christian service, but the Lord was not honored, or served, or worshipped. We can feel it and we call it a “dead” church.

We see them all over the world today. In Europe the great cathedrals are silent. The churches are decimated because of apathy. The apathy came because of apostasy. But the Lord will judge with a spirit of Judgment and a spirit of fire all the church members. This will come at the rapture of the church. The true believers and true church will be raptured out, but the others will remain.

The Jews that remain will be cleansed of their sin and the blood stains will be washed away. This involves the two witnesses and the 144,000 witnessing Jews which we will discuss later.

Isaiah 5: 1-30 Israel is God’s vineyard

The Song of the Vineyard

*5 I will sing for the one I love
a song about his vineyard:
My loved one had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside.*

*2 He dug it up and cleared it of stones
and planted it with the choicest vines.
He built a watchtower in it
and cut out a winepress as well.
Then he looked for a crop of good grapes,
but it yielded only bad fruit.*

*3 “Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.*

*4 What more could have been done for my vineyard
than I have done for it?
When I looked for good grapes,
why did it yield only bad?*

*5 Now I will tell you
what I am going to do to my vineyard:
I will take away its hedge,
and it will be destroyed;
I will break down its wall,
and it will be trampled.*

*6 I will make it a wasteland,
neither pruned nor cultivated,
and briars and thorns will grow there.*

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

*I will command the clouds
not to rain on it."*

*⁷ The vineyard of the LORD Almighty
is the nation of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are the vines he delighted in.
And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;
for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.*

God always viewed Israel and her people as His Vineyard and vines. We see the vineyard parable in the New Testament that extends this to the believers and makes the additional point that we are IN Christ, and He is IN us. As we see the vines must be pruned and kept clean to bear fruit as intended. It is no different for the Nation of Israel, our Nation, or ourselves.

Messianic Prophecies in Isaiah

Isaiah 7:13-14

¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel

Isaiah 9:2,7 The joyful reign of Christ

Isaiah 9:4 The Rule of Christ over the world

READ ISAIAH 11

Isaiah 11:1,10 Christ as a descendant of Jesse and David

Isaiah 11:2 Christ will be filled with the Spirit, also Isa 42:1

Christ to judge with righteousness (11:3-5; 42:1,4).

Christ to rule over the Nations (11:10).

Christ to be gentle with the weak (42:3),

Christ to make possible the New Covenant (42:6; 49:8).

Christ to be a light to the Gentiles and to be worshipped by them (42:6; 49:6-7; 52:15)

Christ to be rejected by Israel (49:7; 53:1-3)

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

Christ to be obedient to God and be subject to suffering (50:6;53:7-8)

Christ to be exalted (52:13;53:12)

Christ to restore Israel and judge the wicked (61:1-3)

If you have never read Isaiah 53, take a few minutes and read over it. It is profoundly descriptive of the Messiah to be born 700 years later. This is a chapter in Isaiah that Jews have a hard time explaining away.

Read Isaiah 53

Next week we will come back and deal with some of the specific prophecies relating to people and countries from Isaiah