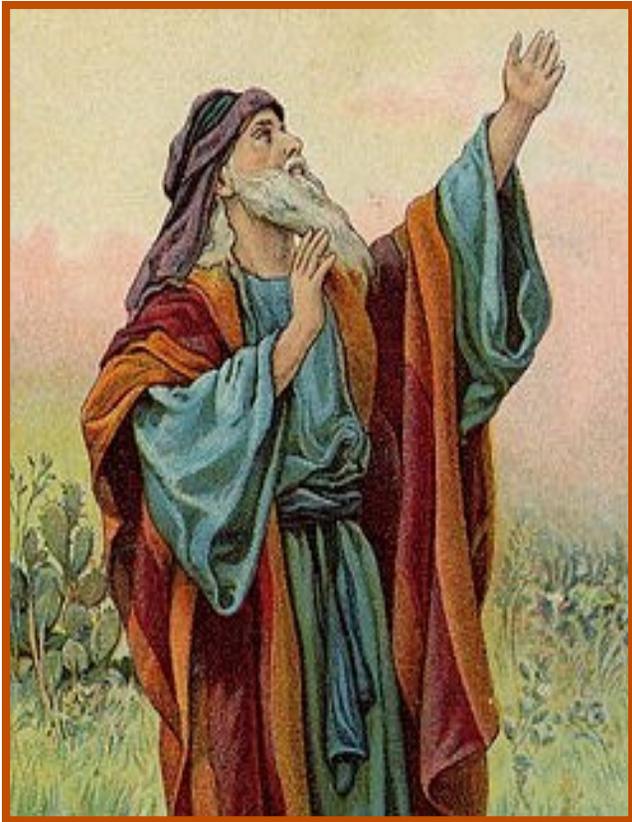


spoken by a person in authority, of its own power, could bring things into being. So in an ancient Egyptian creation myth, the god Atum stood on a mud hillock that emerged from the primeval waters, and named the parts of his body. Thus the gods came into being. Much later, in early medieval lives of Irish Saints, one Saint had a quarrel with an Irish King. During it both said harsh things to each other. They made peace, but yet the text adds: Everything they said to each other came true.

End of Chapter 55



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

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## THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

### CHAPTER 55

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 prophesies 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 55**

Exhortation to Accept the Promised Blessings. Chapter 55. Summary and Comments.

Isaiah encourages them to take up what God promises and return to their land. His fear was not in vain, for out of the 12 tribes, only 2 returned, Judah and Benjamin, and probably not every one out of them either. For many had put down roots in Babylon, had homes, and probably commercial interests too. To return to a ruined city was not inviting.

So God says: Those who are thirsty come to the waters, get bread with no cost. Of course they had bread and water in Babylon. This means accept all the good things God will give you.

God adds: Come, I will make an everlasting covenant with you, as I promised to David. I have made him a witness to the peoples. The <he> seems to be David, who is dead. It really means a future descendant of David, the Messiah. In 2 Samuel 7:12-17 God had promised David through Nathan: When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to rule. St. Augustine observes well (<City of God> 17. 8) that this could not really mean Solomon, who began to rule before, not after the death of David. Augustine points out well, in <City of God> 17. 3, that some prophecies refer only to OT persons and events, some to NT only, some to both. We get the clue of this extension when we see something that seems at first sight to refer to only OT things, but yet does not entirely fit, as in the case of Solomon just mentioned.

The prophecy given through Nathan continued saying: If he is wicked, I will punish him, but I will not take away the kingship as I did with Saul, whose dynasty came to an end. Yet the line of Davidic kings stopped with the great exile. Again, an indication to look further to the One of whom the Archangel Gabriel said: He will rule over the house of Jacob <forever>.

Isaiah added: See I have made him a witness to the peoples. That of course applies to the Messiah, only then would verse 5 come true: You will summon nations, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you. Israelites did not really understand this, they thought all gentiles were to become Jews. They did not yet know what St. Paul revealed in Eph 3:6 that the gentiles are called to be part of the people of God. On the problem of prophecies like this, please see again comments on chapter 2 above.

Therefore: Seek the Lord while He can be found. Let the wicked forsake his wicked way and come to God.

Now a most remarkable line in vv. 8-9: My thoughts are not your thoughts: as far as the heavens are above the earth, so far are my ways above your ways. -- Yes, we could not understand God, for He is transcendent, above all our categories (on transcendence, please see our comments on the first part of chapter 6 above), So we could not know what to expect from Him, if He would not tell us, which He did by the commandments and the covenant. Still more, He gave us His only Son, incarnate, and so having a human heart. We can understand a human heart. Further, so no one might say: Yes, but the human heart is the heart of a divine Person --He has added the Immaculate Heart of His Mother, which is perfectly attuned to His heart. We can surely understand her heart.

To encourage confidence: Just as rain and snow come down from the sky, and do not go back without accomplishing all that I send them to do, so my word will accomplish what I say. Trust it, go out in joy. The mountains and hills will burst into song before you. This will be an everlasting sign that will not be destroyed. In ancient times there was a common belief that a word