
BOOK OVERVIEW

Isaiah

Author: Isaiah

Date: 740–700 B.C. (before the exile)

Recipients: the residents of Judah, Israel, and surrounding nations

Key words: judgement/judge (52 times); The Holy One of Israel (25 times); comfort/comfortably (18 times)

Summary: Isaiah warned the people that, even though they had a “form of godliness,” they were morally, religiously, and politically corrupt and headed for God’s judgement.

Theme: The justice and grace of God.

Key verses: Isaiah 61:1-3

Notes:

Isaiah is quoted 80 times in the New Testament.

Isaiah 7:14 presents the classic prophecy of Christ’s virgin birth.

Isaiah 9:6-7 is prophetic of Christ’s eventual reign on the throne of David.

Isaiah 52-53 offers a vivid, prophetic description of Jesus as the suffering Savior.

The complete copy of the Book of Isaiah found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (1947) is considered to be the oldest copy of Isaiah (150-125 B.C.) and is the oldest copy of any book in the Bible. The scroll is now housed in the Great Shrine of the Book in the Jerusalem Museum.

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BOOK OVERVIEW

Jeremiah

Author: Jeremiah

Date: 626-560 B.C.

Recipients: Judah and Jerusalem

Key words: iniquity/sin/sinned/
transgress/transgression (53 times);
captive/captivity (51 times); evil (81 times);
scatter (14 times)

Summary: The sinfulness of Judah
brings about the Babylonian Captivity.

Key verses: Jeremiah 21:7, 14

Notes:

Jeremiah was very unpopular because he predicted that Jerusalem would fall to the Babylonians and he advised surrender to Nebuchadnezzar.

After the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, they took most of the Jews to Babylon, but they left a small remnant of the poorest of the Jews. The remnant asked Jeremiah to seek God's will as to whether they should flee to Egypt. God, through Jeremiah, warned the remnant not to flee to Egypt where they would be destroyed by sword and famine. The remnant refused God's warning and went to Egypt taking Jeremiah with them. Tradition says that Jeremiah died in Egypt. Some think he may have been stoned by the Jews.

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BOOK OVERVIEW

Lamentations

Author: Jeremiah

Date: 586 B.C.

Recipient: Judah and Jerusalem

Key words: Zion (15 times); Jerusalem (7 times); desolate (7 times)

Summary: An expression of the grief of the prophet Jeremiah in witnessing the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of its people.

Key verses: Lamentations 1:1

Notes:

Jeremiah is referred to as the “weeping prophet.” (see Jeremiah 9:1) In the Septuagint the introduction to this book says, “*And it came to pass after Israel was led into the captivity that Jeremiah sat weeping and lamenting this lamentation over Jerusalem.*”

The first four chapters of this book are **acrostic poems**, each verse beginning with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Orthodox Jews read this book on the ninth day of the month Ab, the traditional date of the destruction of Solomon’s temple. Some Jews also read it each week at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah is a type of Christ who also wept over Jerusalem. (Luke 19:41)

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Ezekiel

Author: Ezekiel

Date: 593-571 B.C.

Recipients: Israeli exiles and some Gentile nations

Key words: “Ye (they, thou) shall know that I am the LORD” (70 times), “Son of man” (91 times, used by Jesus of Himself 79 times)

Summary: The first half of the book reviews the sins of Israel and God’s accompanying judgement, especially upon Jerusalem. This is followed by God’s impending judgment on several Gentile nations. The book concludes with prophecies of a renewed Jerusalem and temple.

Key verses: Ezekiel 36:17-19, 24-28

Notes:

Ezekiel, who was a priest, ministered in Babylon where he had been taken as a captive with Judah’s king Jehoaichin. (597 B.C.) He arrived about 8 years after Daniel and about 12 years before Jerusalem was finally destroyed. (586 B.C.)

The “30 years” in verse 1 is thought by some to be Ezekiel’s age, the age at which the priests began their duties. (Numbers 4:3)

Several times God used Ezekiel as a provocative visual aid to communicate His truths to the Israelites in captivity.

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BOOK OVERVIEW

Daniel

Author: Daniel

Date: 606-534 B.C.

Recipients: not specifically stated

Key words: king (183 times), kingdom (55 times), Daniel (74 times)

Summary: The book shows that God is in complete control of His creation and of the governments of the world, with particular attention to “the times of the Gentiles.”

Key verses: Daniel 7:13-14, 17-18

Notes:

Daniel was among the first of the Jewish captives taken to Babylon.(605 B.C.)

He lived during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus.

He was prominent in the Babylonian and Persian empires.

Daniel 2:4-7:28 was written in Aramaic, while the rest of the book was in Hebrew. Aramaic was common to the Babylonians.

Daniel includes several well-known passages: Daniel’s determination not to defile himself with the “king’s meat,” his interpretation of the great statue made of various materials, his three friends in the fiery furnace, his interpretation of the handwriting on the wall, his experience in the lion’s den, his vision of four beasts, and his vision of the “70 weeks.”

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