

# PASSAGES ISAIAH:

New  
Beginnings,  
New Hopes,  
&  
Old  
Challenges

THE PROPHET BY  
REMBRANDT



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ISAIAH:            *Where Are We Going?*  
                         *Are We There Yet?*

Jan 4:            Introduction–Background–Call

Jan 11:          “First” *Isaiah*

Jan 18:          “Second” & “Third” *Isaiah*

Jan 25:          Messianic Themes in *Isaiah*

Feb 1:           *Isaiah* in the New Testament

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## TODAY'S HOPES!

1. *Isaiah's* Context in Ancient History
2. The (three part) *Book of Isaiah*
3. Isaiah's Call (Isaiah 6)
4. Small Groups – Isaiah Verses for a New Year



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## 5. AND:

Assorted photos of  
our grandchild





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# WHAT IS A PROPHET?

Sistine Chapel->



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## F. Buechner

“The one whom in their unfathomable audacity the prophets claimed to speak for was the Lord and Creator of the universe. There is no evidence to suggest that anyone ever asked a prophet home for supper more than once.”

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## BUECHNER (Cont.)

“Like Robert Frost's, a prophet's quarrel with the world is deep down a lover's quarrel. If they didn't love the world, they probably wouldn't bother to tell it that it's going to hell. They'd just let it go. Their quarrel is God's quarrel.”

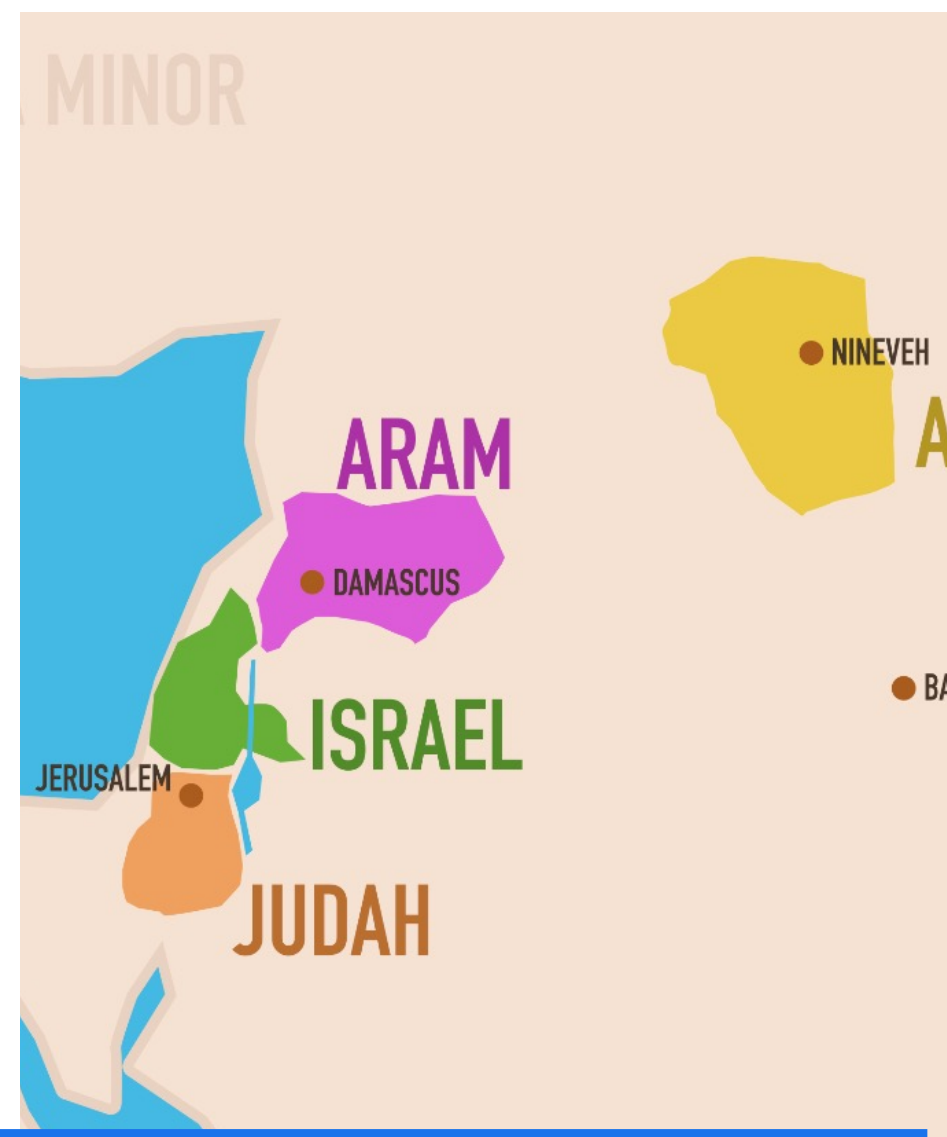




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# 1. A QUICK REVIEW OF ISRAEL'S KINGS

- **Saul** – Israel's first king. Overreaches his power (God removes his anointing)
- 1,000 BC -- **David is king**, Jerusalem is capital, Israel has large borders, peace with surrounding nations
- **Solomon** -- Israel at its most prosperous (the Golden Years / The Temple)



## ISRAEL SPLITS IN TWO

After King Solomon dies, Israel splits into two Kingdoms:

- "Israel" (10 northern tribes)  
(aka "Jacob", "Ephraim")  
Capital city = Samaria
- "Judah" (2 southern tribes)  
Capital city = Jerusalem (Zion)

# BAAAADDDD KINGS ... BAD TIMES

Both Israel & Judah  
are ruled by bad  
kings (*fail to keep the  
kingdoms faithful in  
its worship & life*)





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## CATASTROPHE!

Both kingdoms come to ruin:

- Destruction (Israel) 732 BC
- Destruction of Temple & Exile of leadership (Judah) 587 BC

The defeat of both kingdoms is  
– theologically – a "history repeats itself" story



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## ISAIAH -- CRISIS OF FAITH TIME

Isaiah lives in a time of a huge crisis of faith:

What do you do when it appears that  
the faithful God has abandoned you?



- QUESTIONS?
- COMMENTS?
- CONFUSIONS?





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# ISAIAH & ANCIENT HISTORY

- **ASSYRIAN EMPIRE** (= Iraq)

746–609 BC // King Tiglath-Pileser III & King Sennacherib

- **BABYLONIAN EMPIRE** (= Iraq)

609–539 BC // King Nebuchadnezzar

- **PERSIAN EMPIRE** (= Iran)

550–330 BC // King Cyrus



# ASSYRIAN EMPIRE





# BABYLONIAN EMPIRE





# PERSIAN EMPIRE





## FOUR KEY EVENTS (for *Isaiah*)

- 732 BC: Northern Kingdom (Israel) falls to **ASSYRIA**  
→ (2 Kings 17:1-23)      Isaiah 1-7
- 701 BC: **ASSYRIA** *almost* conquers Jerusalem  
→ (2 Kings 17:1-23)      Isaiah 8-39
- 587 BC: Southern Kingdom (Judah) falls to  
**BABYLON** → (2 Kings 25) (unmentioned)
- 539 BC: Judah exiles return to Jerusalem after  
**PERSIA** conquers the Babylonians. → (Ezra 1-2)



- QUESTIONS?
- COMMENTS?
- CONFUSIONS?



## 2. *ISAIAH* in THREE VOICES

- “First” Isaiah
- “Second” Isaiah
- “Third” Isaiah



## "FIRST" ISAIAH

"The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." (Isaiah 1:1)

FOCUS: Prophecies concerning the two Assyrian threats to Judah in 732–701 BC (chapters 1–39)



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## "SECOND" ISAIAH

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup> A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:1-3)

FOCUS: Prophecies (after 50 years in Babylonian Exile)  
calling exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem (chp 40-55)

## “THIRD” ISAIAH

“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn and her salvation like a burning torch. <sup>2</sup>The nations shall see your vindication and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give.” (Isaiah 62:1-2)

FOCUS: Prophecies to the Jews re-settling in Jerusalem --  
“Second” Isaiah’s prophecies will be fulfilled!

# "ISAIAH" = 3 PROPHECIES TIED TOGETHER

## 1) "First Isaiah" (chapters 1-39)

- Judah at the time of Israel's destruction (740-700 BC)

## 2) "Second Isaiah" (chapters 40-66)

- Judah 50 years after being destroyed by Babylon, in exile but now about to return to Jerusalem and be restored (540-520 BC)

## 3) "Third" Isaiah (chapters 55-66)

- Early days of exiles returned in Jerusalem -- still awaiting a *great* restoration (520-490 BC)

# ISAIAH'S BIG POINT

*Isaiah* tells the story of:

- a) The failure of God's people to keep the covenant
- b) God's justice meted out (to Israel by Assyria, to Judah by Babylon)
- c) God's forgiveness & restoration (Cyrus' decree to return)
- d) Hope for the future (Israel as a light to the nations)

**OLD CHALLENGES ... NEW BEGINNINGS ... NEW HOPES**





- QUESTIONS?
- COMMENTS?
- CONFUSIONS?



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### 3. CALL STORIES: *PLEASE NOT ME!*

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro... and came to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

...God called to him out of the bush, “*Moses, Moses!*” And he said, “*Here I am.*” Then God said, “...Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”

## CALL STORIES: NOT ME!

...."Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people ....I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup> Now go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

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Moses said to the Lord:

“O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”

Then the Lord said: “Who gives speech to mortals? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.”

But Moses said, “O my Lord, please send someone else.”



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## ISAIAH 6: A CALL STORY

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

<sup>3</sup> And one called to another and said, "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.*"

## HOLY OF HOLIES

<sup>9</sup> There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses had placed there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites when they came out of the land of Egypt. <sup>10</sup> And when the priests came out of the holy place, **a cloud filled the house of the LORD,** <sup>11</sup> so that the priests could not stand to minister **because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.**

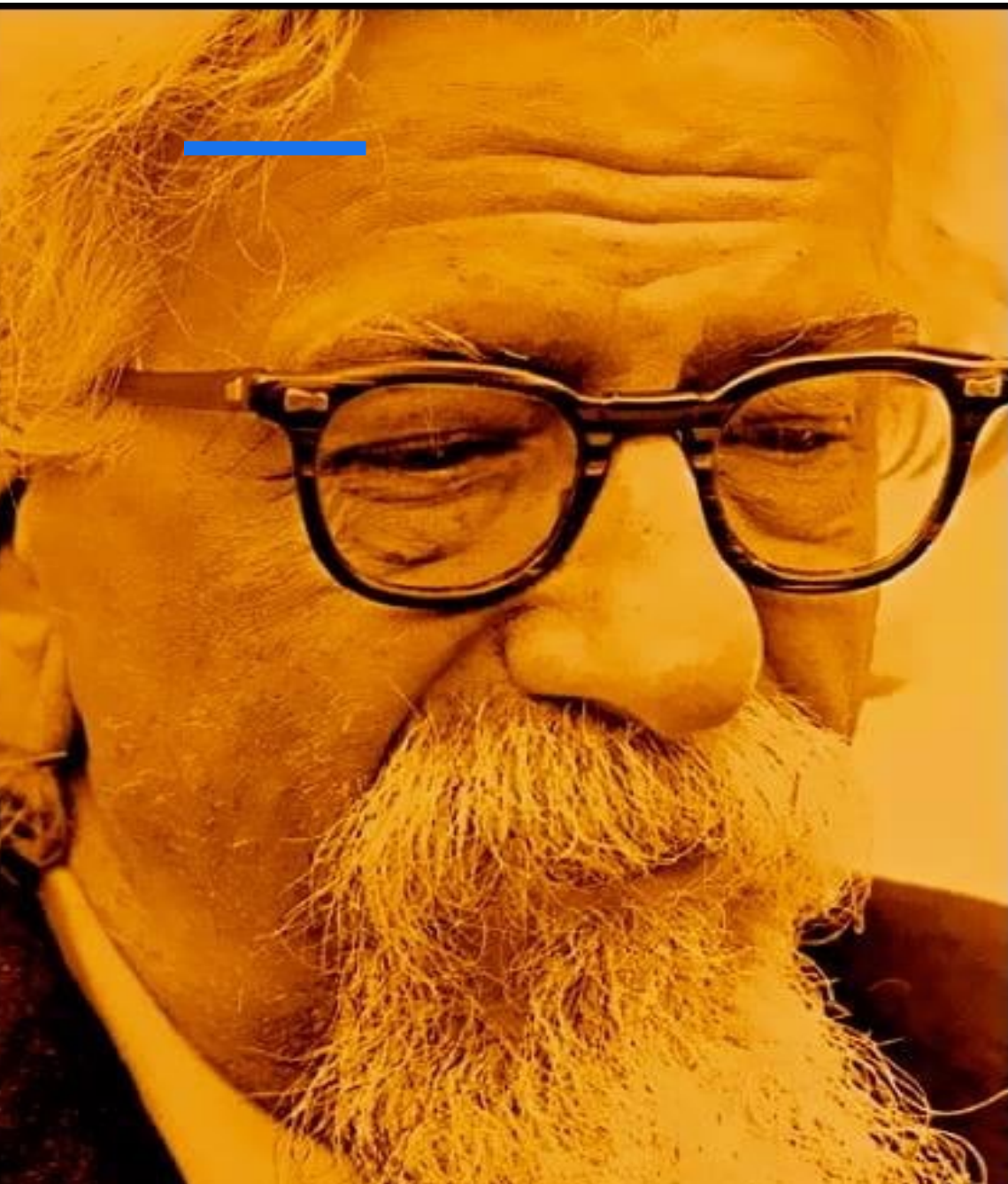
(1 Kings 8)

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## ISAIAH 6: A CALL STORY

- <sup>4</sup> The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> And I said, *“Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”*

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- <sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. <sup>7</sup> The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, *“Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.”*
  - <sup>8</sup> Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, *“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”*



"Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement, [to] get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed."



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# SMALL GROUPS

CHOOSE

- A VERSE
- A PHRASE
- A WORD

from Isaiah to point you  
Into the New Year





# HOLY, HOLY, HOLY by Unveiled Light

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZwBaUE\\_2y4&list=RDfZwBaUE\\_2y4&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZwBaUE_2y4&list=RDfZwBaUE_2y4&start_radio=1)