

32. Isaiah and God

According to *The Reese Chronological Bible*, Isaiah was born in 765 BC and Uzziah, king of Judah, died in 748 BC, making Isaiah around 17 years old when he saw the vision of God in Chapter 6.

I have never before considered Isaiah's timeline, but I want to know more about him and thus I will include it. In fact, what I love about the *Chronological Bible* is that everything is fitted into its time in the story. Psalms, histories, and prophets are all woven together.

It's not that we are looking for a "cultural interpretation" of the Bible, but rather for the story of God and its seasons.

A Timeline. Understand that this layout is one man's best guesses.

799	Uzziah becomes king of Judah	727	Hezekiah becomes king with dad
774	Amos begins prophecy to Israel	726	Temple cleansed & restored
770	Hosea begins prophecy to Israel	725	Passover kept, Israel migrates.
767	Jonah preaches in Nineveh	721	Israel falls to Assyria
765	Isaiah born – father is Amoz	712	Hezekiah sick & healed (40-66)
754	Uzziah violates the Holy	709	Manasseh born, will rule 55 years
753	Rome begins	704	Sennacherib besieges Jerusalem
748	Uzziah dies, Isaiah sees God (6)	701	Hezekiah hosts the Babylonians
747	Jotham becomes king of Judah	697	Manasseh becomes king of Judah
745	(Isaiah 2-5)	689	Sennacherib destroys Babylon
744	Micah begins prophecy to Judah	681	Isaiah is martyred – age 84
732	Ahaz becomes sole king of Judah – very evil. (Isaiah 7-9 & 1)	674	Manasseh becomes very wicked, fills Jerusalem with blood

In the Days Of. Here is how Isaiah starts. – The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Notice that it does not say “in the days of ... Manasseh.”

Isaiah has a good run under Uzziah and Jotham who were both half decent kings and who enjoyed blessing from God.

Then Isaiah was in his late thirties when Ahaz became sole king and turned Jerusalem evil. Five years later, at age 16, Hezekiah took control from his dad, possibly because Isaiah had confronted Ahaz. Hezekiah ruled jointly for ten years, just as Ahaz had ruled jointly with his dad, Jotham.

A Terrible Ending. And so, from his mid-forties to his mid-seventies, about thirty years, Isaiah lived under a godly king and in relative peace in Jerusalem. This was the time of much of his prophetic word concerning Christ and the Church.

Then Manasseh became king, a man whom God did not want birthed, a man who committed such great crimes against all that is holy that God told Josiah, Manasseh's grandson, that no matter what good he did, Jerusalem would still be destroyed because of Manasseh's crimes.

And so Isaiah went to his death in his late eighties in a time of great evil and no hope. Some believe he was the one who was sawn in two as mentioned in Hebrews 11.

Isaiah's Life. Isaiah was married to a woman whom we know only as “the prophetess.” They had at least two sons, whom they named Shear-Jashub (a remnant shall return) and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (speed the spoil; hasten the booty).

Shear-Jashub was much older, likely born not long after Isaiah's vision of God. His unfortunate younger brother was born shortly before the destruction and captivity of Israel.

Isaiah lived his life with his family in the city of Jerusalem. Most of that life was peaceful. Even the two sieges of Jerusalem, first by Syria and Israel, and second by Assyria, did not penetrate into the city.

Part of Us. It helps a lot to understand Isaiah as a man, for now we are better able to identify with him and to know his heart towards God.

Remember that Isaiah and his family are born again Christians right now and members of the same body of Christ with us (Matthew 27 & 1 Peter 3).

It is an incredible blessing God is giving us in this study, in making these Old Testament people part of our lives, people who share our love for Jesus. – And all these, bearing witness through their faith, did not receive the promise... apart from us... We also, being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 11:39 – 12:1).

I Saw the Lord. In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

Then one of the seraphim... having in his hand a live coal ...from the altar ...touched my **mouth with it, and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.”**

Here Am I. Send Me. Understand that everything that has happened to Isaiah thus far in his vision of God happens for every Christian as they are being born again – and with the same heavenly glory. Angels see the wonder, but humans hardly do.

We are the temple in which God dwells; our hearts are the throne upon which He sits.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.” This line is meant by God to be a personal word applicable to every Bible reader. Yet the sending is different for each.

The Sending. You see, God has never sent me to the world; though He does send some in that direction. And God does not send us to His Church, regardless of our prayers for her.

The truth is, when Jesus quoted from this passage, He was speaking only to a handful of people, maybe twenty or thirty gathered close. (More than the twelve followed Jesus closely.)

And He said, “Go, and tell this people... Except I want to quote this from Jesus’ words, in Matthew 13.

Hearing They Do Not Hear. **And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive.**

But Your Ears Hear. For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal **them.**’

And, in saying “that I should heal them,” Jesus meant the glorious Salvation into which He has brought us.

But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

The Remnant. **Then I said, “Lord, how long?” And He answered: “Until the ...land is** utterly desolate... But yet a tenth will be in it, and will return...

Now, this section is filled with references and idioms, and the wording is difficult, such that we hardly understand all that is meant. **Yet this is part of Isaiah’s concept of the “remnant,”** those who remain with God even while all else depart.

My intention in all this, then, is to show that Isaiah labored before God over the same thing Jesus did and the same thing you and I do. – God, how will Your people hear?

The Travail Is God’s. Yet it’s also clear from this passage that Isaiah did not produce this travail, but rather, it came to him from God. This agony is the travail of God; that means it’s a big deal.

I believe that God has removed from our minds any thought of being part of a “remnant” as any part of “elitism.”

In fact, it seems that Isaiah is referencing wood used to burn the sacrifice offered to God. – And be for burning, as a terebinth tree or as an oak. In other words, this is the same as Hebrews 12, **the few are God’s offering for the sake of the many.** All the agony we feel when others do not hear is with God for their sake.

The Grief Is God’s. By understanding the grief of this man, planted in Him by God, we can then see that same thing all through Isaiah’s entire book underlying everything he wrote.

Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you—The sure mercies of David (Isaiah 55:2-3).

This is the grief and longing of God towards a people who will not hear.

Heart Connection. As I look across all the many chapters of Isaiah and see passages I have included in my writing and other passages I would love to include, I realize that I want to accomplish something different in this lesson.

Indeed, I have written an entire book based on one passage from Isaiah – *A Highway for God*, and I equate many lines Isaiah spoke as equal with the ruling verses of the gospel. The purpose of these teachings, however, is to show the heart connection between these men and women and God.

And here is what I realize concerning Isaiah, that it's not so much his relationship with God, but God's heart expressed through him.

Hear Always the Cross. Many of the prophets had many harsh things to say against all the wicked people whether in Israel or Judah or in all the neighboring countries. Those things are found in Isaiah as well, but most of the time there is found God's heart cry underneath the judgment, that His people would choose life.

At the same time, Isaiah is much more concerned about the revelation of God through His people than he is about any judgment against wicked actions.

Yet as you read that judgment, hear always the cross of Christ, for that is the hearing of God.

Human Perception. What I want to do for the rest of this lesson is look at this whole question of hearing versus not hearing, for this grief of God is expressed all the way through Isaiah's book. As Jesus said, Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear.

These two, hearing and seeing, always go together, truth that is applied to one also fits the other just as much. And both together mean human perception of what is true.

I have come to understand that the universe is made of the fabric of Living Spirit Word. And more than that, human perception is the fabrication of “anointed” words.

Darkness. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people (Isaiah 60:2).

Or, as Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 3, his rendition of Isaiah’s “hearing you shall not hear.”

– For their minds were hardened. For until the present day, the same veil remains unlifted upon the reading of the old covenant, which veil itself is being annulled and rendered inoperative inside of Christ. But unto this day, when Moses shall be read, a veil is set upon their heart. However, if and whenever one shall have turned towards the Lord, the veil is stripped away.

Living Spirit Word. The book of Isaiah is filled with Spirit Word and with the explanation of Spirit Word. It is the most important Old Testament book to explore the meaning of John 6:63. The words that I speak to you are Spirit and they are Life.

– On this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word. This is not human fear towards the letter of the word, this is the singing together with the same word that is Christ.

So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

A Fabric of Anointed Words. There is no better concept for us to understand the darkness sitting upon Christians today and their inability to hear Christ made personal as them, than the practice of casting “spells” upon people.

What is happening is the fabric of anointed words cast **upon people’s perception that blocks** any hearing of Christ. These are a weaving of anti-words anointed by anti-Spirit.

The opposite is also the same, yet we hesitate to call it “casting a spell,” that is, until we realize that it is, in fact, the God spell, shortened by the English tongue to gospel. Yet we are referencing “to bless” and “to prophesy Christ.”

Breaking the Yoke. Isaiah equates the king of Assyria, who besieged Jerusalem for a short time, with the power of the prince of the air, that is the one who anoints lying words.

It shall come to pass in that day that his burden will be taken away from your shoulder, and his yoke from your neck, and the yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing oil (Isaiah 10:27).

This is the same thing as my entire teaching on the removal of the seven seals in John’s vision. That is, the fabric of Living Spirit Word written upon our heart is blocked so that no one can read. The removal of the seals is the opening of hearing and understanding in the Church.

A True Caller. And so here is what I gain from understanding the relationship between Isaiah and God. Just like Isaiah, I did not ask God to place His travail for His people upon me. Yet He has done so. And He did so because I also said, “Yes Lord, here am I.”

This is undoubtedly why my heart has so sung in harmony with Isaiah’s words whether I understood what they mean or not.

And the same is true of you, for a true caller of God does nothing more than cause His people to know the meaning of the singing and travail of their own hearts.

Reading for Next Time. The next lesson is titled “Isaiah and Love,” by which I mean “Isaiah and the Church.” So, for next time read Isaiah 2:1-4, all of 49, 54, 60, and 62.

The same desire of Jesus that His Church would share His glory fills Isaiah's view of that same Church. – **For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,** until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns.

It is my hope that when you read Isaiah in the future, you will know the travail God placed in his heart and you will hear the Spirit Word that he speaks.

Let's Pray Together. In calling our God into our world, we are not considering the remnant. We are the remnant, and this is our job.

We are breaking the darkness that sits upon the hearing of God's people, for that is the same travail God placed upon Isaiah. We are breaking a false "spell," and we are doing so with the Words that are Christ Jesus now made personal as us as we are the entrance of God. This fabric of anointed words of Christ that we are speaking WILL accomplish all that God pleases, as Isaiah said.

"God, our Father, we see the darkness that sits upon Your people, the dullness of hearing that prevents them from knowing Christ their only life, and we share Your grief."

Break the False Yoke. "Father, we know that we share Your grief because You fill us with all that You are and You flow out from us as rivers of Spirit. And Father, we know that Christ, every Word You speak, lives in our hearts and mouths.

"Father, as we speak Christ into our world, so we are weaving a fabric of Spirit Words going out upon the minds and hearts of our brethren all across the earth, counteracting that false spell cast upon all as darkness.

"Father, in the name of Jesus, we break that false yoke, we cast down that false anointing, and we silence the false words. Father, let Your Spirit go forth from us in power.

All Authority. “Father, we know that You have given us all authority to speak Christ into our world out from Your Heart inside of us, sharing Your travail, even as we love one another.

“Therefore, we speak Christ, as anointed Living Spirit Word into our world, knowing that such Light going forth dispels all darkness, knowing that such a good consciousness of pure words inside of Christ must return to You having accomplished all.

“And Father, we know that Christ Jesus proves Himself faithful and true as Your Word from our mouths goes across this earth, that all Your Desire is right now being accomplished in Your Church. Let it be so; it is so.”