

Prophets. He lived during the Babylonian Exile.

David. The youngest son of Jesse and second King of United Israel. The prophet Nathan foretold that the Messiah would be a descendant of David.

Day of the Lord. Described often in prophetic writings, it generally signified the Coming of the Lord in power and majesty to destroy His enemies and inaugurate His Kingdom. Sometimes called the **Last Day** or simply **that Day**.

Devil(s). The name given to angels who rebelled against God under the leadership of Satan.



Dove. A bird of the pigeon family, which has been chosen to be a symbol of the Holy Spirit, probably because of its gentleness and purity.



Eagle. A bird that preys on others, famous for its strength, flying power, and vision.

Elijah. The dramatic 9th century B.C. Hebrew prophet who fought against the idolatry in Israel during the reign of the wicked King Ahab. He worked many wonders and was taken to heaven in a fiery chariot. Jesus said that John the Baptizer resembled Elijah in spirit and in power (Mt 11:14).

Elisha. Friend and disciple of Elijah who took his place as prophet after Elijah's ascension and performed extraordinary miracles to substantiate his preaching.

Ephod. An apron-like garment worn by the high priest.

Ephraim. Son of Joseph and leader of the tribe named after him. The name is also applied to the Northern Kingdom of ten tribes.

Epistle. A letter.

Eschatological. Concerning the last things, including the day of judgment, death, immortality, and the Second Coming of Christ.

Evangelist. Name given to the writers of the inspired Message brought by Jesus. They are sometimes depicted in art according to the symbolism suggested by St. Ambrose. According to the visions of Ezekiel (1:10) and John (Rv 4:7), Matthew is represented by a **man** (because he begins his Gospel with Christ's genealogy). Mark is represented by the **lion** (because he begins his Gospel with the Baptizer's message proclaimed in the wilderness). Luke is represented by the **ox** (because the sacrifice offered by Zechariah is recorded in the opening verses of his Gospel) and John is represented by the **eagle** (because of the sublime heights reached in his prologue).

Ezekiel. One of the Major Prophets. He prophesied in exile during the Babylonian Captivity.

Ezra. A Scribe who returned from the Babylonian Captivity and helped to reestablish the Jewish Commonwealth.

Faithful. A person with heart and mind firmly fixed on God and intent on carrying out His will on earth.

Fear of God Means "holy awe," rather than real fear, in the presence of God or His messengers; the reaction of a poor sinner when confronted with infinite Goodness.



Fig. Fruit of the fig tree, whose large leaves provide a cool shade from the heat.

Figure. A person, event or object which in God's intention signifies or foreshadows something else. Many realities of the Old Testament foreshadowed those of the New.

Firstborn. In the Old Testament God decreed that each firstborn male child (and each firstborn animal) be consecrated to Him. Jesus, the firstborn of all creation, summed up in Himself the first-fruits of all creatures.

Flesh and Blood. (1) Synonym for man in contrast to God or pure spirits. Also used for (2) mortal man in a fallen

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

The greatest of the prophets appeared at a critical moment of Israel's history. The second half of the eighth century B.C. witnessed the collapse of the northern kingdom under the hammerlike blows of Assyria (722), while Jerusalem itself saw the army of Sennacherib drawn up before its walls (701). In the year that Uzziah, king of Judah, died (742), Isaiah received his call to the prophetic office in the Temple of Jerusalem. Close attention should be given to chapter 6, where this divine summons to be the ambassador of the Most High is circumstantially described.

The vision of the Lord enthroned in glory stamps an indelible character on Isaiah's ministry and provides the key to the understanding of his message. The majesty, holiness and glory of the Lord took possession of his spirit and, conversely, he gained a new awareness of human pettiness and sinfulness. The enormous abyss between God's sovereign holiness and man's sin overwhelmed the prophet. Only the purifying coal of the seraphim could cleanse his lips and prepare him for acceptance of the call: "Here I am, send me!"

The ministry of Isaiah may be divided into three periods, covering the reigns of Jotham (742-735), Ahaz (735-715), and Hezekiah (715-687). To the first period belong, for the most part, the early oracles (1—5) which exposed the moral breakdown of Judah and its capital, Jerusalem. With the accession of Ahaz, the prophet became adviser to the king, whose throne was threatened by the Syro-Ephraimite coalition. Rejecting the plea of Isaiah for faith and courage, the weak Ahaz turned to Assyria for help. From this period came the majority of messianic oracles found in the section of Immanuel prophecies (6—12).

Hezekiah succeeded his father and undertook a religious reform which Isaiah undoubtedly supported. But the old intrigues began again, and the king was soon won over to the pro-Egyptian party. Isaiah denounced this "covenant with death" and again summoned Judah to faith in Yahweh as her only hope. But it was too late; the revolt had already begun. Assyria acted quickly and her army, after ravaging Judah, laid siege to Jerusalem (701). "I shut up Hezekiah like a bird in his cage," boasts the famous inscription of Sennacherib. But Yahweh delivered the city, as Isaiah had promised: God is the Lord of history, and Assyria but an instrument in his hands.

Israel's Sinfulness

Little is known about whose oracles, of singularly minded his wayward people, Yahweh to his promises.

The complete Book of Isaiah came many years after Isaiah and faithfully reflected the disciples deeply influenced the Apocalypse of Isaiah (24—28) and probably the poems (29—39).

Chapters 40—55, sometimes generally attributed to an anonymous author, are the end of the Babylonian exile and contain oracles known as the Messianic oracles known as the Servant of the Lord, the destiny of suffering and the glorification of Christ. Chapters 56—66 were composed during the post-exilic period and were composed by Isaiah and continued the work of the prophets.

The principal divisions of the Book of Judgment: I. The Book of Judgment: I. II. Immanuel Prophecies (7, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66). III. The Lord Alone, Israel's Avenger (34, 39, 8). B. The Book of Correction (40, 1—48, 21). II. Immanuel Prophecies (49, 1—55, 13). III. Re-

A. THE BOOK OF JUDGMENT

I: INDICTMENT OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

CHAPTER 1

Israel's Sinfulness. ¹The voice of the Lord which Isaiah, son of Amos, heard in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

²Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth,

the Christian community: the woman at the well in Samaria (ch 4) is presented as a prototype of a missionary (4, 4-42), and the first witness of the resurrection is a woman (20, 11-18).

The final editing of the gospel and arrangement in its present form probably dates from between A.D. 90 and 100. Traditionally, Ephesus has been favored as the place of composition, though many support a location in Syria, perhaps the city of Antioch, while some have suggested other places, including Alexandria.

The principal divisions of the Gospel according to John are the following:

- I. Prologue (1, 1-18)
- II. The Book of Signs (1, 19—12, 50)
- III. The Book of Glory (13, 1—20, 31)
- IV. Epilogue: The Resurrection Appearance in Galilee (21, 1-25)

I. PROLOGUE*

CHAPTER 1

¹ In the beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.

What came to be* ⁴through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race;

⁵ the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

⁶A man named John was sent* from God. ⁷He came for testimony,* to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him.

¹¹ He came to what was his own, but his own people* did not accept him.

¹² But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, ¹³who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God.*

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh* and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he

JOHN 1

existed before me.' " * ¹⁶For fullness we have all received in place of grace,* ¹⁷because the law was given through grace and truth came through Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen The only Son, God,* who is Father's side, has revealed I

II. THE BOOK OF SIGNS

John the Baptist's Testimony Himself. ¹⁹*And this is the testimony of John. When the Pharisees and Sadducees from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites [to him] to ask him, "Why do you baptize?" ²⁰he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am the Messiah."* ²¹So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?"* And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" I answered, "No." ²²So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" ²³He said:

"I am 'the voice of one crying in the desert,
'Make straight the way for the Lord,' " *

as Isaiah the prophet said." ²⁴Some Pharisees* were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, Elijah or the Prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water;* but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸This happened in Bethabara across the Jordan,* where John was baptizing.

Notes to John

1, 1-18: The prologue states the main themes of the gospel: life, light, truth, the world, testimony, and the preexistence of Jesus Christ, the incarnate *Logos*, who reveals God the Father. In origin, it was probably an early Christian hymn. Its closest parallel is in other christological hymns, Col 1, 15-20 and Phil 2, 6-11. Its core (1-5, 10-11, 14) is poetic in structure, with short phrases linked by "staircase parallelism," in which the last word of one phrase becomes the first word of the next. Prose inserts (at least 6-8 and 15) deal with John the Baptist.

1, 1: *In the beginning*: also the first words of the Old Testament (Gn 1, 1). *Was*: this verb is used three times with different meanings in this verse: existence, relationship, and predication. *The Word* (Greek *logos*): this term combines God's dynamic, creative word (Genesis), personified preexistent Wisdom as the instrument of God's creative activity (Proverbs), and the ultimate intelligibility of reality (Hellenistic philosophy). *With God*: the Greek preposition here connotes communication with another. *Was God*: lack of a definite article with "God" in Greek signifies predication rather than identification.

1, 3: *What came to be*: while the oldest manuscripts have no punctuation here, the corrector of Bodmer Papyrus P⁷⁵, some manuscripts, and the Ante-Nicene Fathers take this phrase with what follows, as staircase parallelism. Connection with v 3 reflects fourth-century anti-Arianism.

1, 5: The ethical dualism of light and darkness is paralleled in intertestamental literature and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. *Overcome*: "comprehend" is another possible translation, but cf Jn 12, 35; Wis 7, 29-30.

1, 6: John was *sent* just as Jesus was "sent" (Jn 4, 34) in divine mission. Other references to John the Baptist in this gospel emphasize the differences between them and John's subordinate role.

1, 7: *Testimony*: the testimony theme of Jn is introduced, which portrays Jesus as if on trial throughout his ministry. All testify to Jesus: John the Baptist, the Samaritan woman, scripture, his works, the crowds, the Spirit, and his disciples.

1, 11: *What was his own . . . his own people*: first a neuter, literally, "his own property/possession" (probably = Israel), then a masculine, "his own people" (the Israelites).

1, 13: Believers in Jesus become children of God not through any of the three natural causes mentioned but through God who is the immediate cause of the new spiritual life. *Were born*: the Greek verb can mean "begotten" (by a male) or "born" (from a female or of parents). The variant "he who was begotten," asserting Jesus' virginal conception, is weakly attested in Old Latin and Syriac versions.

1, 14: *Flesh*: the whole person, used probably against docetistic tendencies (cf 1 Jn 4, 2; 2 Jn 7). *Made his dwelling*: literally, "pitched his tent/tabernacle." Cf the tabernacle or tent of meeting that was the place of God's presence among his people (Ex 25, 8-9). The incarnate Word is the new mode of God's

presence among his people. The Greek verb has the same consonants as the Aramaic word for God's presence (Shekinah). *Glory*: God's visible manifestation of majesty in power, which once filled the tabernacle (Ex 40, 34) and the temple (1 Kgs 8, 10-11, 27), is now centered in Jesus. *Only Son*: Greek, *monogenēs*, but see the note on Jn 1, 18. *Grace and truth*: these words may represent two Old Testament terms describing Yahweh in covenant relationship with Israel (cf Ex 34, 6), thus God's "love" and "fidelity." The Word shares Yahweh's covenant qualities.

1, 15: This verse, interrupting vv 14 and 16, seems drawn from v 30.

1, 16: *Grace in place of grace*: replacement of the Old Covenant with the New (cf 17). Other possible translations are "grace upon grace" (accumulation) and "grace for grace" (correspondence).

1, 18: *The only Son, God*: while the vast majority of later textual witnesses have another reading, "the Son, the only one" or "the only Son," the translation above follows the best and earliest manuscripts, *monogenēs theos*, but takes the first term to mean not just "Only One" but to include a filial relationship with the Father, as at Lk 9, 38 ("only child") or Heb 11, 17 ("only son") and as translated at Jn 1, 14. The Logos is thus "only Son" and God but not Father/God.

1, 19-51: The testimony of John the Baptist about the Messiah and Jesus' self-revelation to the first disciples. This section constitutes the introduction to the gospel proper and is connected with the prose inserts in the prologue. It develops the major theme of testimony in four scenes: John's negative testimony about himself; his positive testimony about Jesus; the revelation of Jesus to Andrew and Peter; the revelation of Jesus to Philip and Nathanael.

1, 19: *The Jews*: throughout most of the gospel, the "Jews" does not refer to the Jewish people as such but to the hostile authorities, both Pharisees and Sadducees, particularly in Jerusalem, who refuse to believe in Jesus. The usage reflects the atmosphere, at the end of the first century, of polemics between church and synagogue, or possibly it refers to Jews as representative of a hostile world (10-11).

1, 20: *Messiah*: the anointed agent of Yahweh, usually considered to be of Davidic descent. See further the note on Jn 1, 41.

1, 21: *Elijah*: the Baptist did not claim to be Elijah returned to earth (cf Mal 3, 23; Mt 11, 14). *The Prophet*: probably the prophet like Moses (Dt 18, 15 cf Acts 3, 22).

1, 23: This is a repunctuation and reinterpretation (as in the synoptic gospels and Septuagint) of the Hebrew text of Is 40, 3, which reads, "A voice cries out in the desert prepare the way of the LORD."

1, 24: *Some Pharisees*: other translations, such as "Now they had been sent from the Pharisees," misunderstand the grammatical construction. This is a different group from that in v 19; the priests and Levites would have been Sadducees, not Pharisees.