



An Introduction to the Book of Isaiah

Author and Title

The opening words of the book explain that this is <<*the vision of Isaiah son of Amoz*>> (1:1a). Unlike Jeremiah, who discloses aspects of his inner personal life, e.g. Jeremiah 20:7-12, Isaiah says little about himself. Isaiah Chapter 6 records his call to prophesy, openly revealing his innermost thoughts on that occasion; Chapters 7-8, 20 and 37-39 offer glimpses into his public ministry. The parallel accounts in 2 Kings Chapters 19-20 add a little. The NT bears witness to his prophetic foresight (John 12:37-41), and boldness (Romans 10:20). Beyond this, the Bible's sole interest is in Isaiah's message, which is summed up in the meaning of his name: 'Yahweh is salvation'.

Isaiah's father was Amoz, but the Bible says nothing more of him. Jewish tradition claims that Amoz was a brother of Amaziah, the king of Judah, putting Isaiah into the royal family. It is clear that Isaiah was a married man and a father. He appears to have been a resident of Jerusalem. Hebrews 11:37b <<*they were sawn in two*>> may allude to the tradition of Isaiah's death under persecution by Manasseh, king of Judah (687-642BC); this is described in the documents Lives of the Prophets 1.1 and Martyrdom of Isaiah 5.1-14.

Isaiah's record of the reign of King Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:22) is not to be identified with the biblical Book of Isaiah.

The title presents the book as <<*the vision of Isaiah son of Amoz*>> (1:1a). Israel's prophets were indeed seers (2 Kings 6:15-17, 17:13, Isaiah 29:10 and 30:10). Isaiah himself 'saw the Lord' (6:1), but his visionary insights were made shareable by being put into a written message: <<*The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw*>> (2:1). Isaiah's book is a vision in that it reveals, through symbols and reasoned thought, a God-centred way of seeing and living. It offers everyone the true alternative to the false appearances of this world.

Date

Isaiah prophesied <<*in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah*>> (1:1b). His call to ministry came <<*in the year that King Uzziah died*>> (6:1a), around 740BC, and he lived long enough to record the death of Sennacherib (37:38), datable to 681BC. A few of the oracles can be dated, as the comments will show: e.g. Chapter 7 comes from about 735BC; Chapters 36-38 come from the time of the Assyrian invasion in 701BC. Most of the material, however, can be dated only in very general terms because the book offers no such information.

Some scholars theorise that more than one author was responsible for this book. These scholars spread the authorship of the book through multiple hands writing over the course of around 200 years. This theory proposes that, although Chapters 1-39 are largely the work of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66 are the work of an anonymous prophet living during the Babylonian exile, over a Century after Isaiah. Many propose further that Chapters 56-66 were composed by yet another, still later, anonymous prophet. This would yield First Isaiah (Chapters 1-39), from the late 8th Century BC; Second Isaiah (Chapters 40-55), from the middle of the 6th Century; and Third Isaiah (Chapters 56-66), from sometime in the 5th Century. There are three primary reasons offered for not attributing Chapters 40-66 to Isaiah the son of Amoz:

1. Chapters 40-66 assume the exilic period as their background.
2. Chapters 40-66 have differences in style from Chapters 1-39.
3. The detailed predictions in the latter section of the book would have been meaningful to the exilic and postexilic community of Judah but, according to this view, would not have been relevant to the people of Isaiah's own time.

These reasons for dividing the book suffer from severe shortcomings, and it is better to take the heading (1:1) as indicating that the entire book comes from Isaiah, the son of Amoz.

1. There is unified testimony from the ancient world for single authorship.
 - a. The NT refers to passages throughout the book as the work of Isaiah. The NT acknowledges no other author or authors. The testimony of John in John 12:41 is especially instructive: <<*Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke about him*>>. 'These things', which is plural, refers to the two previous quotations in John 12:38, using Isaiah 53:1, from the so-called 'Second Isaiah'; and John 12:40, using Isaiah 6:10, from so-called 'First Isaiah', but John refers to the one person, Isaiah, who both 'saw his glory' and 'spoke of him'.

- b. The intertestamental Book of Sirach (48:24-25) and the 1st Century Jewish historian Josephus (Jewish Antiquities 11.5-6) attest Isaiah's authorship of the whole book.
 - c. A Hebrew manuscript of Isaiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls bears witness to the seamless unity of the book as the work of Isaiah.
 - d. It is hard to imagine how prophets could have issued such oracles as those of Isaiah 40-66, which were of such importance in the history of Judah, and yet fade into obscurity.
 - e. Later OT authors seem to cite prophecies from Chapters 40-66, which they could not have done if the book were broken up as described.
2. There are many distinctive features of Isaiah's style that run through all three parts. For example, Isaiah's characteristic title for the Lord is 'the Holy One of Israel', which appears 25 times in the whole book: 12 times in Isaiah 1-39; 11 times in Chapters 40-55; and twice in Chapters 56-66. It appears only six times outside of Isaiah: twice in Jeremiah, three times in the Psalms, and in 2 Kings 19:22 (Isaiah 37:33). The phrase 'high and lifted up' is a feature of Isaiah, appearing in 2:12-14, 6:1, 52:13 and 57:15, i.e. in each of the three sections. The comments will show other aspects of coherent thought and expression in Isaiah. Any differences of style can be explained by the different topics of the chapters and by different stages in Isaiah's life, e.g. Isaiah may have written Chapters 40-66 after the Assyrian invasion of 701BC.
 3. The predictive material in Chapters 40-66 is highly relevant both to the exilic audience and to Isaiah's own day. Certainly it demonstrates the Lord's rule over history; these chapters appeal to it for that purpose, and Josephus (Jewish Antiquities 11.5-7) records a story of the impression the specific prediction of Cyrus (Isaiah 44:28) made on the Persian monarch when he learned of it, a prediction made about 150 years in advance. The biblical worldview, which begins with the majestic Creator, can readily accept this. Further, Chapters 40-66 often mention pagan religion, but specifically Babylonian material is rare (46:1); most address Canaanite idolatry, which Judah mixed in with their worship of Yahweh, and the extended satire on idolatry; and this was no longer a problem in Judah after the fall of Jerusalem.

However, the primary significance of this predictive material resides in a wider context. The whole book portrays God's plan for Judah as a story that is headed somewhere, namely, toward the coming of the final heir of David who will bring light to the Gentiles. Israel was created for this very purpose, and it will require that God's people be purified of those members whose lives destroy that mission. This prospect of a glorious future enlists all believing readers to dedicate

themselves to living faithfully and to embrace the dignity of playing a part in its development.

At the heart of Isaiah's message is God's purpose of grace for sinners. If that ultimate miracle is accepted, and one cannot be a Christian without accepting it, then a lesser miracle is no barrier. Indeed, the prophet making predictions of future events is not a problem; it is, as Isaiah intended it to be, encouraging evidence of God's sovereign salvation intercepting a sinful world.

Theme

The central theme of the book is God himself, who does all things for his own sake (48:11). Isaiah defines everything else by its relation to God, whether it is rightly adjusted to him as the gloriously central figure in all of reality (45:22-25). God is the Holy One of Israel (1:4), the One who is high and lifted up but who also dwells down among the 'contrite and lowly' (57:15), the Sovereign over the whole world (13:1-27:13) whose wrath is fierce (9:12 and 10:4), but whose cleansing touch atones for sin (6:7), whose salvation flows in endless supply (12:3), whose Gospel is 'good news of happiness' (52:7), who is moving history toward the blessing of his people (43:3-7) and the exclusive worship due him (2:2-4). He is the only Saviour (43:10-13), and the whole world will know it (49:26). To rest in the promises of this God is his people's only strength (30:15); to delight themselves in his word is their refreshing feast (55:1-2); to serve his cause is their worthy devotion (Chapter 62); but to rebel against him is endless death (66:24).

A microcosm of the book's message appears in 1:2-2:5. The Lord announces his basic charge against the people: they have received so much privilege from God and ought to be grateful children, but 'they have despised the Holy One of Israel' (1:2-4). He describes the purpose of the various judgements they face, namely, to bring them to repentance, or at least to preserve a remnant who will repent (1:5-9). Judah is very diligent to observe the divinely appointed sacrifices, but the people's hearts are far from God, as their unwillingness to protect their own weakest members exhibits (1:10-20). The Lord called his people to be the embodiment of faithfulness in this world, and yet they are now filled with rampant unfaithfulness at every level: personal, religious and social; but God intends to purge Zion of its sinful members and set her up as a beacon of light for the whole world. In view of this glorious future, Isaiah's contemporaries should commit themselves afresh to walking 'in the light of the Lord' (1:21-2:5).

Purpose

Isaiah announces God's surprising plan of grace and glory for his rebellious people and, indeed, for the world. God had promised Abraham that through his descendants the world would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). God had promised David that his throne would lead the world into salvation (2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Psalm

89:19-37). But by Isaiah's time, the descendants of Abraham and many members of the dynasty of David no longer trusted the promises of God, aligning themselves instead with the promises and the fears of this false world. Judah's unbelief in God during the pivotal events of Isaiah's lifetime redirected their future away from blessing and toward judgement. At this historic turning point, Judah moved from independence under God's power to subservience under pagan powers.

What, then, of God's ancient promises? Is the gracious purpose of God defeated by Judah's sin? Isaiah answers that question. After the prefatory Chapters 1-5, his answer unfolds in Chapters 6-27, and the rest of the book develops the serious but hopeful message of these chapters. Isaiah's answer is that, although God must purify his people through judgement, he has an overruling purpose of grace, beginning with Isaiah himself (Chapter 6), spreading to Judah (7:1-9:7) and Israel (9:8-11:16), and resulting in endless joy (12:1-6). Even the nations of the world are taken into account (13:1-27:13). The purpose of Isaiah, then, is to declare the good news that God will glorify himself through the renewed and increased glory of his people, which will attract the nations. The Book of Isaiah is a vision of hope for sinners through the coming Messiah, promising for the 'ransomed' people of God a new world where sin and sorrow will be forever forgotten (35:10 and 51:11).

Isaiah's book envisions three historical settings:

1. Chapters 1-39 are set against the background of Isaiah's own times in the late 8th Century BC.
2. Chapters 40-55 assume the Jewish exiles in Babylon in the 6th Century as their audience.
3. Chapters 56-66 take the returned exiles and subsequent generations of God's people as their backdrop.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the chapters have relevance only to their assumed audiences: the long-range prophecies of Chapters 40-66, as already indicated, challenge all the people of Judah in Isaiah's time to accept their role in a story that is headed to a glorious future and to live faithfully in that light. Further, the entire book, as canonical Scripture, addresses all the people of God until Christ returns.

First, in his own times, Isaiah prophesied <<***in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah***>> (1:1b). Called by God <<***in the year that King Uzziah died***>> (6:1), his long ministry began in 740BC. The external threat of Isaiah's day was the militant Assyrian Empire rising to power in the east. The question forced upon Judah by this threat was one of trust: in what will God's people trust for salvation, in human strategies of self-rescue, or in prophetic promises of divine grace?

This question of what and whom to trust intensified on two occasions. The first occurred in circa 735BC, during the reign of King Ahaz. Under pressure from Assyria, the Northern Kingdom of Israel formed a pact of mutual defence with Syria, and together these two kingdoms aimed to force Judah into alignment with them (Chapter 7). However, God could be trusted to stand by his commitment to defend the Davidic throne. Accordingly, Isaiah assured Ahaz of God's saving purpose. But Ahaz refused God, preferring the power of Assyria, and negotiated for pagan protection (2 Kings 16:5-9). Thus Ahaz surrendered the sovereignty of the Davidic throne to a nation hostile to the Kingdom of God, and achieved nothing in return. The coalition arrayed against Judah failed; Syria fell in 732BC and Israel in 722BC, as God had said they would (Isaiah 7:16 and 8:4).

The second crisis occurred in 701BC, during the reign of Hezekiah. This time Assyria was the threat. As before, the temptation was to negotiate an alliance of defence with human powers, in this case with Egypt (30:1-7, 31:1-3 and 36:6). Judah chose the false refuge of human promises rather than to rest on the Lord's 'sure foundation' (28:14-22). Assyria then set out to punish Judah for its pact with Egypt. Hezekiah tried to buy peace from the Assyrians (2 Kings 18:13-16), but they turned on him (Isaiah 33:1). Under extreme pressure, Hezekiah finally put his trust in the Lord and found him to be powerfully faithful (Chapters 36-37).

The eventual downfall of Judah was foreseen in Hezekiah's unguarded openness to Babylonian influence (Chapter 39). Isaiah discerned in Hezekiah's enthusiasm for Babylon a future of captivity there for God's people.

Second, Isaiah was enabled by God to address the Jewish captives far away in Babylon in the 6th Century BC. He announces a promise that God is coming with a world-changing display of his glory (40:5). To prepare for his coming, the exiles must return to the Promised Land (48:20). They must not be demoralised by the impressive but empty culture of idolatry in which they live (41:21-24), nor should they resent God's use of a pagan conqueror, Cyrus the Great, as their liberator from Babylon (44:24-28). They must look by faith for a greater liberator still to come, the messianic 'servant of the Lord'. He will bring justice to the nations (42:1-4), and save his people from their ultimate captivity, the guilt of sin (52:13-53:12). Since the faith of God's people had already proven weak, God pledges that he alone will accomplish this, for his own glory (48:9-11).

Third, Isaiah addressed the returned exiles and subsequent generations of God's people with messages of challenge and hope, to keep their faith and obedience steady until God fulfils all his promises. Isaiah makes clear the spiritual and universal nature of God's true people (56:3-8 and 66:18-23). He sees the final triumph of one who is 'mighty to save' (63:1). His prophetic eye looks beyond the fraudulence of this world, all the way forward to the eternal finality of God's renewed people in a renewed cosmos (65:17 and 66:22). **<<Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which**

we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe>> (Hebrews 12:28).

Key Themes

With God himself as the centre of Isaiah's vision, multiple supportive themes are entailed:

1. God is offended by religious ritual, however impressive, if it conceals an empty heart and a careless life (1:10-17, 58:1-12 and 66:1-4).

2. God's true people will become a multinational community of worship and peace forever (2:2-4, 19:19-25, 25:6-9, 56:3-8 and 66:18-23), and the predominant culture of a new world (14:1-2, 41:8-16, 43:3-7, 45:14-17, 49:19-26 and 60:1-22).

3. God opposes all manifestations of human pride (2:10-17, 10:33-34, 13:11, 16:6, 23:9 and 28:1-4).

4. The foolish idols that man creates are destined for destruction (2:20-21, 19:1, 31:6-7, 44:9-20 and 46:1-7).

5. Although God's judgement will reduce his people to a remnant, his final purpose is the joyful triumph of his grace (1:9, 6:1-12:6, 35:1-10, 40:1-2, 49:13-16, 51:3, 54:7-8 and 55:12-13).

6. God is able to judge people by rendering them deaf and blind to his saving word (6:9-10, 28:11-13, 29:9-14 and 42:18-25).

7. The only hope of the world is bound up in one man – the promised Davidic king (4:2, 7:14, 9:2-7 and 11:1-10), the servant of the Lord (42:1-9, 49:1-13, 50:4-9 and 52:13-53:12), the anointed preacher of the Gospel (61:1-3), and the lone victor over all evil (63:1-6).

8. God is actively using creation and history, and even the wrongs of man, for his own glory (10:5-19, 13:1-27:13, 36:1-39:8, 40:12-26 and 44:24-45:13).

9. With a great and holy God ruling all things, man's duty is a repentant trust in him alone (7:9, 10:20, 12:2, 26:3-4, 28:12, 28:16, 30:15-18, 31:1, 32:17-18, 36:1-37:38, 40:31, 42:17, 50:10, 55:1-7, 57:13, 57:15 and 66:2).

10. God's people, feeling abandoned by God (40:27, 49:14 and 51:12-13), foolishly put their trust in worldly powers (7:1-8:22, 28:14-22, 30:1-17, 31:1-3 and 39:1-8).

11. God will uphold his own cause with a world-transforming display of his glory (4:2-6, 11:10, 35:1-2, 40:3-5, 52:10, 59:19, 60:1-3 and 66:18).

12. God uses predictive prophecy to prove that his hand is guiding human history (41:1-4, 41:21-29, 44:6-8, 44:24-45:13, 46:8-11 and 48:3-11).

13. God's past faithfulness and the certainty of his final victory motivate his people toward prayer and practical obedience now (56:1-2 and 62:1-64:12).

14. The wrath of God is to be feared above all else (5:25, 9:12-21, 10:4-6, 13:9, 13:13, 30:27, 34:2, 59:18, 63:1-6, 66:15-16 and 66:24).

History of Salvation Summary

Isaiah shares with the rest of the OT a high view of the mission of Israel. God called Abraham and his family to be the vehicle by which he would bring to the whole world the blessing of knowing the true God (Genesis 12:1-3). The great tragedy of Israel was their repeated faithlessness, which hid the light from the Gentiles. God will not be thwarted, however, and in order to bless the Gentiles he will purify his people (1:24-28), and from them raise up the heir of David.

Although Isaiah denounces hypocrisy, greed and idolatry as offenses against God, he also foresees the Saviour of offenders, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God with us (7:14), the child destined to rule forever (9:6-7), the hope of the Davidic throne (11:1), the glory of the Lord (40:5), the suffering servant of the Lord (42:1-9, 49:1-6, 50:4-9 and 52:13-53:12), the anointed preacher of the Gospel (61:1-3), the bloodied victor over all evil (63:1-6), and more. Isaiah is mentioned by name in the NT over 20 times and is quoted there extensively, for the message he preached is the very Gospel of Jesus and the apostles.

Isaiah's message makes an impact on every reader in one of two ways. Either this book will harden the reader's pride against God (6:9-10, 28:13 and 29:11-12), or it will become to the contrite reader a feast of refreshment in God (55:1-3, 57:15 and 66:2). Through Isaiah's vision the eyes of faith see their iniquity laid on another (53:6), they see a new Jerusalem of eternal gladness (65:17-18), they see all humanity giving God the worship that is his due forever (66:22-23), and that prophetic vision keeps their hope alive. As with the rest of the OT, these things were written <<***that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope***>> (Romans 15:4b).

Literary Features

The overall genre of the book is prophecy. Although biblical prophets primarily tell forth God's message in their contemporary situation, and less frequently foretell the future, the last third of Isaiah is an exception in being mainly predictive of the future. It is important to clarify two literary features of the foretelling: first, having been received in visions, it has many figurative elements; and second, its purpose is not simply to tell the future but to express the author's sense of Israel's place in God's overarching redemptive plan for the world.

A book this large, and lacking a narrative line, must be viewed as an anthology or collection of individual compositions. It is often futile to look for a smooth flow

from one unit to the next. The book swings back and forth between oracles of judgement and oracles of salvation. The general movement of the book is from an emphasis on evil and judgement to rapturous visions of a coming redemption, a movement from bad news to good news. However, this is only a general pattern that should not lead readers to distort the smaller swings, between evil/judgement and redemption/restoration, which persist to the very last verses of the book.

The opening movement of the book is more of a warning against sin than a blueprint for the future. As Isaiah looks at his world, he depicts its evil, denounces that evil, and predicts God's imminent judgement against that evil. All three of these ingredients are typically couched in the form of the oracle of judgement, a divine indictment of present evil. Additionally, biblical prophets intermingle and end their books with visions of God's restored favour to his people; these visions are expressed in the form of the oracle of redemption, also called the oracle of salvation, and oracle of blessing.

The oracles of judgement need to be approached as examples of satire: they have an object of attack, a vehicle in which the attack is embodied, a stated or implied norm by which the criticism is conducted, and a prevailing tone of either ridicule or disgust. Because much of the Book of Isaiah envisions things that either have not yet happened or do not literally happen, given the symbolic form in which they are portrayed, the genre of visionary writing is continuously operative in the Book of Isaiah, the author envisions something that does not literally exist and/or that has not yet happened. A preponderance of the book is cast into the form of poetry, with the result that readers need to apply all that they know about staples of poetry, such as imagery, metaphor, simile, apostrophe, and hyperbole.

Many of the visions of redemption in the last third of Isaiah are lyric in form and effect. Apocalyptic writing appears prominently in Chapters 24-27. Because the agents who interact with God are often nations rather than individuals, and because the forces of nature are also sometimes actors, the label 'cosmic drama' is a helpful concept. Finally, in this book that encompasses such a diversity of material, there is even a full-fledged hero story involving King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah (Chapters 36-39).

The Near East at the Time of Isaiah (circa 740BC)

The prophecies of Isaiah are set against the backdrop of a rising Assyrian Empire. This resurgent ancient nation posed a great threat to Israel and Judah, and it would eventually engulf nearly the entire Near East from Ur to Ararat to Egypt.



Regional Map

Outline

- I. Introduction: ‘Ah, Sinful Nation!’ (1:1-5:30)
 - a. Judah’s sins confronted (1:1-31)
 - i. The Wickedness of Judah (1:2-20)
 - ii. The Degenerate City (1:21-31)
 - b. Judah’s Hope, Guilt, Hope (2:1-4:6)
 - i. The Future House of God (2:1-4)
 - ii. Judgement Pronounced on Arrogance (2:5-4:1)
 - iii. The Future Glory of the Survivors in Zion (4:2-6)
 - c. Judah’s sins condemned (5:1-30)
 - i. The Song of the Unfruitful Vineyard (5:1-7)
 - ii. Social Injustice Denounced (5:8-23)
 - iii. Foreign Invasion Predicted (5:24-30)
- II. God Redefines the Future of His People: ‘Your Guilt Is Taken Away’ (6:1-12:6)

- a. A Vision of God in the Temple (6:1-13)
- b. Grace Through Judgement for Judah (7:1-9:7)
 - i. Isaiah Reassures King Ahaz (7:1-9)
 - ii. Isaiah Gives Ahaz the Sign of Immanuel (7:10-25)
- c. Isaiah's Son a Sign of the Assyrian Invasion (8:1-15)
- d. Disciples of Isaiah (8:16-22)
- e. The Righteous Reign of the Coming King (9:1-7)
- f. Grace Through Judgement for Israel (9:8-11:16)
 - i. Judgement on Arrogance and Oppression (9:8-10:4)
 - ii. Arrogant Assyria also Judged (10:5-19)
 - iii. The Repentant Remnant of Israel (10:20-34)
 - iv. The Peaceful Kingdom (11:1-9)
 - v. Return of the Remnant of Israel and Judah (11:10-16)
- g. Thanksgiving and Praise (12:1-6)
- III. God's Judgement and Grace for the World: 'We Have a Strong City' (13:1-27:13)
 - a. The First Series of Oracles: the Here and Now (13:1-20:6)
 - i. Babylon and Assyria (13:1-14:27)
 - 1. Proclamation against Babylon (13:1-22)
 - 2. Restoration of Judah (14:1-2)
 - 3. Downfall of the King of Babylon (14:3-23)
 - 4. An Oracle concerning Assyria (14:24-27)
 - ii. An Oracle concerning Philistia (14:28-32)
 - iii. An Oracle concerning Moab (15:1-16:14)
 - iv. The Syria-Israel alliance (17:1-18:7)
 - 1. An Oracle concerning Damascus (17:1-14)
 - 2. An Oracle concerning Ethiopia (18:1-7)
 - v. Egypt (19:1-20:6)
 - 1. An Oracle concerning Egypt (19:1-17)
 - 2. Egypt, Assyria, and Israel Blessed (19:18-25)
 - 3. Isaiah Dramatises the Conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia (20:1-6)

- b. The Second Series of Oracles: the Deeper Truth (21:1-23:18)
 - i. Oracles concerning Babylon, Edom, and Arabia (21:1-17)
 - 1. Babylon (21:1-10)
 - 2. Edom (21:11-12)
 - 3. Arabia (21:13-17)
 - ii. Jerusalem (22:1-25)
 - 1. A Warning of the Destruction of Jerusalem (22:1-14)
 - 2. Denunciation of Self-Seeking Officials (22:15-25)
 - iii. An Oracle concerning Tyre (23:1-18)
 - c. The Third Series of Oracles: the Final End (24:1-27:13)
 - i. Impending Judgement on the Earth (24:1-23)
 - 1. The Wasted City (24:1-20)
 - 2. The Lord will Punish (24:21-23)
 - ii. Praise for Deliverance from Oppression (25:1-12)
 - iii. Judah's Song of Victory (26:1-21)
 - iv. Israel's Redemption (27:1-13)
- IV. God's Sovereign Word Spoken into the World: 'Ah!' (28:1-35:10)
- a. Six Laments, with Assurances (28:1-33:24)
 - i. Judgement on Corrupt Rulers, Priests, and Prophets (28:1-29)
 - ii. The Siege of Jerusalem (29:1-16)
 - iii. Hope for the Future (29:17-24)
 - iv. Stubborn Children with their own Plans (30:1-33)
 - 1. The Futility of Reliance on Egypt (30:1-7)
 - 2. A Rebellious People (30:8-17)
 - 3. God's Promise to Zion (30:18-26)
 - 4. Judgement on Assyria (30:27-33)
 - v. Those Who go Down to Egypt for Help (31:1-32:20)
 - 1. Alliance with Egypt Is Futile (31:1-9)
 - 2. Government with Justice Predicted (32:1-8)
 - 3. Complacent Women Warned of Disaster (32:9-15)
 - 4. The Peace of God's Reign (32:16-20)
 - vi. The Destroyer Who has not been Destroyed (33:1-24)

1. A Prophecy of Deliverance from Foes (33:1-16)
 2. The Land of the Majestic King (33:17-24)
- b. Two Final Outcomes: Judgement or Salvation (34:1-35:10)
 - i. Judgement on the Nations (34:1-17)
 - ii. The Return of the Redeemed to Zion (35:1-10)
- V. Historical Transition: 'In Whom Do You Now Trust?' (36:1-39:8)
- a. Practical Trust in God Vindicated (36:1-37:38)
 - i. Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem (36:1-22)
 - ii. Hezekiah Consults Isaiah (37:1-13)
 - iii. Hezekiah's Prayer (37:14-35)
 - iv. Sennacherib's Defeat and Death (37:36-38)
 - b. Human Inconstancy Sent into Exile (38:1-39:8)
 - i. Hezekiah's Illness (38:1-22)
 - ii. Envoys from Babylon Welcomed (39:1-8)
- VI. Comfort for God's Exiles: 'The Glory of the Lord Shall Be Revealed' (40:1-55:13)
- a. God's People Are Comforted (40:1-31)
 - b. Israel Assured of God's Help (41:1-20)
 - c. False Hopes, the Lord's Servant, a New Song (41:21-42:20)
 - i. The Futility of Idols (41:21-29)
 - ii. The Servant, a Light to the Nations (42:1-9)
 - iii. A Hymn of Praise (42:10-20)
 - d. God Reclaims his People for his Glory (42:21-43:28)
 - i. Israel's Disobedience (42:21-25)
 - ii. Restoration and Protection Promised (43:1-28)
 - e. God Revives his People for his Glory (44:1-44:28)
 - i. God's Blessing on Israel (44:1-8)
 - ii. The Absurdity of Idol-Worship (44:9-20)
 - iii. Israel Is Not Forgotten (44:21-28)
 - f. Cyrus, God's Instrument (45:1-19)
 - g. The Gods and Pride of Babylon Doomed (45:20-47:15)
 - i. Idols Cannot Save Babylon (45:20-46:13)

- ii. The Humiliation of Babylon (47:1-15)
- h. God the Creator and Redeemer (48:1-22)
- i. The Lord's Servant Displayed, His People Assured (49:1-50:3)
 - i. The Servant's Mission (49:1-7)
 - ii. Zion's Children to Be Brought Home (49:8-50:3)
- j. The Servant's Humiliation and Vindication (50:4-11)
- k. Blessings in Store for God's People (51:1-23)
- l. Let Zion Rejoice (52:1-12)
- m. The Suffering Servant (52:13-53:12)
- n. Compassion for God's People, Offered to All (54:1-55:13)
 - i. The Eternal Covenant of Peace (54:1-17)
 - ii. An Invitation to Abundant Life (55:1-13)
- VII. How to Prepare for the Coming Glory: 'Hold Fast My Covenant' (56:1-66:24)
 - a. The Covenant Extended to All Who Obey (56:1-8)
 - b. The False People of God Exposed (56:9-57:13)
 - i. The Corruption of Israel's Rulers (56:9-12)
 - ii. Israel's Futile Idolatry (57:1-13)
 - c. A Promise of Help and Healing (57:14-21)
 - d. The Path to Blessing: Ritual vs. Responsibility (58:1-59:21)
 - i. False and True Worship (58:1-14)
 - ii. Injustice and Oppression to Be Punished (59:1-21)
 - e. Present Failure, Eternal Covenant, Future Glory (60:1-22)
 - i. The Ingathering of the Dispersed (60:1-18)
 - ii. God the Glory of Zion (60:19-22)
 - f. The Anointed Preacher Renewing the World (61:1-62:12)
 - i. The Good News of Deliverance (61:1-11)
 - ii. The Vindication and Salvation of Zion (62:1-12)
 - g. The Coming Victor; his Past Faithfulness (63:1-14)
 - i. Vengeance on Edom (63:1-6)
 - ii. God's Mercy Remembered (63:7-14)
 - h. A Prayer of Penitence (63:15-64:12)
 - i. The Eagerness of God for His People's Eternal Joy (65:1-25)

- i. The Righteousness of God's Judgement (65:1-16)
 - ii. The Glorious New Creation (65:17-25)
- j. True Worship Now and Forever (66:1-24)
 - i. The Worship God Demands (66:1-4)
 - ii. The Lord Vindicates Zion (66:5-13)
 - iii. The Reign and Indignation of God (66:14-24)