

**A
CONCISE
COMMENTARY
ON
THE BOOK OF
ISAIAH**

Eugene Kimble, Ph.D.

Made available by Biblical Studies Ministries International, Inc.
www.bsmi.org

A CONCISE COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF ISAIAH
Eugene Kimble, Ph.D.

Introduction: Isaiah's name means, "The LORD is salvation," and in chapter 12, verse 10 Isaiah says of himself, "Behold, God is my salvation." Edward J. Young, in his fine three-volume commentary of Isaiah, explains what the prophet meant:

God is the author, the cause, the agent, the accomplisher of that salvation. Salvation apart from God is unthinkable. . . . In salvation we are delivered from the guilt and the pollution of our sins, and we receive the wondrous and blessed righteousness of the eternal Christ. God is our Father, and by an act of His omnipotent grace adopts us as His own children. In the fullest sense, we receive God. What more can we have—what more do we need than God Himself? He is our salvation.

"If God were not my salvation," the people of God might reason, "there would be everything to fear." Man is lonely, man is despondent; he lives in the blackness of long night. There is everything to fear until God become his salvation. Then there is nothing to fear. Only one may speak with such boldness and confidence; he is the one to whom God has become salvation. With full security and assurance he may proclaim, "I will trust and not be afraid." This is a God-given certainty of hope which may be possessed only by the redeemed.

Every man must have might and strength in order to live. Unless there is something upon which one can base his life, he will go to pieces. Some lean on drink; some on narcotics, some on dogged willpower; and some on bravado; some on 'religion'; all with a single exception lean on man. That exception consists of those who find their might and their strength in God.¹

Young gives the underlying theme of Isaiah: God will come in judgment upon those who refuse to repent. He will redeem the obedient believer.

Seldom does a pastor or Sunday School teacher give a full exposition of the book of Isaiah. This concise commentary is offered with the prayer that it may present an overview of Isaiah as a whole that will permit preachers, teachers, and students to grasp the blessed truths proclaimed by God's prophet.

I. Prophecies concerning God's people Israel and His city Jerusalem, 1:1-6:13

A. God's people move toward hardness of heart—having ears that would not hear God's Word and eyes that could not see God's working power, 1:1-6:13

1. The purpose of chapter one is to show the relationship between the sins of the people and their sufferings, and the need for further purification—a general introduction setting forth a sequence of incidents that God's people will experience in more than one emergency, 1:1-31

a. The sin of the people is shown to be

(1) The cause of their separation from God, and

(2) The cause of the calamities coming upon them, 1:2-9

b. The relationship of their corruption with religious rites is set forth to demonstrate that worship, practiced with a heart far from God, is in itself of no value, 1:10-20

¹ Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1965), I, 403-404.

- c. The people's present moral corruption is contrasted with Jerusalem's former glory and also with her future when the wicked will be destroyed, 1:21-31
- 2. Three distinct pictures of God's people, 2:1-4:6
 - a. The future exaltation of God's people as the source of instruction concerning true spirituality, 2:1-5
 - b. The present idolatry and wickedness of God's own people, 2:6-4:1
 - (1) The coming day of the Lord, 2:6-22
 - (a) Since His people are morally and religiously indistinguishable from the rest of mankind, 2:6-9
 - (b) Then God's sure punishment will humble them and thereby exalt Himself, 2:10-18
 - (c) What the worldly religious will do when God shows their false gods to be without any power whatsoever, 2:19-22
 - (2) The coming judgment on Jerusalem and Judah, 3:1-4:1
 - (a) Their nourishing support of food and water will be completely taken away, 3:1
 - (b) The leaders will also be removed (3:2-3) and Judah will fall into a state of anarchy and chaos, 3:4-7
 - (c) Judah's destruction is the result of sin, particularly God's people following wicked rulers instead of Him, 3:8-12
 - (d) Since the people would not listen to the Word of repentance spoken by His prophet, God takes His place in court as their Judge 3:13-15
 - (e) When the women become as immoral and irreligious as their men and leaders, the situation is incurable. Thus God because of their wickedness will bring upon them the loss of their present delights as well as widowhood, captivity and disgrace, 3:16-4:1
 - c. Messiah, the Branch, and His cleansed, holy and future people, 4:2-6
 - (1) The beautiful glorious Branch, planted by the Lord, 4:2 (See Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12)
 - (2) Those who survive God's judgment will be holy and free from all filth and stain, 4:3-4
 - (3) God will protect and manifest Himself to His people as in the days of the Exodus from Egypt, 4:5-6
- 3. The prevalent iniquities of God's people and the judgments that, in consequence of these, are to fall upon them, 5:1-30
 - a. God's message spoken in a parable, representing Israel as His vineyard, which contrary to all expectation has produced bad fruit and therefore is given up to devastation, 5:1-7
 - b. A catalogue of their sins with appropriate punishment, 5:8-24
 - c. God's means of inflicting destruction and the end result, 5:25-30
- 4. Isaiah's vision of the Lord, 6:1-13
 - a. What Isaiah saw, 6:1-7
 - b. What Isaiah heard, 6:8-13
 - (1) Go and preach repentance to a non-responsive people, 6:8-10
 - (2) The people will be hardhearted and unrepentant until the land is destroyed, the people deported and only a handful remains, 6:11-13

II. The comfort of Immanuel's deliverance and salvation from, and during, Assyria's (the World's) oppression, 7:1-12:6

A. The Divine Sign of Immanuel—the Virgin's wondrous Son, 7:1-25

1. The Promise of deliverance of God's people (Judah) from her worldly enemies (Syria and Northern Israel), 7:1-16

a. Enemies fighting against God's people, 7:1-6

b. God fighting for His people, 7:7-9a

c. Immanuel—the Divine sign of the Virgin's Wondrous born Son—delivering God's people, 7:9b-16 (See Matthew. 1:18-23)

(1) Ahaz—the no-faith-king, 7:9b-12

(2) God—have faith in His miraculous sign, 7:13-16

(a) A virgin will give birth to a Son, 7:13-14a

(b) The Child will be—"God With Us," 7:14b

(c) The Divine Child gives immediate deliverance, 7:15-16

2. Friendship with the world (Assyria), because of a lack of trust in God's way, brings His Divine chastisement and discipline upon His people (Judah). Furthermore, when His people prefer the world's presence and protection to that of God's, they give themselves up to a loss of freedom, become dominated and harassed by the world, and are thus removed from His place and will for them. They will then see their work of fertile fields and orchards become covered with briars and thorns, with but few left to tend the scant grain and fruit, 7:17-25

B. Two signs from God for His people's present need, 8:1-4

1. A symbolical name written with bold letters on a large tablet, attested by two witnesses, 8:1-2

2. The name applied to Isaiah's newborn son, whose childhood development is to be the measure of God's people's (Judah) deliverance from their enemies (Syria and Northern Israel), 8:3-4

C. The encouragement of Immanuel, "God with us," in the coming conflict, darkness and sin, 8:5-9:7

1. Encouragement will be needed and given, 8:5-10

a. Powerful Assyria will scare off Syria and Northern Israel from Jerusalem, but at the same time will threaten to take all Judah captive, 8:5-8

b. Assyria's evil design against God's people (Judah) will ultimately fail for Immanuel—"God is with us," 8:9-10

2. The majority of people will not receive God's gift of Immanuel, 8:11-15

a. God's people are not to fear persecution from the merely religious, 8:11-12

b. Instead they are to fear God and regard Him as holy, 8:13-15

(1) Then Immanuel will be a sanctuary for believers, 8:14a

(2) But a stumbling stone, trap and snare for unbelievers, 8:14b-15 (See Romans 9:30-33)

3. But the minority of the believing obedient disciples will receive and obey God's Word, 8:16-22

a. The religious mass in their self-hardening did not understand God's Word and even despised it. Thus Isaiah asks God to seal it in the hearts of those disciples who received the Word with believing obedience, 8:16

- b. Since God's Word is the pledge of His people's continuance in the midst of judgment and of the renewal of Israel's glory afterwards, Isaiah now waits for God's grace which is to follow His wrath, 8:17
- c. Isaiah, his two sons and disciples are symbols of redemption to come, opening a way for itself through judgment, 8:18
- d. The obedient believers contrasted with the religious majority in their attitude toward God's Word, 8:19-22

- (1) Believers consult and obey God through His Word

- (2) Whereas, the majority accept the latest religious fad and gurus, because their spiritual eyes are blind, and they will become even more distressed and darkened, 8:19-22

4. In the future a Great Light will arise in the land to dispel the darkness, 9:1-7 (See Matthew 4:12-17)

- a. This Light will enlighten the most wretched and spiritually blind of both Jew and Gentile, 9:1-2

- b. This Light will be an occasion of great joy to believing Jew and Gentile alike, 9:3

- c. The reason for joy is the glorious deliverance of the Galileans (the first converts to Christ) from the burden of religion, the yoke of the law, the service of Satan and the bondage of wickedness, 9:4

- d. The final result of the Great Light's shining will be universal peace, both spiritual and political, 9:5-7

- (1) All military stores and weapons are to be destroyed, 9:5

- (2) Immanuel—the Virgin-born Child of Isaiah 7:14 will be

- (a) The Head of all government, 9:6a (See Rev. 19:16)

- (b) God in human flesh bringing peace, 9:6b-7a

- (c) King David's royal Heir, 9:7b (See Luke 1:30-33)

(All that His people need God has provided in Immanuel—"God with us." When He is with us all problems will be taken care of, joy will be increased (9:3), and gloom and despair and wretchedness will give way to enlightenment and peace. May He in truth be with us.)

D. A message about accumulated Divine wrath and impending ruin upon Northern Israel—calamities sent from God that to the present time had gone unheeded, 9:8-10:4

1. Foreign invasion: God's people had been warned both by His prophets and by experience but had remained steadfast in their proud self-confidence. Therefore, God had allowed Assyria, after overthrowing the Syrian king, Resin, to attack Northern Israel, while at the same time they were hounded by hostile neighbors, 9:7-12

2. Loss of political and religious leaders: Still the people did not repent and turn to God Who destroyed their leaders, especially the ruling class and false prophets who seduced the people with lies instead of God's truth. As a consequence God withheld His usual compassion, 9:13-17

3. Anarchy: All the preceding calamities were the natural result of sin, which like an unchecked fire in a thicket spreads to the whole forest and then devours the entire land. But even in the midst of these strokes of Divine displeasure, the people still were giving free rein to mutual suspicion and hatred. As a famished man might consume his own flesh, Ephraim and Manasseh alternately devour each other, and then the two try to eat Judah, 9:18-21

4. Impending captivity: Prevalent wickedness, especially by injustice and oppression, will mean a combination of death and exile to the people by the Assyrians, 10:1-4

E. Assyria, God's chosen instrument to punish and debase Israel, will itself fall victim to His wrath "for the willful pride of his heart," 10:5-34

1. Assyria the chosen instrument of God's wrath upon all Israel exalts itself and makes itself the end instead of God's means, 10:5-7
2. Yahweh, the true God, is nothing more in his thinking than just another idol like those of all his other conquered kingdoms, 10:8-11
3. Assyria's ambitious self-exaltation above Yahweh was blasphemy that would be punished, 10:12-19
 - a. How Assyria sees itself versus how God views Assyria, 10:12-15
 - b. God's view of Assyria prevails, 10:16-19
4. These events cure the believing remnant of its inclination to trust in men and their promises and ability rather than God's, 10:20-23
5. God encourages the believing remnant by predicting Assyria's destruction, 10:24-34
 - a. The destruction will be similar to that of Midian at Oreb and Egypt at the Red Sea, 10:24-27
 - b. The enemy will approach, army outpost by outpost, until he stands before Jerusalem, then he will be cut down like a mighty forest felled by lumberjacks, 10:28-34

(Assyria, the enemy of God's people, has no future: her downfall will be final and fatal. However, as will be seen in chapters eleven and twelve, God's people [Judah] have a bright future. Their divine strokes are only disciplinary, producing repentance and righteousness.)

F. The Spirit-filled and Spirit-led Davidic Branch (Messiah) from the stump of Jesse arises to bring in the millennium and to bring chastened Israel back from her exile into the Promised Land, 11:1-16

1. Messiah will have all the necessary wisdom and power of a righteous judge, 11:1-5
 - a. The fullness of God's Spirit will endow Him for His task, 11:1-3a
 - b. He will judge and rule in complete justice and righteousness (in contrast to Israel's former judges and rulers), 11:3b-5
2. The ensuing universal knowledge of God will bring full peace and concord, and there will be no injuries to even a lamb or calf or child by the most violent of animal predators, 11:6-9
3. Since the nation of Israel, out of which the Branch will arise, will be scattered from its native land, far and wide (see 6:8-13), God Himself will reclaim the righteous remnant of His people and bring them back into the land, eager for Messiah's rule, 11:10-16
 - a. Messiah will be a banner to which Gentiles will rally, as well as the Jewish remnant, and He will unite them into one undivided body, 11:10-13
 - b. At that time God's people will finally and completely triumph over their former persecutors and enemies, 11:14
 - c. His people will return to their land on the King's Highway, just as they did when leaving Egypt, 11:15-16 (See Numbers 20:17; Isaiah 35:8-10)

G. God redeems His people from the world for the purpose of worship, 12:1-6 (See Exodus 15:1-18; Matthew 1:21-2:12; Revelation 5:11-14)

1. They sing the old songs first sung when Israel was redeemed from Egypt, 12:1-3
2. They also sing new songs to reflect their present experience of joy, redemption and God's very own Presence, 12:4-6 (See Revelation 5:9-11)

III. Prophecies Concerning God's Judicial Verdict Mainly upon Non-Jewish Nations, 13:1-23:18. This group of prophecies against the foreign nations finds a suitable place at the end of a cycle of Messianic prophecies (7:1-12:6), for the thrust of those prophecies concerning Immanuel is that all earth's kingdoms are to become the kingdom of God and of His Christ (See Revelation 18:1-20:10). Thus the former prophecies concerning Immanuel (7:1-12; 12:6) are closely associated with the following oracles concerning the overthrow of powers hostile to God, His people and His universal rule.

A. God's judicial sentence upon Babylon, heir of the Assyrian empire and persecutors of His people, 13:1-14:23

1. Babylon the world power, because of its hostility to both God and His people, will be utterly destroyed, 13:1-22 (See Revelation 17:1-18:24. In the New Testament Babylon is a type of all God-hating powers—the world).

a. God selects a nation (the Medes) to be His chosen instrument to destroy Babylon, just as He chose Babylon to discipline His people (Israel), 13:1-9

b. Babylon's overthrow will be comparable to that of God's total destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, 13:10-22

2. Satan, the real authority and force behind the world powers, will be dethroned as god of this world, and be cast into Hell, 14:1-23

a. God's people will eventually rule the earth, 14:1-2 (See Revelation 20:4-6)

b. At that time (14:3) Satan, the god of Babylon (the world system) will be given his just desserts, 14:3-23 (See Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10)

(1) "The earth will finally be at rest and peace," 14:3-8

(2) Satan, who would be god permanently to mankind and the entire world system, instead of the Most High God, is cast into Hell, 14:9-15

(3) Rather than becoming God, Satan is stripped of his regal power (14:16-17) and is humiliated above that of any other world ruler ever, 14:18-20a

(4) The children of Satan are given over to eternal destruction just as was their evil Master, 14:20b-23

B. God's judgment upon other national powers from the enmity of which His people have been more or less a sufferer, 14:24-23:18 (See Jeremiah 46-51; Ezekiel 25-32; Daniel 2, 5, 7, 8; Matthew 25:31-36; Revelation 6:1-19:21). (In the New Testament Babylon is a symbol of the union of both religion and government that will combine under Satan's major general, antichrist, to wage the final great war against God and His people. These are generic prophecies or pictures of God's dealings with all the foes of His people.)

1. Judgment against Assyria and the Philistines, 14:24-32

2. Judgment against Moab, 15:1-16:14, with some brief comments

a. Notice both the prophets' and God's heartfelt sympathy for Moab in her affliction because of sin, 15:5; 16:9,11. (They mingle their own tears with those of the Moabites!)

b. A remnant from the nation will ally themselves with God's people and seek protection with Messiah the Son of David, 16:3-5 (See Matthew 25:31-46)

c. The judgment must soon come, 16:13-14

3. Judgment against Syria and Northern Israel, both now savage enemies of God's people, 17:1-14 (notice God's reason for the destruction, 17:10a)

4. Judgment against Cush, the upper Nile region, 18:1-7

- a. A great catastrophe is coming, 18:1-3
 - b. The destruction is compared to a vineyard allowed to blossom and bear fruit and suddenly destroyed just prior to harvest time, 18:4-6
 - c. God's affliction results in the salvation of a minority, 18:7
5. Judgment against Egypt, the lower Nile region, 19:1-25
- a. The punishment of civil wars (1-4), physical calamities upon the land (5-10), with folly and cowardice upon the rulers, and fear upon the people, 19:11-17
 - b. The punishment will result in the remaining purified Egyptians and Iraq joining God's people (Judah) in a common alliance in worship of Yahweh, 19:18-25
6. Judgment against both the lower (Egypt) and upper (Cush) Nile regions, 20:1-6. The strange and improper apparel of Isaiah (without either shoes or outer garment) while he moved about the people for three whole years was a prediction of the fall of the kingdoms of the lower and upper Nile, which was to take place at the end of three years.
7. Judgment upon Babylon by the Medes and Persians (21:1-9), which would bring deliverance to God's people (10)
- a. In 21:11 just as an ill person longs for the morning to end a sleepless night, so the Edomites inquire of Isaiah whether the night of distress will not soon be over. The prophet replies that even if the morning of relief dawns, it will soon be swallowed up again by the night of affliction, 21:12. And historically this is what happened with the Assyrian era of judgment followed by the Babylonian, and the Babylonian by the Persian, and the Persian by the Grecian, and the Grecian by the Roman. And Edom was totally destroyed, disappearing from among the nations.
 - b. Judgment upon Arabia will come within on year, and there will be but few survivors, 21:13-17
8. Judgment upon the Valley of Vision—Jerusalem, the seat of Divine revelation, the abode of the prophets and the place where God's Presence was manifested, 22:1-25
- a. What will be the lot and attitude of the people of Jerusalem during the coming war with God's chastiser, Assyria (present-day Iraq), 22:1-14
 - (1) During the long siege, hunger and pestilence will ravage the inhabitants and those attempting to escape will manage to give up their desperate conditions for prisoner-of-war status, being unable to defend themselves because of emaciation and exhaustion from lack of food, 22:1-3
 - (2) God and Isaiah's inconsolable anguish at the destruction of His people caused by sin, 22:4 (See Lamentations 1:5)
 - (3) Jerusalem's protective wall will be torn down by the besiegers, 22:5-7
 - (4) God's people in spiritual darkness caused by sin will look everywhere for assistance, except from God Himself, 22:8-11
 - (5) God will forgive any and all sin, except that of failure to repent, 22:12-14 (See Matthew 11:21-22)
 - b. Living examples of Jerusalem's attitude and the spirit that God desires from His people, 22:15-25
 - (1) "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled" illustrated by the life of Shebna, the leader and example of the people, 22:15-19
 - (2) "Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted" shown in the life of Eliakim, the faithful servant after God's own heart, 22:20-25
9. Judgment against Tyre, 23:1-18

- a. The destruction of Tyre is authored by God with Assyria as His instrument to humble those who exalt themselves, 23:1-14
- b. Tyre shall be desolate for seventy years (15) and then restored to her former activity and wealth (16-17). After this her gains from trade will be devoted to those who live before the Lord, 23:18

IV. The following chapters 24-27 form a grand finale to the preceding chapters 13-23. As in music, the finale gathers up the many parts of a composition into a last, grand impressive whole, so the song in Isaiah 24-27 becomes a mighty hallelujah to God's judgments in 13-23 (See the song in Revelation 19:1-9 which immediately follows God's judgment upon the world system of 18:1-24).

A. God's devastation of the earth and punishment of all its evil powers, 24:1-23

- 1. The entire earth is filled with confusion, distress and devastation because of the sin of its inhabitants, 24:1-13 (See all of Revelation 6:1-18:24)
- 2. The redeemed faithful remnant sings "Glory to the Righteous One" for judgment inflicted upon their oppressors—Satan and Babylon, which is the world system, 24:14-16a (See again Revelation 19:1-9)
- 3. The guilt of sin and rebellion is so heavy that it causes the earth to sink under such immense load, never to rise again, 24:16b-20
- 4. All rebellious powers, both in the heavens above and upon the earth, will be shut up in prison, to await punishment, 24:21-22 (See 14:2-23)
- 5. Then Yahweh Himself will reign gloriously in Jerusalem among and over His own people, 24:23

B. The threefold song of praise that God's people will sing on the day of their deliverance from the world and Satan, 25:1-27:13

- 1. First stanza: concerning the salvation of the believing remnant at which time Babylon (the world power) falls, 25:1-9 (See Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 18:1-19:9); other rebellious nations (Moab) will also be humiliated, 25:10-12
- 2. Second stanza: concerning Yahweh's building for the righteous redeemed a perfect city of peace (26:1-6. See Revelation 21:1-22:5), who rejoice in God's Presence as He sends judgment upon the wicked for the purpose of teaching them righteousness, 26:7-16. God's people (Israel) have failed to bring either deliverance to themselves or salvation to the world (26:17-18), but what His people are unable to do He Himself will accomplish by the resurrection of the dead (26:19), the rapture of the righteous (26:20), the great tribulation (26:21) and the casting of Satan and antichrist into Hell, 27:1. (See Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10)
- 3. Third stanza:
 - a. Yahweh's people, a potential fruit-bearing vineyard, will be under His protection and blessing as long as they are at peace with Him, 27:1-6
 - b. Yahweh chastens His people only for the purpose of cleansing them from their idols and to increase their understanding of Him (27:7-9, 11b), and God's purging from sin can be quite severe, 27:7-11a
 - c. In the last days Israel will be restored to the land in peace and fellowship with God, 27:12-13 (See Romans 9-11, Revelation 7:1-8)

V. Chapters 28-34 give predictions of Woe (how terrible it will be) upon God's people, Israel,

for sin and also upon those nations on whom Israel relied for help—Assyria and Egypt. The people first started trusting in Assyria, instead of God, to free themselves from the onslaught of Syria and Northern Israel (7:1-17; 2 Kings 16-18). However, after defeating Syria and Northern Israel and thus saving Judah, Assyria then warred with Judah and brought her under its control (8:1-8). Now under King Hezekiah, Judah hopes to rid herself of the Assyrian yoke by help from Egypt, and again not from God (30:1-5). How often this mistake is repeated in the lives of individuals, churches, and denominations. God only wants for His people to be clean (Ephesians 5:27) and He Himself their Savior, Helper and Redeemer (Isaiah 36:18; 37:20,35).

- A. Because of their sin, how terrible it will be (woe) for both Northern Israel and Judah, 28:1-29
1. Northern Israel's capital, Samaria, will be forcefully thrown down by an alien army, as righteous judgment upon a sensual and irreligious nation, 28:1-13
 - a. God's man, Isaiah, rebukes the proud drunkards of Northern Israel whose crown (the capital city Samaria) is losing its beauty like that of a fading flower, 28:1-4
 - b. The Lord Almighty desires to be their beautiful floral wreath, and He will be for the faithful obedient remnant, 28:5-6
 - c. But the unbelieving disobedient majority in their drunkenness cast off God's moral authority and refuse to heed His preacher's instructions, to their own destruction, 28:7-13
 2. Judah, her capital Jerusalem and its rulers are just as wicked and deserving of Divine chastisement as is Northern Israel, 28:14-29
 - a. All in Judah who do not build upon the precious cornerstone divinely laid in Zion must necessarily perish, even as Israel's enemies of old were brought to ruin, 28:14-23
 - (1) Their sin is a proud self-confidence that feels there is no need to fear anything, even death itself. And their pride had for its foundation the secret alliance entered into with Egypt and Assyria (present-day Iraq). What they desperately needed, and could not understand, was God's "precious cornerstone for a sure foundation." Thus, when God's punitive judgment comes like a scourging hailstone and flood, they will be swept away along with their false foundation, 28:13-19a (See Psalms 118:22-23; Matthew 5:24-27; 21:42; Ephesians 5:20b)
 - (2) When His people sin just like the world does, God Himself will fight against them, just as He did against His enemies of old. A religion of lies and alliances with God's enemies, void of the reality of faith in and reliance upon Him, brings sure destruction, 28:19b-22
 - b. Consolation for the believers who will yield themselves to God's Word of instruction, 28:23-29
 - (1) God had given the farmer divine understanding concerning how to till, sow and plant his fields, 28:23-26
 - (2) He has also divinely instructed the farmer how to fruitfully reap his harvest, 28:27-29

The wise Divinely given methods used by the farmer in planting and reaping his grain in order to get the very best harvest possible are an illustration of the wise methods employed by the Divine Gardener in the treatment of His people, in order to bring forth a great harvest of the very best fruit (See John 15:1-8). As Caspari has ably explained the passage, "He does not punish all the members of the nation with the same severity; and those whom He punishes with greater severity than others He does not punish incessantly, but as soon as His end is attained, and the husks of

sin are separated from those that have been punished, the punishment ceases, and only the worst of the nation, who are nothing but husks, and the husks on the nation itself, are swept away by the punishment.” (See Philippians 1:29-30; Hebrews 12:2-11)

B. The second woe: Jerusalem will be destroyed (29:1-16) and then redeemed by the Holy One of Israel, 29:17-24

1. First, destruction from God, 29:1-16

a. By means of hostile armies, God will bring Jerusalem very low, 29:1-4

b. The Lord Almighty Himself will then turn the chastening armies into dust and chaff (29:5-6); like a dream they will dissolve into nothing and their plans for destroying Jerusalem will be as the eating and drinking of a dreamer, which, upon his awakening, turns out to be a delusion, 29:7-8 (See the fulfillment in Isaiah 36:1-38:22)

c. Jerusalem’s physical problem is caused by spiritual eyes that will not see and spiritual ears that will not hear, 29:9-16 (See 6:8-10; John 12:37-43)

(1) The entire population was blind and drunk, not physically but spiritually—prophets and all, 29:9-14

(a) Sin had caused the eyes of all, even the religious leaders, to become spiritually blind, 29:9-10

(b) The first result was an inability to understand God’s Word, 29:11-12

(c) The second result was a religion of human rules rather than a heart religion, based upon spiritual perception, 29:13

(d) The third result is that their highly prized wisdom, void of God’s input, would be turned into confusion. Like a drunkard they simply would not know what or how to do anything, 29:14

(2) The people in their conceit hoped to hide from God that they were relying upon Egypt to deliver them from Assyria (29:15, See 30:1-5), which is an inversion and perversion of the true relation between God and man, 29:16

2. Second, Israel’s redemption brought about by God, 29:17-24

a. Which redemption will bring about a reversal of the present state of things. Even the unplowable land will become cultivated (29:17), the spiritual deaf and blind will be able to hear and see, and thus obey (29:18), the proud will become humble and the self-sufficient become needy (29:19), and ruthless men, mockers and all liars will completely disappear from the land (29:20-21)

b. This redeemed remnant will become a holy community, well-pleasing unto God. God’s purging and thus purifying work has produced good results, 29:22-24 (See Romans 9-11; Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 7:1-8)

(1) The new generation will be children whom God has formed, a holy people, fearing and sanctifying Him, the Holy One of Israel, 29:22-23

(2) Their previous self-hardening will be replaced by a genuine desire for spiritual understanding and their former complaining against God’s Word by a real thirst for knowledge of God, 29:24

C. The third woe: how terrible it will be for God’s people (Judah) who seek aid from the world (Egypt) to deliver them from their enemies (Assyria), to the neglect of God, their rightful King and their only able Protector, 30:1-33. (Reliance upon man and government, to the exclusion of faith in God’s promise, has always been a pandemic sin of God’s people, both ancient and contemporary. The sin is to seek our own ways, means, time and glory for our own projects, without first seeking Divine wisdom and permission. See Isaiah 53:6)

1. God now condemns what Israel has already put into action, 30:1-7
 - a. It is only obstinate spiritual children who make plans and devise methods without consulting Him or without His Spirit being present, 30:1-2
 - b. The begging of favors from Egypt (the world) to the exclusion of God's help can have no advantage for His people, but only shame and disgrace, 30:3-5
 - c. Carrying their bribes, Israel's ambassadors retrace the steps of her Exodus from Egypt, which previously held them in bondage, to buy their help—help that Egypt (the world) an utter do-nothing had never given to God's people because she was not able to, 30:6-7
 2. Their reliance upon man and distrust of God proceeds entirely from the spiritual state of the people, 30:8-17
 - a. In their spiritual stupor they are unwilling to receive God's instructions (8-9), have no desire to hear what is "right" but what is "pleasant" (10), and have no wish to meet the Holy One of Israel, face to face (11)
 - b. Since Judah has rejected God's message to her, she would fall and be broken to pieces, like a leaning, cracked wall "that collapses suddenly, in an instant," 30:12-14
 - c. The way of deliverance is always by repentance and faith. Instead, however, God's people fled from His offered rest and strength to beg help from Egypt, the world (15-16). Fleeing to Egypt only results in the world causing them to flee from it, until the nation is reduced from a multitude, like a forest, to a faithful remnant, like a lone tree on a hill, 30:17
 3. For the remnant which remains faithful there is a wonderful change coming, 30:18-33
 - a. These redeemed ones will gladly listen to God's message and preacher and cast away all reliance upon anything but the Lord Himself, 30:18-22
 - b. At that time when God heals His people, the land will yield produce profusely and the face of all nature will be changed for the better, 30:23-26 (See Romans 8:18-22)
 - c. God's people march their joyful way to worship God, while He shatters the world power, and that without any help from Israel, 30:27-33 (See Isaiah 36-38; Revelation 15:2-4; 16:1-7)
- D. The fourth woe: how terrible it will be for those who rely upon the false help of flesh (31:1-3) when the Lord Almighty is available and ready to be their Helper, 31:4-9
1. Dependence solely upon the world is distrust of God Who will exalt Himself by rising up against both helper and helped, 31:1-3
 2. The Lord Almighty will take the part of His people against a destroying world, 31:4-5
 - a. God will no more allow His people to be taken from Him than a lion would be driven from its prey, 31:4
 - b. He will shield Jerusalem as flying birds soar around and above their threatened nests to protect their nestlings, 31:5
 3. We, the renegades, are invited to return to Him from every idolatrous reliance upon man and witness the destruction of the enemy (world powers) by the fierce fire of His wrath, 31:6-9
- E. The future blessedness God will bring to His people (32:1-8, 15-20) versus their present complacency, 32:9-14
1. Future blessings the Lord will bestow upon His people, 32:1-8, 15-20
 - a. A righteous, just, protective King, 32:1-2
 - b. Spiritual illumination to perceive and know God's truth, 32:3-4
 - c. Moral and spiritual values will no longer be turned upside down 32:5-8 (The

aristocracy of intelligence, wealth, power and glamour will be replaced by the superiority of righteous character).

(1) The wicked man's true character is manifested by his habitual acts and deeds, and should be judged by such, 32:5-7

(2) Likewise, the truly good man reveals his character by his conduct, on which he gladly takes his stand, 32:8

d. The coming desolation of 32:9-14 will continue "till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high" and the millennium begins, 32:15-20

(1) Agricultural growth of the entire land will be so glorious, that what is presently valued as a wonderful garden, will be completely overshadowed by something far more glorious, 32:15

(2) Justice and righteousness will reign throughout the land and produce as their fruit: eternal peace, quietness, and confidence, 32:16-17

(3) The road from fleshy, false peace to the true peace of security and rest (18,20) will arise out of humiliating discipline, 32:19

2. The present complacency of the females among God's people whose sinful habits contributed, more or less directly, to existing wickedness and the coming desolation, 32:9-14 (See 3:16-4:1)

F. The fifth woe: how terrible it will be for Assyria, the oppressor, and at the same time the sifter and purifier of God's people, 33:1-24

1. Assyria the destroyer, the rod of God's chastisement upon His people, will himself be destroyed and God thereby exalted, 33:1-6 (See 38:38)

a. The enemy of God's people has marched through Judah destroying her cities and is now at the gate of Jerusalem, 33:1 (about 701 B.C. See 10:24-34)

b. God's people pray to Him, desiring His grace and Presence to be their strength and deliverance, 33:2

c. God rises judicially above the enemy (Assyria) and thunders upon them as Judge, 33:3-4

d. The consequence of the people's prayer (2) and God's judging (3-4), 33:5-6

(1) His just and righteous destruction of the wicked enemy exalts God Who dwells on high, 33:5

(2) God Himself becomes a present sure foundation for His people—that is "a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge." The key to this vast treasure is "the fear of the Lord," 33:6

2. God weeps and mourns with His people over the present miserable condition of things, 33:7-9. Sennacherib of Assyria attacked and destroyed the smaller cities of Judah and demanded 300 talents of silver and 35 talents of gold that Hezekiah sent to him by envoys. Sennacherib received the payment then broke the treaty by demanding the surrender of Jerusalem itself. The envoys returned to Jerusalem bearing this message of deception and disgrace with bitter weeping and self-humiliation (See 2 Kings 18:13-25).

3. At word of the above treachery, the Lord rises up from His throne to show Himself in all His greatness to Israel's enemies (10). In God's eyes, Assyria is only chaff and straw set afire by the blaze of his wrath, 33:11-12

4. What is true of Assyria (the world) is true also of the Israelites (or Christians-in-name only) who are sinners and godless. Neither can dwell with God—the consuming fire the eternal burning, 33:13-14

5. The character and rewards of those who are able to live with the God Who is a consuming fire, 33:15-19
 - a. He who lives in all life's relations in the full measure of righteousness; whose words are in agreement with his inner feelings and outward practice; who does not seek any gain which injures his neighbor's interest; and who shuts his senses against contemplating moral pollution, 33:15
 - b. Such person finds security in God's protection and sustenance from God's sure supply, 33:16
 - c. He will see King Messiah ruling over a vast land, (17) and all his arrogant oppressors, with their strange speech, will have vanished, 33:18-19
 - d. Jerusalem, the capital city, will still be standing safe from intruders (20). The Lord our Mighty One will dwell in the city, surrounded by broad rivers, impassable to hostile ships (21). Then the people truly and finally realize that the Lord, "it is He Who will save us," 33:22. Finally, they realize the theological meaning and impact of Isaiah's name (God is salvation).
 - e. Assyria, the enemy is described as such a vessel as above, but one now badly equipped and dashed by storm and waves sent by God (23), whereas God's people full of physical and spiritual health, are redeemed from all sin and completely forgiven, 33:24

VI. Chapters 34-35 relate the finale of God's judgment upon all the nations of the world and the bringing in of His Kingdom that will produce unprecedented blessings for both man and nature.

A. God's judgment against all rebellious nations of the world in general (1-4) and against Edom, Israel's perpetual enemy, in particular, 34:5-17

1. All nations who are implacable enemies of God's people will be totally destroyed, 34:1-4 (See Zechariah 14:1-21; Matthew 25:31-45; Revelation 16:12-16; 18:1-19:21)
2. Edom is particularly mentioned as a persistent enemy of God's people, and represents what will happen to the entire class of such enemies, 34:5-17 (It is a Biblical doctrine that God will destroy all people hostile to His people, as soon as His people are sifted and purified and the world's sin is full to the brim).
 - a. God first destroys hostile heavenly powers (5a See also 24:21-23), and then judges Edom, a particular nation, representing that class of all nations warring against God's people, 34:5b
 - b. The slaughter in Edom and its cities will be such as the slaughter of a great number of animals at the festival sacrifices to God, 34:6-7
 - c. Edom will suffer eternal destruction as God upholds the cause of His people, 34:8-10
 - d. The land will be a desolate wilderness (11) and the palaces and castles of the ruling class will lie in ruins, a habitation only for wild beasts, 34:12-15
 - e. Those who see the future fulfillment of God's wrath upon the nations and compare it with this past prophecy will find that prophecy and fulfillment exactly coincide, 34:16-17

B. In direct contrast to the destruction and desolation that God brings to her enemies in chapter 34, His redeemed and purified people enter a millennium of agricultural and bodily blessing, accompanied by holiness of character and wonderful joy of heart, 35:1-10

1. The previously barren desert and wilderness will be clothed in glorious splendor from the

great God, Who comes and sets up His Kingdom, 35:1-2

2. God explains to His afflicted people that He is coming to save them by inflicting vengeance upon their enemy, 35:3-4

3. The salvation God brings will also include perfect bodies (5-6a) and a glorified nature, 35:6b-7

4. The road leading to God's eternal kingdom is the "Way of Holiness," and none but His people, purified and sanctified by suffering, can walk upon it, 35:8-9

5. His ransomed people will then enter into God's kingdom and city "with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them and sorrow and sighing will flee away," 35:10

(With this beautiful picture of the Messianic and millennial future, Isaiah's "woes" find their reason and conclusion. We should note for our own spiritual life, that God never utters a woe without adding a corresponding promise of deliverance and blessing.)

VII. This section in chapters 36-39 shows history being fulfilled according to God's prediction. It establishes the credibility of the Word of God. We need to know that what is written will come to pass. Chapter 38 shows that not only is God able to destroy, chasten and bless nations, but He also deals with the individual and meets his needs, as in Hezekiah's healing from the brink of death. Chapter 39 reveals that even after we have seen and experienced miracles in our life, we still must remain humble before God and depend upon Him, or else disaster may well overtake us. Chapter 39 also forms a transition from God's dealing with the world power Assyria in 1-38 to His dealings with the future world power Babylon in 39-66. (See 2 Kings 18-20 and 2 Chronicles 22).

A. What Assyria thinks about God and plans to do against Jerusalem and God's people, 36:1-37:13

1. The first attempt of the world power Assyria to compel the surrender of the city of God, Jerusalem, 36:1-37:8

a. Assyria's field commander comes to the same place to demand Jerusalem's surrender (36:1-3) as where Ahaz stood when God promised him that Jerusalem would not fall (See 7:1-3, 10-13). If your faith does not pass God's test, you must take the test again. Passing His tests is the way God causes our faith to grow, (See James 1:1-4).

b. The Assyrian King says that there is no one to deliver God's people: Egypt cannot and God will not, 36:4-10

c. Face the facts: if the bad news is given in intelligible language, don't ask for it to be given unintelligibly, 36:11-12

d. What the world thinks about its own ability, 36:13-20

(1) The world says: Don't trust in the Lord and His Word spoken by true leaders, 36:13-16a, 18-20

(a) Your leaders deceive you by exhorting you to depend upon God's help rather than ours, 36:13-16a

(b) History itself teaches that the political world power always wins, 36:18-20

(2) But God's way is to obey true leaders given by Him, 36:21-22

e. Some problems are designed to show us our poverty and His power, and thus cause us to seek His face in humility and prayer, 37:1-8 ("The sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise," Psalm

51:17.)

(1) Humility before God, desperation and group prayer is a good start toward repenting, 37:1-4

(2) God answers: “Don’t be afraid, I’ve got the situation under control,” 37:5-8

2. The second attempt of the Assyrians to compel the surrender of God’s people, 37:9-13 (Faith will be tested more than once.)

a. The movers and shakers of this world will try to convince God’s people that their God is utterly powerless, and that they must give obedience to those in power more than to the spiritual power, 37:9-10

b. They will quote all sorts of statistics to prove the irresistibility of their message, 37:11-13

B. What God thinks about Assyria and plans to do to them, 37:14-32

1. When faith is tested we must continue praying, 37:14-20

a. Hezekiah went to the House of God with his pressing problem “and spread it out before the Lord,” 37:14

b. Realize who God is (16-17), face the facts of the case (18-19), believe God can and will deliver you, despite the tough situation (20a), and don’t forget to give God the glory, 37:20b (See Acts 3:12-16; Revelation 19:1-8)

2. God wants you to know that He effects deliverance “Because you prayed unto Me. . . .” 37:21-22

3. A word from God in answer to the boasting of Sennacherib and the prayers of Hezekiah, 37:23-32

a. What Sennacherib believed that he had accomplished, 37:23-25

b. God Himself had previously ordained, planned and brought to pass, 37:26-29 (All things happening to us are worked out by the Lord for our good, even the Sennacheribs and Satans of our lives. See Romans 8:28)

c. God will not only destroy the enemy and thus deliver the believing remnant of His people, but He will also miraculously supply their need by commanding the earth to produce food for two years without being farmed, 37:30-32

C. God wins. He will save His people “for My sake and the sake of My servant David” 37:33-38 (Notice the meaning of Isaiah’s name, “God is salvation.”)

1. Sennacherib will not be able to harm even one hair of God’s people (33-35) because the angel of the LORD went forth and destroyed 185,000 of the Assyrian soldiers, 37:35-37 (God can employ either angels or men to deliver you. In God’s hand, one is as good as the other.)

2. Sennacherib saw and felt the hand of the true God, but learned nothing from the lesson. He did not change one iota and was killed because of it, 37:38 (Does this sound familiar?)

D. God cares not only about nations (chapters 1-37) but also about individuals; and will deliver one as quickly as He will the other, as is shown by His healing of Hezekiah who was at the point of death, 38:1-22 (Notice that the healing resulted from Hezekiah’s prayer).

1. God heals Hezekiah from “the point of death,” 38:1-8 (See Mark 5:23)

a. The power of disease to destroy, 38:1

b. The power of prayer to restore, 38:2-8 (See James 5:13-18)

2. The proper duty of the one delivered to glorify and praise God for His great mercy shown to him, 38:9-20

a. Hezekiah’s thoughts when he was at the brink of death, 38:9-12

- b. The king's intense suffering from the illness and his looking to God for help, 38:13-14
 - c. God's performing His promise of healing (15a) will cause Hezekiah to live in humble obedience before God all his life, 38:15b (Thanksgiving should be a part of our lives.)
 - d. The gracious words and deeds of the Lord are the true support of life, both physical and spiritual, for all God's people. In contrast to Ahaz (7:9b-12) Hezekiah mixed his faith with God's promise of healing, and he lived, 38:16
 - e. The suffering was indeed chastisement, but a discipline springing from God's love, 38:17 (See Romans 8:28; Hebrews 12:5-12)
 - f. One reason for Hezekiah's deliverance was that he might praise God in testimony to his children (18-19) and worship continually in God's presence, 38:20
3. The preceding words of praise (9-20) arose from the king's faith in God's Word, 38:21-22

E. The testing of Faith, 39:1-8 (See 2 Kings 20:12-19; 2 Chronicles 32:24-31)

- 1. Beware of Babylonians bearing gifts, 39:1
- 2. Beware of pride, 39:2
- 3. Beware of a heart that does not repent when God confronts it, 39:3-4
- 4. The catastrophic result of relying on self, rather than upon God, produces a condition the exact opposite of having Immanuel—God with us, 39:5-8

VIII. The prophecies and their fulfillment and God's chastening and purifying of His people and restoring all nature in chapters 1-39 can be applied partially to the Jews of the Old Testament, the Church in the New Testament, and to the life of every individual believer.

In chapters 40-48 there is a contrast between powerful Yahweh and powerless idols. This section also set forth the remnant's deliverance from Babylon, which God has prophesied beforehand, to the shame and overthrow of both idols and idol worshippers. The deliverer from Babylon, Cyrus, is named approximately 200 years before he appears in history. This unique power to predict demonstrates Yahweh Deity and is the basis for Isaiah's presenting Him to Israel as their incomparable God. Thus, chapters 40-48 are a prophecy of His people's deliverance from captivity through Cyrus, something no one else could ever predict. Such ability identifies God, their God, as totally unique.

A. Words of Comfort from the unsurpassable God of comfort, 40:1-31

- 1. "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people," the theme of God's promise to His people and the basis of the absolute necessity of its fulfillment, 40:1-11
 - a. God's continual command to His preachers, 40:1-2
 - (1) Even though He disciplines, God does not cease to love, 40:1 (See Hebrews 12:1-12)
 - (2) The turning point from wrath to comfort has arrived, 40:2
 - b. God Himself will come and dwell among them, and all mankind will see His glory, 40:3-5
 - c. Perishable man versus God's imperishable Word, 40:6-8
 - (1) Man like a plant rises, blooms, and then fades, generation after generation, 40:6-8a
 - (2) In contrast to man's non-durable nature, God's promise of deliverance will be

- fulfilled because its rests upon Divine and eternal authority, 40:8b
- d. God's preachers are to proclaim that He is, even now, ready to dwell in the midst of His people, 40:9-11
 - (1) They are to proclaim boldly and without trepidation God's desire to dwell among His people, 40:9
 - (2) He will come as both Rewarder (10) and as Shepherd, 40:11
2. The fulfillment of God's promise to deliver His people rests upon the power of His person, 40:12-17
 - a. His almighty power, which no one else has, 40:12
 - b. His infinite wisdom, which no one else has, 40:13-14
 - c. His exaltation as Governor of the world, which no one else can rightly claim, 40:15-17
 3. How much more then is the infinite, wise Governor of the universe (12-17) superior to any idol with which man replaces Him, 40:18-24
 - a. Which of your best idols are comparable to such a One, 40:18-19
 - b. Which lesser idol is comparable to such a One, 40:20
 - c. The unsurpassed excellence of God can be seen,
 - (1) From creation, 40:21,22
 - (2) From history, 40:23,24
 4. The incomparable One Who created the heavens (25-26) is the same One Who gives strength to and supports His people (27-29). The sole condition for His help to be given to each one is to wait upon Him, (40:30-31), not self, nor sin, nor Satan, nor the world. This is the reason that prayer is indispensable both for the individual Christian as well as for the church body. As Kidner says elsewhere, "To wait is to accept His time and therefore His wisdom; it marked the difference between David's and Saul's attitude to God [See 1 Samuel 26:10-; 13:8-14] and between Isaiah's and Israel's [See Isaiah 30:15-18]." Faith is all that is needed to insure participation in God's strength (See 7:9b)
- B. Yahweh, Israel's God, is the God of prophecy and also of the world's history, 41:1-29
1. The supreme proof of God being the sole deity is His power to predict the future, 41:1-7
 - a. God summons the idolatrous nations to the judgment seat of reason and truth, 41:1
 - b. God predicts to the nations the raising up of King Cyrus to overthrow Babylon and redeem His people as proof that He has been the Author and Guide of the world's history from the very beginning, 41:2-7
 - (1) Cyrus is the instrument, 41:2b-3
 - (2) God is the Author and Cause, 41:1, 2a, 4
 - (3) The unbeliever's only recourse is to make a metal idol that will be unable to tell them how to handle the situation, 41:5-7
 2. Although God uses Cyrus to destroy the nations (1-7), Cyrus in turn will be God's instrument to deliver Israel, 41:8-20
 - a. Destruction for unbelievers but redemption for believers, 41:8-10
 - b. Israel's enemies will be ashamed, disgraced and disappear (11-12), whereas Yahweh, the Redeemer, even the Holy One of Israel, will Himself aid His people, 41:13-14
 - c. Instead of succumbing to their foes, God's people will acquire full power and authority over them, 41:15-16
 - d. Even though their present state is needy (17), His people's cry for help will be

- amply supplied (18-19), so they can understand that their God, and no other, has Himself supplied their want, 41:20
3. Compare your best god-substitute to the incomparable God, 41:20-29
 - a. The god-substitutes, 41:20-24
 - (1) Cannot predict the future, 41:20-23a
 - (2) Cannot perform any works, good or bad, 41:23b-24a
 - (3) Those who choose such worthless god-substitutes, in place of the mighty God Himself, are detestable, 41:24b
 - b. The incomparable God, 41:25-29
 - (1) He does what no other man or god can do. He will raise Cyrus to deliver His people and tells about it 200 years before the event takes place, 41:25-27
 - (2) Since the god-substitutes cannot do likewise (28), their claims to god-like powers are false, and they themselves are nothing but wind and confusion, 41:29
- C. Messiah, "The Servant of the Lord," God's agent of redemption and deliverance, 42:1-25
1. The Servant-Messiah's virtues, 42:1-4
 - a. God's Spirit-filled Delight Who brings justice according to truth, 42:1
 - b. He pursues His work with a quiet, gentle and humble spirit by bringing truth that commends itself, and therefore requires no forced trumpeting, 42:2
 - c. Along with His unassuming manner there is associated a tender pastoral care, 42:3
 - d. He will persevere until He accomplishes God's true purpose for the earth and its people, 42:4
 2. The Servant will never lack ability to execute His calling, by virtue of the infinite power of the great God Who sent and thus upholds Him, 42:5-9
 - a. It is Yahweh God, the Creator of all matter and the Author of all life, Who calls the Servant and sustains Him, 42:5-6a
 - b. The Servant will make a new covenant with the people (42:6a, See 61:8; Jeremiah 31:33-34; Luke 22:20); He brings redemption from physical captivity, as well as from spiritual bondage. He leads both Jew and Gentile out of night into light, redeeming all who need and desire salvation, 42:6b, 7
 - c. True and false religion cannot co-exist. True worship of God is to be exclusive of all other gods, 42:8
 - d. Just as all former God-given prophecies have been fulfilled, so will these present predictions, concerning the deliverance of Israel, 42:9
 3. A song of thanksgiving for the coming redemption of God's people and destruction of their enemies, 42:10-17
 - a. God Himself goes forth to fight against Babylon, which holds His people in captivity, 42:10-13
 - b. Like a baby ready to be born, the time has come for God to bring forth the deliverance of His people (14). The land of their captivity will be destroyed and all barriers to their return demolished, 42:15
 - c. God's mercy gives understanding to the spiritually blind (See 6:9-10), lights up the darkness and clears away every obstacle, 42:16
 - d. At that time the false religions will fail, and this may later become a means for unbelievers to become believers, 42:17
 4. Israel (God's people) is charged with unfaithfulness to its great trust and this unfaithfulness is declared to be the cause of her suffering, 42:18-25

- a. Israel's spiritual deafness and blindness, making it ineffective as God's messenger, is her own fault, for God gave them both good preachers and His glorious Word, 42:18-21
- b. Israel's present bondage and exile is the result of discipline for unfaithfulness, 42:22
- c. When God's people (Israel) have their spiritual sight restored, they will recognize with repentance that their wretched state was but merited punishment from God, 42:23-25 (See Psalms 78:32-39; 119:67)

D. No meritorious work would bring Israel (God's people) from what it once was to what it was to be; but instead God's free grace will do it, 43:1-43:23. This is God's method of dealing with His people at all times among all nations!

1. God's relation to Israel versus His relation to other nations, 43:1-13
 - a. Israel owes everything she is to the love of God for her, 43:1-7
 - (1) God created, redeemed and named her, 43:1
 - (2) God is her protector—deep rivers will not drown her, fierce flames will not destroy her, 43:2
 - (3) Because He loves Israel, God will destroy those nations that previously had afflicted her, 43:3-4
 - (4) His love for Israel will bring back all her scattered children, 43:5-7
 - b. The other nations will bear witness to God's love for His people, 43:8-13
 - (1) God will appoint someone (Messiah) to lead spiritually blind and deaf Israel out of bondage (8) which will cause them to believe on the Lord and act as witnesses to His promise to deliver them, 43:10-13
 - (2) The nations will witness God's redemption of Israel according to His previous prediction (9a), which none of their worthless idols was able to do, 43:9b
2. God's vengeance upon His people's enemies brings at the same time deliverance for His people, 43:14-21
 - a. God's vengeance upon Babylon will at the same time deliver Israel (14-15), just as Israel was redeemed from Egypt, while Egypt was being destroyed, 43:16-17 (See Revelation 6:1-19:9. Reflect also on the rapture)
 - b. God's people along with all nature will be liberated, 43:18-21 (See Isaiah 11:1-16; Romans 8:18-23)
3. Although God's grace alone will deliver His people (See 43:1-13), Israel must appropriate God's promise by repentance and faith. Since she has not believed and fully returned to God, she must be purified by even more suffering, 43:22-28. We, likewise, must lay hold of God's grace by faith.
 - a. Instead of honoring God by prayer, praise and worship, they had burdened Him with their sins, 43:22-24
 - b. Nevertheless, divine love would blot out their sin from God's remembrance (25), even though Israel has no merit before God at the present time (26) or ever in her past (27). Therefore, the believing remnant would come to repentance and faith in God only by further suffering, 43:28
4. The outpouring of the Spirit, 44:1-5 (See Joel 2:28-29)
 - a. Upon Israel, now a righteous (Jeshurun) servant, 44:1-2
 - b. All nature will be changed, 44:3a
 - c. All the people will be blessed (3b-4) and feel they now truly belong to the Lord, 44:5

E. The foolishness of god-substitutes, when one can have the true "King and Redeemer, the

Lord Almighty” as his Protector and Provider, 44:6-23

1. God’s pledge to redeem and deliver Israel is supported by His ability to correctly prophesy of things to come, proving that He alone is God, since no other god-substitute can do likewise, 44:6-20

a. God alone manifests Himself as God by speaking and acting (6) and uttering prophecy that has been and will continue to be fulfilled. This proves He alone is God; all god-substitutes are utterly useless, 44:7-8

b. The very best of the god-substitutes are themselves merely metal fashioned by the one who then worships it, 44:9-13

c. The inferior idols are likewise made by man, and are even made from the wood which the worshipper uses to cook his meal and warm his house—the creator worshipping the created which is an inversion and perversion of the truth that the created should worship the Creator, 44:14-17

d. God-substitutes deceive and harden the heart and take away one’s spiritual understanding, 44:18-20 (See Isaiah 6:9-10; 27:11; Romans 1:18-24a)

2. God’s ability to perform His promise (21a) should cause His servant Israel (21b) to accept His redemption by turning in repentance to Him (22). When Israel does this very thing all heaven above and all nature below will burst forth in song and praise, 44:21-23

F. Who Israel’s God truly is and why His people should have confidence in Him and desire Him and His ways, 44:23-45:25. (In contrast to the impotent god-substitutes previously described).

1. Israel’s Redeemer is Yahweh, Who created the heavens and earth, 44:24

2. He alone discloses the future and then perfectly fulfills His prediction—which no god-substitute can do, 44:25-45:8

a. He turns the predictions of false prophets into nonsense, but carries out the Word spoken by His prophets, 44:25-26a

b. In about 739 B.C. God predicts that Israel will come back to Palestine from Babylon and that Jerusalem will be rebuilt (44:26b-27), because Cyrus the Persian will be His chosen instrument, 44:28-45:6. (For the fulfillment in 538 B.C. see 2 Chronicles 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1-4)

(1) God appoints Cyrus to be His shepherd to regather the lost sheep of the house of Israel to their land and to rebuild their cities and temple, 44:28-45:3

(a) It is the hand of Israel’s God that leads Cyrus in all his endeavors, 44:28-45:1

(b) In fact God Himself will go before Cyrus to break down Babylon’s gates and hand over her treasures to the Persian, 45:2-3

(2) The calling and equipping of Cyrus occurred when Cyrus as yet knew nothing of Yahweh, and thereby proves that Yahweh alone is God, and therefore can be trusted in His Word to Israel, 45:4-6

c. Yahweh alone is Sovereign (7) and His righteous purpose for His people will prevail, as the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning Cyrus will prove, 45:8

3. To those of God’s people who would quarrel with His ways among nations and individuals, 45:9-13

a. Complaining about God’s work in your life is like a vase asking the potter “What are you doing?” (9), or a child objecting to its parents concerning its own birth, 45:10 (See Jeremiah 18:1-10; Romans 9:19-21)

b. A vase may as well question the potter or a child his parents, as the faultfinders

question what God their Maker is doing in their lives (11a). Instead they are to pray for enlightenment concerning His plans for them and He will answer, 45:11b

c. He Who created all things will always have a means to deliver His people and to cause them to be victorious (12). Therefore, His people should not fear Cyrus' coming destruction of Babylon, because that very thing will bring deliverance to Israel, 45:13

4. God's work among the nations will redeem the sifted and purified remnant and at the same time convert some among the heathen, 45:14-25 (See Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 9-11)

a. Some among the unsaved will see that "Surely God is with you" and be converted (14), which causes amazement to the believers, 45:15

b. The remaining unbelievers will be disgraced (16), whereas God's people will be saved with an everlasting salvation, 45:17

c. Yahweh is God in the fullest and most exclusive sense and therefore will bring His people into a fertile fruit-bearing land, rather than a sterile uninhabited land (18). God's people can rely upon this promise because it pays to seek Him—the One Who speaks truth, 45:19

d. Those unbelievers who escape God's judgment upon the nations are invited to leave their do-nothing idols and come in repentance and faith to Yahweh, the only One able to declare the future correctly and then see His prediction be fulfilled completely, 45:20-22

e. In the end all mankind will come to the true God and bow their knee: the believers will find righteousness and strength in such voluntary submission (23-24a, 25), but the rebellious will be put to shame in His presence, 45:24b

G. The fall and destruction of religious Babylon brought about by the one and only true God, 46:1-13 (See Revelation 17). (Thus, in chapters 46-47 God has strong sayings for stubborn skeptics.)

1. When judgment day comes, all god-substitutes will be unable either to protect their worshippers or to save themselves. They are totally impotent, 46:1-2

2. Unlike the impotent, do-nothing god-substitutes, Israel's God has upheld them and carried them in past years (3) and will continue to sustain, carry and rescue them in the future, 46:4

3. Yahweh alone is Deity and is the incomparable One, 46:5-11

a. All god-substitutes are but creations of man (6). Indeed, they are unable even to move themselves, or to answer prayer or to deliver anyone from trouble, 46:7

b. Whereas, believers are to be steadfast in the faith that Yahweh is the true and only God (8-9), Who manifests His sole Deity by making His purpose known in prophecy and then fulfilling His promise (10). One such prophecy is His present promise to destroy Babylon and deliver His people through Cyrus, the Persian, which God will fulfill at the proper time, 46:11

4. In spite of their unbelief (12) God decrees that Israel will be saved by His righteousness and will as a consequence partake of His splendor, 46:13

H. The fall and destruction of commercial and political Babylon, the capital of the empire of the world, brought about by Yahweh, the one and only true God, 47:1-15 (See Revelation 18). (From the religion of Babylon in chapter 46, the announcement of judgment passes on to Babylon itself.)

1. Babylon, the once proud virgin queen of every city, surrounded by total luxury, is

reduced to the lowly status of the domestic slave-girl (1-3), brought about by Israel's Redeemer, the Lord Almighty, even the Holy One, 47:4

2. The virgin queen of the world will herself be cast into darkness (5), because having been given victory over God's people, she treated them mercilessly, 47:6

3. The reason the world empire treated God's people so harshly was because of its arrogance, pride and self-confidence (7-8), and as a result she will suddenly find herself bereft and forsaken, 47:9

4. Nothing can ransom Babylon nor ward off her coming catastrophe: Not her wisdom (10-11) nor her false, hellish religion, 47:12-15

a. Neither fortune tellers, ouija boards, tarot cards, or horoscopes can save her "from what is coming upon you," 47:12-13

b. The leaders and prophets of this false religious system will themselves be consumed in the irresistible, divine flame, leaving the world's capital, Babylon, totally helpless, 47:14-15

I. Israel—the reluctantly redeemed rebel, 48:1-22

1. The rebellion of Israel, 48:1-8

a. Although chosen by God, Israel's insincerity causes her to be unworthy of such honor and also to be unfaithful to her covenant with God, 48:1-2

b. God had given and fulfilled former prophecies (3) to enlighten stubborn Israel concerning Himself (4), so that Israel would know and must admit that He alone is God, 48:5-6a

c. God will give to Israel new prophecies concerning their deliverance from both Babylon and also personal sin (6b-7). Their spiritual ears and eyes have not yet been opened to this Word because of their rebellious nature, 45:8

2. The redemption of Israel, 48:9-21

a. By God's compassion (9) and by Israel's purification through the affliction of captivity (10), in order to protect His own Divine honor, 48:11 (See Leviticus 18:21; Ezekiel 36:20-32)

b. By His Own exclusive Deity proved 1) by His being the Creator of all things (12-13), and 2) by His sole ability to predict the future, and then bring His prophecy to pass, 48:14-16

(1) By predicting in 739 B.C. Cyrus' destruction of Babylon and deliverance of Israel and fulfilling the prophecy in 538 B.C., 48:14-15

(2) By predicting the coming of the Son of God Who will redeem His people not by force of arms, like Cyrus, but by the power of the Spirit, 48:16

c. By His teaching in all its various forms, 48:17-19

(1) God's way is always best, 48:17 (See Genesis 22)

(2) Obeying God's voice gives peace like a river, abundant righteousness and a numerous, enduring people, 48:18-19 (See Galatians 6:16)

d. By fleeing Babylon, the world's capital, when redemption does come (20-21). However, there will be no peace to the wicked—those who do not accept God's redemption and righteousness, 48:22. Even today Satan's main weapon against God's child is self and the world.

IX. Whereas the previous chapters of Isaiah have dealt mainly with the physical deliverance of Israel from a terrible condition of slavery to the nations, chapters 49-55 deal in particular with

the basis for the spiritual salvation of God's people by God's coming Servant being pierced for their sin, by paying sin's penalty for them, and then rising from the dead to great honor and glory. Here, for the first time in the Old Testament, we receive the full revelation that Messiah is to suffer and die for sins not His Own, and that this would occur before His destruction of the world system and all demonic powers and before His bringing in the millennium of eternal righteousness, peace and prosperity.

A. The Servant of the Lord: His Mission and Its Success, 49:1-26

1. The Servant's Mission, 49:1-13

a. The Servant's suitability for His Mission: His Call (1); the power of His Word to overcome everything that resists Him (2a, See Revelation 1:16; 19:15); His appearance in the fullness of time (2b, See Galatians 4:4,5); and the One Who glorifies the Lord God by completely obeying God's will for His life, even to death on the Cross, 49:3 (See Isaiah 53)

b. At first His mission would seem to be a failure (4a, See Isaiah 53:1-3), but He was confident that later God would crown His ministry with success, 49:4b

c. The Servant's dual mission, 49:5-7

(1) To bring Israel back to God, 49:5-6a

(2) To bring the light of salvation to the Gentiles, 49:6b-7 (See Luke 2:27, 32)

d. The Servant's dual role, 49:8-13

(1) To be a Covenant for the people, 49:8-9a (See Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6-13)

(2) To Shepherd God's people, 49:9b-13 (see John 10:1-18)

(a) To feed them and love them, 49:9b-10

(b) To make a way for them to return to God, 49:11-13

2. The Servant's success, 49:14-26

a. Since God can no more forget His children than a mother can forget hers, and since His people's name is engraved on His hands in perpetual remembrance, God will in due time bring Israel back to Himself, 49:14-18 (See Romans 9-11)

b. Israel will be restored with spacious lands and populated with a multitude of God's people, 49:19-21

c. Israel will be restored to the land by God's turning once hostile Gentiles into compassionate foster fathers and nursing mothers, 49:22-23

d. To those Gentiles who resist conversion and continue to plunder His people, God will destroy them thoroughly so that all mankind will recognize Him as the Mighty One—the Savior and Redeemer of His people, 49:24-26 (See Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 17:1-19:9)

B. Israel's faithlessness versus the devotion and faithfulness of the Lord's Servant, 50:1-11

1. The people's lack of dedication to God, 50:1-3

a. The suffering of God's people is the necessary result of their own sin of disobedience to God's Word, 50:1-2a

b. In their blindness and hardness of heart they turned to impotent god-substitutes, rather than to the omnipotent power of the true Redeemer and Creator, 50:2b-3

2. The Servant's qualification and dedication, 50:4-9

a. He learns daily from God how to speak words in order to sustain the weary, 50:4

b. Contrary to Israel He will not rebel at God's Word but gladly heed and obey it, 50:5

c. The Servant will persevere in obedience to God's will for His life, despite great

suffering and mocking, 50:6a

d. However, He will not be disgraced or shamed because the sovereign Lord Who helps Him will bring Him to final victory, 50:6b-9

3. The call for wholehearted discipleship, 50:10-11

a. Those who wish to turn from spiritual darkness to the light that comes from obedience, let them trust in God and give full obedience to His Word, 50:10

b. Those false disciples who kindle fires of opposition to God and His Servant will be destroyed by the fire from their own flame, 50:11 (See Matthew 23:37-39; 24:1-2)

C. Salvation and Judgment, 51:12-23

1. "Listen to Me": Your deliverance is at hand, 51:1-16

a. If God's promise to make Abraham a great nation was fulfilled in due time (1-2), surely His promise to make Israel's wasteland like the garden of Eden inhabited by people full of joy and gladness, thanksgiving and singing will also come to pass, 51:3

b. God will also use this deliverance of Israel to bring many Gentiles into His Kingdom (4-5), but not the unrepentant ones, 51:6

c. Those who do right and have God's Word in their heart (7a, See Hebrews 8:10-12), are exhorted not to be afraid of men, 51:7b-8 (See Hebrews 13:5-6)

d. God's previous grace in delivering Israel from Egypt (9-10) should mean He will be no less gracious soon to redeem Israel and crown her with everlasting joy in her homeland, 51:11

e. The One Who comforts His people is Yahweh their Maker—Creator of heaven and earth. They do not have to fear man. He will soon set His people at liberty, 51:12-15

f. God's Word placed in the mouth of His Servant will be the means of the renewal of the world and the restoration of Israel, 51:16 (See Genesis 1:3-31)

2. Jerusalem is to awaken from her stupor because God gives her new promises, 51:17-23

a. His people's past and present condition, 51:17-20

(1) As punishment she drank deeply from the cup of God's wrath; "the goblet that makes men stagger," 51:17

(2) Cities and land have been devastated and the inhabitants given over to sword and famine, 51:18-20 (See Lamentations)

b. God their Defender will soon bring this change, 51:21-23

(1) Israel will never again drink from the cup of God's wrath. Her salvation will be full and final, 51:21-22

(2) The instruments of Israel's punishment are themselves given over to the punishment that their pride deserves, 51:23

D. God calls His people to exchange slavery for power and imprisonment for liberty, 52:1-12

1. Jerusalem is exhorted to awaken from the stupor caused by bondage to the enemy, then to rise up and clothe herself with power and garments of splendor provided by her Lord, 52:1 and 2. Likewise, the Christian is exhorted to escape from all bondage of the flesh, the world and Satan, which grace is the result of God's love for him.

2. The reason Israel can shake off the chains of slavery and rise to liberty and dominion is because "your God reigns," 52:3-12

a. Israel's redemption will be by God's power and not by money, 52:3

b. Israel went to Egypt as a guest and was enslaved first by her host and then by Assyria (4), which caused both nations to mock the powerlessness of the one true God as being too weak to deliver His people (5). Such mockery will result in Babylon's punishment

and purified Israel's deliverance, and in Israel's knowing that her salvation came from her God Who long ago had proclaimed such thing through His prophet, 52:6

c. Messengers of good tidings are already appearing on the mountaintops proclaiming peace, because "your God reigns" (7). God's watchmen also hail their coming Lord (8). The ruined city is summoned to rejoice because its once desperate people are now comforted and the city itself redeemed, 52:9. (See Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21:1-22:5). This glorious redemption of city and people will be witnessed by all nations, 52:10

d. God's people now redeemed are exhorted to leave the world, which He will destroy, as He leads them out to cleanliness and purity, 52:11-12 (See II Corinthians 6:14-7:1)

E. The suffering and death of the Lord's Servant for our sin and His subsequent exaltation is the reason why God can save His people and have His Presence dwell among them, 52:13-53:12 (See the heading, "The Death of the Son," in Psalm 9)

1. The Introduction: The Servant-Messiah must be highly exalted (13); and His exaltation (13,15) will be in proportion to the humiliation preceding it, 52:14 (See Acts 2:31-36; Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:5-11). As Delitzsch explains, "The Servant of the Lord, whose inhuman sufferings excite such astonishment, is exalted on high; so that from utter amazement the nations tremble and their kings are struck dumb."

2. The Message: Israel as a nation will not believe the preaching of the Servant when He appears (1). The Servant will have an unattractive origin of birth and growth (2a). His outward appearance would not be such as to attract or delight the emotions (2b). In fact, the impression given by His physique was somewhat repulsive to those who measure by worldly standards (3a). His miserable condition would cause Israel to mistake and despise the Servant (3b, See John 1:46). Believers from all nations will come to recognize that He took in His own Person the consequence of their sin, in order that He might deliver them from them (4a). Truly God's full vengeance for sin fell upon this particular sufferer (4b). Yes, He was pierced and crushed on account of our sins and iniquities—punishment that brought us peace and healing (5). Our confession is that the sin of going our own way was iniquity before the great and holy God Who laid our guilt on Him (6). Though personally innocent He went to His death without protest (53:7, See Matthew 27:12-14; Acts 8:32-34). By oppression and judgment He died for the transgressions of God's people (8). Following His ignominious death He was honored by having a prince's burial because of His freedom from sin for: "He had done no violence nor was any deceit in His mouth" (9). Though men crucified the Son, it all happened according to the will and purpose of God to make His unique Servant a guilt offering for our sin (10a). The suffering of the Servant was His path to glory and resurrection (10b-11a). The suffering of His soul and shedding of His blood was what He offers to God as a guilt offering on our behalf (11a). By His knowledge of what God requires to be paid for the guilt from sin, the Righteous Servant lets others partake of His righteousness through their knowledge of Him (11b). Because "He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors" by pouring "out His life unto death," God will raise the Servant from among the dead and give Him victorious dominion which He shares with His followers (12, See Romans 8:16-17). One would think that Isaiah wrote these words while standing beneath Jesus' cross on Passover Day in the spring of 30 A.D., rather than penning them about 725 B.C. Through his spiritual perception he knew much more about Christ's death hundreds of years before that dreadful event took place than did the majority of Jesus' countrymen who watched the crucifixion with physical eyes. No

wonder Jesus said of His executioners, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

F. The incredible triumph of the cross and resurrection in chapter 53 issues in a hymn of praise in 54:1-17.

1. Concerning God’s love, 54:1-10

a. God’s treatment of Israel is like that of a once rejected wife newly restored by grace and then possessing a great family, 54:1-6 (See Hosea 1-3)

(1) A good theme for a song: in the future God’s people will be more glorious and productive than ever before, 54:1-3 (See Galatians 4:27)

(a) Numerous children, 54:1

(b) Enlarged dwelling place, 54:2

(c) Nations added to their number, 54:3

(2) Her past shame and humiliation because of sin will be remembered no more, 54:4-6

(a) Because the former widow will receive a new Husband Who is her Maker, 54:4-5

(b) Because the once rejected and dispirited wife will be called back by her Husband, the LORD, 54:6

b. From henceforth God’s love toward His people will be unfailing and His covenant of peace eternal, 54:7-10

(1) God’s momentary displeasure at Israel’s sin will quickly pass away to be followed by His kindness and compassion that will never again cease, 54:7-8

(2) The grounds of His everlasting love to Israel is His covenant of peace which He now makes with her, 54:9-10

(a) Like Noah’s covenant, God’s promise never to be angry at Israel again is eternal and unchangeable, 54:9

(b) His covenant with Israel is firmer than the mountains of God, unshakable and unmovable, 54:10

2. Concerning the New Jerusalem, 54:11-17

a. The old city is nothing compared to the splendor of the coming New Jerusalem, 54:11-12 (See Revelation 21:10-22:6)

b. Its citizens will need no instructors since God Himself will be their Teacher, and His word will bring peace, 54:13

c. Since the new city will have righteousness for its foundation, she will have no need to fear terror. God will send no more enemies against her, 54:14-15

d. The New Jerusalem will be as invincible as is God, because the LORD, the Sovereign One is their Protector, 54:16-17

G. An invitation to the thirsty to come and drink deeply from the well of salvation, 55:1-13 (See John 4:10; Revelation 22:17). (Having provided for salvation in chapter 53, and spoken of His love and the celestial city in chapter 54, God now bids the thirsty come and satisfy their deepest need, freely, provided by grace alone.)

1. All things are now ready. You are invited and nothing is required except to come, 55:1-2 (See Matthew 11:28-30)

a. Partake of an eating and drinking that exceeds the physical and takes hold of that joy which springs from spiritual life and nourishment, (See Psalm 36:7-9; 1 Peter 2:2-3)

b. Buy spiritual blessings and gifts with the coin of Divine grace, their reception

- dependent upon nothing but sense of a need and readiness to accept the blessings offered. It is only by the obedience of faith that satisfaction for one's soul can be won, 55:1-2 (See Ephesians 2:8-9)
2. The results of coming to God 55:3-5
 - a. Partaking of the glories of the coming Kingdom of God to all who will merely give ear, 55:3
 - b. Witnessing in your holy splendor to the nations of the world who will heed your message and be drawn to God, 55:4-5
 3. Repentance is first necessary before those desiring to partake from God's blessings can do so, 55:6-9
 - a. Now is the accepted time. Behold today is the day of salvation, 55:6 (See 49:8; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2)
 - b. Repentance explained, 55:7
 - (1) Turning away from sinful self-will, both externally "your way" and internally "your thoughts," 55:7a
 - (2) Turning to God for mercy and pardon, 55:7b
 - c. Repentance is necessary in order to learn the ways and thoughts of God which unrepentant man knows not (8), and cannot know apart from God's help, 55:9
 4. God's plan and purpose will always accomplish exactly what He desires, 55:10-13
 - a. Rain and snow descend to earth but do not return to the sky until they have produced what God intended—food for man, 55:9-10
 - b. Likewise, God's Word goes forth from Him to accomplish what He desires and "achieve the purpose for which He sent it," 55:11
 - c. Therefore, God's purpose for Israel to go forth from slavery to glorious redemption and deliverance, with all nature changed and rejoicing at her freedom, will likewise be fulfilled, 55:12-13 (See Romans 8:19-23)

X. In chapters 56-57 God's people are exhorted to uphold truth and do what is right; then God's deliverance will soon be at hand.

- A. This conditional promise of grace is open to all regardless of race (3a, 6-8) or those previously excluded under the limits of the law, 56:1-2, 3b-5 (See Leviticus 22:4; Deuteronomy 23:1; Romans 2:28-29)
 1. God welcomes all people, 56:1-8
 2. The sure way to receive God's grace is to meet His covenant conditions, 56:1-8
- B. Those who can, and those who will not partake of God's deliverance, 56:9-57:13
 1. The latter will be abandoned to their enemies to face the consequences of their sins, 56:9-57:2
 - a. Their spiritual leaders are neither able nor worthy enough to deliver the one under their care, 56:9-12
 - (1) The prophets are to the people what a worthless guard dog would be to his master—dumb, ineffective, and interested only in eating and sleeping, 56:9-11a
 - (2) They are like faithless shepherds who know only to care for their own appetites and not the needs of the sheep, 56:11b-12
 - b. The righteous are to be saved by early death from the destruction which cannot fail to come upon God's people for such wickedness as this, 57:1-2. (The Bible's view is

the death of the righteous, who enter into peace, is better than life in a wicked, judgment-cursed world.)

2. The righteous die and thus escape God's judgment on the world and oppression by the wicked, who not realizing what is happening go on shamelessly practicing their idolatrous and ungodly ways, 57:3-10

3. Those wicked ones who follow god-substitutes will find that their idols will be unable to deliver them in God's day of judgment (11-13a), whereas those who make the Lord their refuge will be redeemed from bondage and returned to the land He prepared for them, 57:13b

C. The Holy One of Israel is also the Merciful One who not only manifests His glory on high (14-15, 20) but also His grace here below, 57:16-19

1. The road that leads to God's dwelling and fellowship with Him can be traveled only by those who are repentant in heart and poor in spirit, 57:14-15

2. God's wrath at sin caused Him to hide His face from His people until their affliction brought forth a purified heart (16-17). After this God will heal, guide and comfort His obedient people, causing them to give praise to the name of God, 57:18-19a

3. God's work in His people's lives will create two classes: Those purified by suffering who accept His peace and healing (19b-c) and those wicked ones who continue in their sin and unrest like that of a storm-tossed sea, 57:20-21

XI. In chapters 40-48 Cyrus, King of Persia, is God's servant to bring physical deliverance of His people from Babylon. In chapters 49-57 God's Servant is the agent of their spiritual salvation. And chapters 58-66 define the conditions which are necessary in order for His salvation to be enjoyed (Peace to the faithful redeemed; no peace to the wicked, along with moving events toward the goal of God's eternal purpose—the final destruction of the wicked and his world, and the creation of a new heaven and earth for the blessed. See Revelation 21:1)

A. Externals alone corrupt the religious man as well as his worship, 58:1-14 (Externals—always the bane of the spiritual man)

1. External religion is unacceptable to God unless accompanied by both internal and external righteousness, 58:1-12

a. This sin the preacher is to proclaim to his people with a voice like the clarion call of a trumpet (1), even to those who "seem eager for God to come near them" while simultaneously living in sin and rebellion against Him, 58:2

b. How the people view their work—holy righteousness (3a), and how God views it, 58:3b-4

c. Their external righteousness (5) is at variance with true worship which must be followed by merciful works of love to one's brethren—whatever that may entail, 58:6-7

d. Self-renouncing, self-sacrificing love will be amply rewarded by God's divine grace, 58:8-9a (See Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Corinthians 3:8-15)

e. However, the divine conditions must first be met (9a-10), in order to receive God's promised and wonderful blessings, 58:11-12

2. The service of love exhibited toward the brethren (1-12) is to be accompanied by the service of worship, 58:13-14. (It is in worship that we are empowered for service, John 20:19-21.)

B. The absence of God's presence and blessing upon His people is not Yahweh's fault but is

completely because “your iniquities have separated you from your God,” 59:1-21

1. Reasons for unanswered prayer, 59:1-15
 - a. The principle: “Your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear,” 59:1-2
 - b. The specifics, 59:3-15 (See Romans 3:10-18 where the Holy Spirit sets forth the universal corruption of morals and values)
 - (1) Violence (3a) and lies, 59:3b
 - (2) In court, all are destitute of truth and speak what is morally corrupt and worthless (4). For personal gain, all their evil testimony and lawsuits are directed toward the injury of their neighbor (5). But such wickedness and lies will not bring the sinners any lasting advantage, 59:6
 - (3) They have eager inclination to harm the innocent, because their external religion has not changed their inmost being (7). Such perverted religious truth can not co-exist with God’s peace, 59:8
 - c. The result of living wickedly before the Lord, 59:9-12a
 - (1) Truth-doing and righteousness are withheld from them, 59:9a
 - (2) Deep spiritual blindness and deception are their prevailing state, 59:9b-10
 - (3) In their pain and impatience they look for God’s truth and deliverance (11) but cannot receive them because they will not repent—“our offenses are ever with us,” 59:12a
 - d. The solution to unanswered prayer, 59:12b-15a
 - (1) Individual repentance, 59:12b-13
 - (2) Realization and confession as to what sin has done to God’s righteousness (“driven back”) and truth (“stumbled in the streets”), 59:14-15a
2. Yahweh—the God of battles still, 59:15b-21
 - a. Displeased at the absence of truth-doing and intercessors, God Himself dresses for battle, with “righteousness as His breastplate” and “the helmet of salvation on His head” to deliver the believing, faithful minority, 59:15b-17a
 - b. But to the unbelieving, disobedient sinners of the world “He will come like a pent-up flood” dealing out “wrath to His enemies and retribution to His foes,” 59:17b-19
 - c. The result will be:
 - (1) World-wide “men will fear the name of the Lord” (19) and those of Israel who repent of their sins will be redeemed, 59:20
 - (2) Those who turn from sin will enter into an eternal covenant with God, a covenant not of law but of the Spirit and Word, 59:21

C. The glory of the New Jerusalem, the eternal capital city of God, 60:1-22. (See Revelation 21:1-22:5. Contrast her with fallen Babylon, the capital city of Satan’s kingdom in Revelation 18-19). In chapter 60 Scripture is looking to the millennial age that goal of Divine history which is one of God’s purpose for His redeemed ones.

1. God’s glory radiates from the New City and breaks through the spiritual darkness covering all mankind (1-2), drawing the nations to Yahweh, the supreme reality, 60:3
2. The Israel of God is to look about in all directions, for an approaching multitude bearing the wealth of the nations comes to behold her beauty and the glory of Him Who dwells among her, 60:4-5
3. Tribes to her east approach bearing gold and incense, “proclaiming the praise of the Lord” and driving flocks “to be accepted as offerings on My altar,” (6-7). On the other hand

commercial fleets from western nations appear on the scene bearing God's people along "with their silver and gold, to the honor of the Lord your God," 60:8-9

4. Those nations who protected God's people during the great tribulation will be allowed into God's kingdom whose capital city has gates that "will always stand open, they will never be shut by day or night," 60:10-12 (See Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 12:13-17; 21:25-26)

5. The New Jerusalem will be built of the very finest material possible, 60:13 (See Revelation 21:9-21)

6. Those who afflict God's people during the tribulation will be brought to bow humbly before both her and her God and confess that truly she is "the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel," 60:14

7. Following redemption and glorification, the people of God will be the envy of all mankind and in that day will themselves finally "know that I, the LORD, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob," 60:15-16

8. The New Jerusalem will be governed by the inward virtues of peace and righteousness and be protected externally by "walls of salvation" and "gates of praise," 60:17-18

9. The people and city will no longer have need of either sun or moon for "your God will be your glory. . . the Lord will be your everlasting light," 60:19-20 (See Revelation 21:23)

10. At this time God's people will be conformed to the glorious image of Christ both internally and externally and will have entered into their inheritance (21). Their glory, abilities and opportunities in the New Age will be multiplied many fold over their previous state in the flesh, 60:22a

11. When God comes to set up His Kingdom He will do so when men least expect it, 60:22b (See Matthew 24:36-25:13)

D. The Spirit-filled pastor, 61:1-11 (Chapter 60 describes God's blessing upon His people and chapter 61 sets forth the characteristics of the one who brings that blessing and what the result will be upon the people who receive His message.)

1. He should be Spirit-anointed, 61:1a (See Luke 4:16-20; Ephesians 5:18b)

2. His purpose should be to preach God's good news, 61:1b-3

a. Which bestows both freedom and God's favor upon those in sin's bondage, who grieve, mourn and are brokenhearted about their condition, 61:1b-3a

b. Which gives beauty, gladness and praise to replace the ashes, mourning and despair caused by rebellion against God, 61:3b-c

c. Which produces victorious righteous ones for the display of God's splendor, 61:3d (See Matthew 5:13-15; Galatians 5:22-23)

3. The beginning effect of spirit-filled preaching upon the people's ministry, 61:4-6

a. The hearers will become mature to do God's work, 61:4

b. The hearers will convert many unbelievers who in turn will do God's work, 61:5

c. The hearers will have a strong ministry, instead of just maintenance, and will have funds sufficient for every need, 61:6

4. The lingering effect of Spirit-filled preaching upon the people's ministry, 61:7-9

a. The people will receive a great inheritance in God's coming Kingdom, 61:7 (See 1 Corinthians 3:8-15; Revelation 2:26-29)

b. Because they have turned from iniquity to righteousness, God will make them His covenant people (8), whose converts also will be mighty ministers among the people (9a) and they themselves will be respected and not scorned even by unbelievers, 61:9b

5. The great delight and joy of those who have a Spirit-anointed ministry before God, 61:10-11
 - a. He/she will be clothed “with garments of salvation,” and arrayed “in a robe of righteousness” as glorious as those of a bride and bridegroom at their wedding, 61:10
 - b. They will be effective in the worldwide spread of God’s truth and righteousness, 61:11
- E. The coming glory of the people of God and the city of God—the New Jerusalem, 62:1-12 (See Revelation 21:1-22:5)
1. The people of God and the city of God will be a crown of beauty in the hands of the Lord, 62:1-3
 - a. Their glory, salvation and righteousness will shine through the darkness like a flaming light, so bright that all the world will behold it, 62:1-2
 - b. His people will be the greatest beauty on earth, the master handwork of her Lord, 62:3 (See Revelation 12:4a; Philippians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19)
 2. God’s people at the marriage supper of the Lamb, 62:4-5 (See Matthew 21:1-14; 25:1-13; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-11)
 3. God’s people are to pray daily for His Kingdom to come, for His will to be done on earth as in heaven, 62:6-7 (See Matthew 6:9-10) (May it soon be so!)
 4. The arrival of God’s millennial Kingdom will bring in worldwide peace and abundance, with no enemies in sight to harass His people, 62:8-9
 5. Behold, your Savior is at hand, 62:10-12 (See Matthew 24:36-25:13)
 - a. Therefore, God’s people are to leave Babylon, be wide awake, and walk the highway of holiness to where His Presence abides, 62:10 (See Isaiah 35:8-10; Matthew 24:36-25:13; Revelation 18:2-3)
 - b. Because the judgment seat of Christ for rewarding His people will then take place, 62:11 (See Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 3:8-15)
 - c. Because of their imputed righteousness and God’s presence among them, His glorified, transformed people will now be called holy (not sinful), redeemed (no longer in bondage), sought after (no longer shunned and scoffed at) and no longer deserted (because God’s very own Person is in their midst, 62:12)
- F. God’s day both of vengeance and deliverance, 63:1-19
1. God take it upon Himself to work wrath upon those hostile to His chosen ones, 63:1-6 (See Revelation 14:17-20; 16:12-16; 19:11-21)
 - a. He alone is the only One strong enough to redeem, 63:1a, 5-6
 - b. Righteousness and holiness win the day, 63:1b-3
 - c. Vengeance on the ungodly and redemption of believers will occur on the same day, 63:4 (See 2 Thessalonians 1: 5-10)
 2. His own people will go into the Babylonian bondage because they simply refuse to follow the Holy Spirit’s leading, 63:7-19
 - a. Like father: their forefathers also refused at first to follow the Spirit’s direction, 63:7-14
 - (1) Because He was distressed at their affliction, God saved their fathers from Egypt (7-9); yet they rebelled against the Holy Spirit’s guidance, so He gave them over to chastening in order to purify them from sin, 63:10
 - (2) Thus, the Divine strokes caused His people to remember God’s past goodness, and they longed to be “given rest by the Spirit of God,” 63:11-14 (See Judges 2:1-

4; 3:1-8:35; Luke 15:11-32)

b. Like son: present day Israel was likewise in bondage in Babylon and looks back with longing heart to God's deliverance of His people from Egypt and offer a prayer for their own redemption, 63:15-19

(1) The people pray for a renewal of God's past mercies that are currently withheld from them, 63:15

(2) The basis for their petition is that God is their Father, and their forefathers Abraham and Jacob are unable to help them, 63:16

(3) When we scornfully and obstinately reject God's grace and light, He lets our spiritual eyes become blind and our spiritual ears become deaf, 63:17 (See John 12:35-41, 46; Romans 1:21; Ephesians 1:17-19)

(4) The result of spiritual blindness on the part of God's people is the loss of His presence, as well as the loss of ministry, 63:18

(5) God's people are different from the world. His people carry His name and He rules over them, which is not true of the wicked. Thus in the end He will bless the righteous and condemn the evil ones who are not named after Him or ruled by Him, 63:19

G. A prayer for God's gracious Presence and thus for His blessings to be restored, 64:1-12

1. If you serve God, He will take care of you, 64:1-5a

a. God should be no less gracious to us tomorrow than He was yesterday, 64:1-4

b. Tomorrow's grace depends upon today's righteousness and obedience, 64:5a

2. Our present sinful actions will hinder God's grace, Presence and blessings to be in our life, 64:5b-7

a. Our present sins cause us to become as unclean and rejected before God as a filthy rag would be to an industrious housewife (5b-6). Our sin also keeps us from praying, 64:7a

b. As a consequence we fail to sense God's Presence with us and thus waste away in our sins, 64:7b

3. Further results of not living righteously before the Lord, 64:8-11

a. Even though God is our Father and we are the regenerate work of His hand, 64:8

b. When we follow the world, God will let the world's afflictions purify and cleanse us from sin and rebellion against Him, 64:9-11 (See Luke 15:16-31)

(1) God's anger can endure for a long time, 64:9

(2) Our very life can become as barren and dry as a desert, 64:10

(3) Even our worship will turn to ashes and God will withdraw His Presence, 64:11

4. God's people, finally driven to prayer by their desperate situation caused by sin, pray hopeful that His chastening strokes have been sufficient enough to allow abundant mercies to soon fall upon them, 64:12

H. The final separation: a difference is made between the obedient believer who has Christ in his heart, and the disobedient merely religious who has only the name of being Christian, 65:1-25 (See Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50)

1. In His sovereign grace, God reveals Himself to all men, only some of whom listen to His voice and then find Him, 65:1 (See Romans 1:18-20; 2:12-16; 10:17-21)

2. Having the name of belonging to God without having the reality of God in the heart ends in death, 65:2-7

a. Pursuing our own speculation about whom to worship and how to worship manifests

that we are obstinate, God-provoking, and a stench in the Lord's nostrils that inflames His wrath, 65:2-5

b. Such self-will in going their own way of those claiming to be His people, God "will pay back in full," 65:6-7

3. God always makes a distinction between those obedient ones who have God in them and the disobedient ones who have only God's name and not godly practice, 65:8-16

a. The true people of God are not those having external religion only (church membership!) but who in their hearts are God's servants. They and they alone will inherit His promises, because they truly seek Him, 65:8-10

b. Those who are only church members and forsake the LORD by refusing to heed His voice will be condemned. They have chosen the external over the internal, the shadow over the substance, 65:11-12

c. In God's own time the obedient, regenerate servants will inherit His blessings, whereas the in-name-only Christians will receive the curse, 65:13-14

d. Even the name of the unbelievers will become something to utter when making a curse (15a), whereas the obedient servant will receive a new name, "known only to him who receives it" (See Revelation 2:17), 65:15b

e. Since He is truly "the God of truth" Yahweh will faithfully fulfill all promises made to His servants and they in turn will lean upon Him, 65:16 (See Revelation 3:14)

4. The obedient faithful will inherit all things—even a new heaven and a new earth, 65:17-25 (See Revelation 21:1)

a. The New Jerusalem, as well as its citizens, will truly become the city of God (See Psalm 46), the joy of the whole earth (See Psalm 48:1), a joyous, happy people in whom Yahweh Himself will take delight, 65:17-19

b. Mankind's life span will be greatly extended, 65:20

c. They will suffer no threat of violence (such as exists in our country this very day), 65:21-23

d. All prayer will be heard instantly (24); peace and harmony will extend to all creation, even unto the violent predators of the animal kingdom itself, 65:25

I. Yahweh is coming again to establish the New Jerusalem and create new heavens and a new earth. Judgment will be meted out to those seduced by satanic and worldly practices. At the same time deliverance from all evil along with divine blessings are to be bestowed upon all who by faith in God's Word seek to do His will, 66:1-24

1. True worship and false, 66:1-4

a. The house of worship is worthless unless it is filled with worshippers who elevate God and His ways above themselves (humility), are willing to repent when they go astray (contrite), and tremble at God's Word (fear God), 66:1-2

b. Those who keep only the externals of true religion while rebelling against God by choosing "their own ways" and refusing to listen to His Word of instruction will be condemned and destroyed as though they were idol worshippers, 66:3-4 (See Micah 6:6-8)

2. Those religious-in-name-only who despise God's people "who tremble at His Word," Yahweh Himself will repay "all they deserve," 66:5-6

3. The coming renewal of God's people, 66:7-17

a. Their barrenness will not continue forever—an entire nation of people of God will be born and God Himself will do it in a swift and unexpected way, 66:7-9 (See Romans

- 9-11; Revelation 7:1-8)
- b. Those who have participated in the suffering of God's people are to begin rejoicing now in the faith and knowledge that all their suffering and travail will be changed into glory, 66:10-11
 - c. Those godly people who mourned and prayed over the church's seeming desolation are now to rejoice and participate in her divinely bestowed abundance and honor, 66:10-14
 - d. God's judgment of wrath upon all evildoers must happen first in order to prepare the way for the redemption to come, 66:15-16 (See Joel 3:14; Zechariah 12:1-13:2; Matthew 3:11-12)
 - e. God's judgment will be upon those who are Christians-in-name only, as well as other evildoers, 66:17
4. Some of the nations, other than Israel, will also call upon the name of the Lord and be saved, 66:18-24 (See Matthew 25:31-46)
- a. Those nations willing to submit to Yahweh will survive the judgment and see God's glory in the New Jerusalem, 66:18
 - b. Some of those who know the Lord will go forth as missionaries to proclaim His glory to those willing to submit to His authority, 66:19
 - c. Those newly converted will be accepted as brothers and eagerly come from every corner of the globe by every mean of transportation, 66:20
 - d. The formerly unbelieving nations are fully incorporated into the body of God's people as kings and priests, 66:21 (See 1 Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6)
 - e. All men, without national or religious distinction, will bow down together before Yahweh and worship Him forever, 66:22-23
 - f. But all who rebel against God (the openly irreligious along with the in-name-only religious) will meet their final doom, 66:24

Copyright © 2000 Biblical Studies Ministries International, Inc. You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that: (1) You credit the author and Biblical Studies Ministries International, Inc.; (2) Any modifications are clearly marked; (3) You do not charge a fee beyond the cost of production; (4) You do not make more than 500 copies; and (5) You include BSMI's web site address (www.bsmi.org) on the copied resource. When placing this material on the web, a link to the document on BSMI's web site is preferred. For any use other than that given above, please contact Biblical Studies Ministries International, Inc., 820 Bennett Court, Carmel, IN 46032 or tbsmi@aol.com.