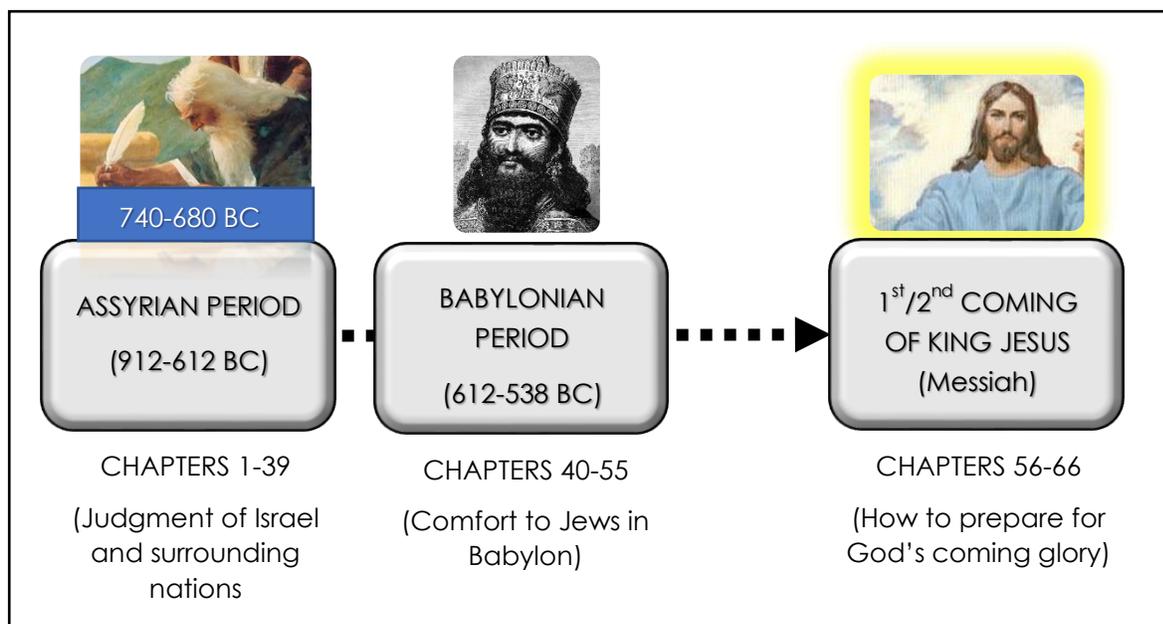


THE THREE MAIN PARTS OF ISAIAH



PART 1: THE ASSYRIAN PERIOD (CHAPTERS 1-39)

- Chapters 1-39 generally carry the message of judgment for sin during the Assyrian Period.
- Isaiah brings the message of judgment to Judah, Israel, and the surrounding pagan nations. Judah had a form of godliness, but in their hearts they were corrupt.

PART 2: THE BABYLONIAN PERIOD (CHAPTERS 40-55)

- It is assumed from Isaiah 39 that Chapters 40-55 are addressed prophetically to the exiled Jews in Babylon (612-538 BC).
- However, it also encourages Isaiah's contemporaries (740-680 BC).¹ These chapters bring a message of forgiveness, comfort and hope.

PART 3: PROPHECIES OF KING JESUS' 1ST AND 2ND COMINGS

- This message of hope looks forward to the coming of the Messiah. Isaiah speaks more about the Messiah than does any other OT prophet.
- He describes the Messiah as both a suffering servant and a sovereign Lord. The fact that the Messiah was to be both a suffering servant and a sovereign Lord could not be best understood clearly until the NT times.²

¹ (ESV Crossway Bibles 1309 Notes)

² (Life Application Bible 1167)

CHAPTER 40 SUMMARY

I. MAIN IDEA

God not only punishes sin and rebellion but he also promises comfort and hope through his forgiveness to those who wait for the Lord – i.e., by placing their faith in him (40:31). Through this, God's incomparable glory is more fully revealed.

II. GOD'S WORDS OF COMFORT FOR HIS PEOPLE IN BABYLON (40:1-2)

- A. After a series of raids, beginning in 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar eventually conquered the nation of Judah, destroying their Temple and carrying most of the Jews off to Babylon (586 BC).
- B. Now no longer in their own land and without a temple they were extremely discouraged and believed God has forsaken them.
- C. God sends words of comfort to his people by telling them their sins have been paid for (40:2), meaning they have suffered enough.

III. A PROPHECY OF THE COMING MESSIAH (40:3-5)

- A. These verses reflect the custom of some eastern monarchs to send heralds before them to clear away obstacles to make way the coming king. "Preparing the way" implies the need for repentance as John the Baptist preached repentance just prior to the first arrival of King Jesus (Matt. 4:17).
- B. The misery of the Jews will be replaced with the Lord's glory, and every person will see God's glorious salvation in the Messiah's future kingdom). All people will see King Jesus when he returns in his glory (Rev. 1:7).

IV. THESE WORDS OF GOD STAND FOREVER (40:6-8)

- A. Unlike people's promises which are like grass and flowers that pass away, God's Word endures forever.
- B. James also teaches the folly of trusting in material wealth instead of God's Word (Jas. 1:10, 11). Peter too illustrates the folly of trusting in things that pass away (1 Pet. 1:24, 25).

V. GOD'S PRESENCE IN JERUSALEM WILL RETURN SOMEDAY (40:9-31)

- A. Like a messenger on a hilltop, Isaiah calls on the city to proclaim loudly to the rest of Judah's cities the good news when God's presence returns there.
- B. "Here is your God" is referring to God's presence in Jerusalem after many centuries of absence.
- C. These words of comfort to the nation of Israel also apply to all those who put their hope in the Lord, knowing that no matter how difficult this life can be there will come a day when God's glory will be manifested through his Son, Jesus Christ, when he returns (40:31; Rev. 22:20-21).