

In chapters 40 to 66 Isaiah turns his whole attention to the godly remnant and brings them words of consolation from God. He shows them that the exile is not to last forever. God will deliver His people and will pour out great blessings upon them.

The Outline of the Book

In approaching such a book as Isaiah it is helpful to see into what divisions it naturally breaks up. Here the analogy of American geography can be useful. The great chain of the Rocky Mountains forms a section of the United States that is different from anything east or west of it. In the book of Isaiah, there is a similar section, made up of chapters 36 to 39, which is distinct both from what precedes and from what follows. These chapters do not have the style of a prophetic discourse, but that of a narrative. In parts of this section one would almost think he was reading Kings or Chronicles, for these chapters are not mainly the declarations of a prophet, but an account of events in history. This naturally divides the book into three sections: chapters 1 to 35, then the narrative section (36 to 39), and then the section of prophetic discourse in chapters 40-66.

These divisions of the book have distinctive characteristics. Most of the material in chapters 1 to 35 begins in the reign of Ahaz. It may be entirely made up of discourses given in the reign of Ahaz or before, though parts of some sections may have been added by Isaiah in the days of Hezekiah.

Chapters 36 to 39 describe events in the reign of Hezekiah and tell of the relationship between the prophet and the king during this reign. Chapters 40 to 66, which may be called "Isaiah's Book of Comfort," were probably written in the reign of Manasseh.