

Isa 1-2(4)

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During the reign of Hezekiah, the situation prophesied in the reign of Ahaz actually comes to pass. Judah is now face to face with the power of the Assyrian king who has destroyed Syria and conquered Israel. The Assyrian power comes down against Judah with overwhelming strength, as part of its endeavor to force all the nations to bow beneath its yoke. It appears that nothing human can protect Jerusalem. Yet God delivers Jerusalem in a most unexpected way, by suddenly destroying a large part of Sennacherib's army. (Isa. 37:36)

At about the same time King Hezekiah makes a friendly arrangement with the king of far-away Babylon. Isaiah points out to him that from this land of Babylon there is to come one who will destroy Judah and take the people into captivity as punishment for their sins. Hezekiah is thankful that this ~~terrible punishment which God is to send is not to take place~~ <sup>catastrophe</sup> ~~will~~ <sup>will not occur</sup> in his own day.

Manasseh follows Hezekiah and terrible persecutions take place during his reign, so that it becomes obvious to Isaiah and to the godly people of the land that God must punish the nation for the terrible wickedness that is being shown by the king and by the people as a whole. Punishment is so certain that the godly of the land begin to think of it almost as something which has already come.

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

The easiest way to find the outline of a book of the Bible is, of course, to look in a Bible dictionary or a commentary to see how it divides the book. However, particularly in the case of such a book as Isaiah, it is well to look