

Isa 1-2(5)

into the book itself and see into what divisions it naturally breaks up.

The analogy used above of the United States, a unit in language as compared with Mexico to the south, will serve here to illustrate the point. Suppose that someone looks at the United States as a whole and considers into what ^{parts} divisions one would naturally divide it. The great chain of the Rocky Mountains forms a section of the country different from anything east or west of it. It is decidedly different from the plains of Kansas or the farming country of Ohio. It is one of the particularly distinct sections of the United States.

In the book of Isaiah, there is a similar section which is distinct ^{both} from what precedes ~~it~~ and from what follows ~~it~~. This is the section made up of chapters 36 to 39. They have the style, not of a prophetic discourse, but of a narrative. In much 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.

The king of Assyria does something, his representative makes a certain statement, Hezekiah seeks an answer, then Isaiah brings a message from God. It is a narrative section as compared with the sections of direct prophecy or prophetic discourse which precede or follow it. -So this naturally divides the book into 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.