

ISAIAH

1:1 and INTRODUCTION

A large book– some stats:

- 15 manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls (2nd to Dt); a complete manuscript among them as 17 pieces of leather stitched together—nearly 25' long
- 2nd in chs. (Ps; 7% of OT), 4th in verses (Gen, Jer; 1 down, 1291 to go!), 5th in words (Ez; 6% of OT)¹— his lengthy service along with many words recorded and preserved
- uses nearly 2200 different Hebrew words– 'more than any other OT writer'²
- most oft-named OT prophet in NT (22x); most oft-cited OT book in NT (419 in 23 books vs. Ps' 414, Gen 260); 4th and 7th most-cited passages in NT (6:1's 11x in Rev and 53:7's 10x; vs. Ps 110:1's 18x)

Isaiah, the man

- often mentioned in II Kings/Chron, but very few details there or in the book of Isaiah— despite an active and lengthy ministry (about 60 years– from approx. 740-681 BC)
 - MH's 'It was an honor to him, and a happiness to his country, that he was continued so long in his usefulness'
 - MH's 'we must suppose both that he began young and that he held out to old age' (w/ app.)
- name means 'the Lord [Yahweh] saves' or 'the Lord is salvation' (as Joshua, Hosea)
- married to a prophetess (8:3) and had at least two sons (7:3, 8:3; 7:14?)
- very educated and a great writer/poet with tremendous command of Hebrew
 - perhaps a priest (given Ch. 6's vision) or a teacher (given 8:16's 'school')
 - tremendous interest in nature, with frequent reference to plants and animals
 - some prose, but mostly (beautiful) poetry; NIVSB's 'The beauty of its poetry is unsurpassed in the OT.'; Motyer's 'a use of rhyme unparalleled in subtlety and abundance elsewhere in the OT.'
- scribe for King Uzziah (II Chron 26:22); tradition says he was his cousin– but in any case, remarkable access to 1's four consecutive kings
 - served during the reigns of Uzziah (6:1) and Jotham (chs. 1-6), Ahaz (chs. 7-14), and Hezekiah (chs. 15-39)

¹ The rest of the top 10: Num, Ex, Dt, II Chron, Luke (or Acts?)

² NIVSB, p. 1015.

- worked with a variety of kings and in a variety of times (w/ app.)– in general, started in times of relative peace/prosperity, but things mostly degenerated from there
- a prophet (communicated with thru 1:1, 6:1's 'visions' [2:1's 'saw'; note: prophets as 'seers'; Rev 1:12] vs. voice or dream; Num 12:6); a short history of the office of prophet (II Pet 1:20-21):
 - originated with Moses, because of the people's fear of God (Ex 20:18-19, Dt 5:24-28)
 - none after Moses and the Law until Samuel
 - in between, the Spirit intervened militarily (Joshua, Judges) vs. providing additional revelation-- more acting than speaking (MH's 'They had the law of Moses, recently written; let them study that.')
 - from Samuel to the end of the OT, a constant stream of prophets (e.g., Elijah, Elisha)– but none are appointed to write until Isaiah and his contemporaries (except II Chron 21:12-15's letter from Elijah)
 - after Malachi, no more prophets until John the Baptist and then Christ as the ultimate mediator/prophet
- more specifically, a Judean (southern kingdom) prophet, centered in Jerusalem
 - vs. his contemporaries: Hosea-- from the northern kingdom; Amos (a little earlier) and Micah-- Judeans but rural
 - Isaiah's focus on David's kingdom and Jerusalem (vs. Israel) and the role it has played and will play in God's plans for the world (Ps 132:11-14)
 - Miller's 'He is not only Isaiah-son-of-Amoz, but even more importantly, Isaiah-of-Jerusalem'³
- tradition holds that he was killed by Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, after Hezekiah died in 686 (Heb 11:37's 'sawed in two'); and after Sennacherib died in 681 (why?; cite?)

Isaiah, the book and its overall structure⁴

- the first (in Scripture vs. chronology) and most comprehensive of the (major) prophets
- chs. 1-39– mostly refers to events during his lifetime (esp. in the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah) vs. chs. 40-66– covers the return from exile and beyond
 - interesting that there are 66 books in the Bible—39 of which are in the OT
 - chs. 1-39 as Assyrian; 40-55 as Babylonian; 56-66 as Persian??

³ This is also one of Motyer's five key themes; for details, see: p. 16-17.

⁴ As is common with biblical criticism over the last century, studies have– for better *and* worse– focused on details, but increasingly missed the whole. See: Motyer, p. 9 for a biblio.

-addressed to two primary audiences: those who had strayed then and a (future) faithful remnant

-LAB's ('generally') 'words of judgment' vs. 'words of comfort', including the coming of the Messiah

-> when written?

-conservative view: chs. 1-39's historical (prophetic *forth*-telling)-- prob. written just after the Assyrian threat from 701 BC was repelled; chs. 40-66's prophetic (foretelling)-- prob. written soon after Hezekiah dies, near the end of Isaiah's life (686-681 BC)

-but even conservative scholars note that most scholars argue for at least two Isaiahs-- given supposed differences in style⁵, historical perspective⁶, theological viewpoints within the text, and esp. a willingness (or not) to assume an ability to foretell events 150 years into the future⁷ (see: Babylon-- 9x in chs. 43-48, Cyrus⁸-- 44:28, 45:1, and 66:1's possible temple rebuilding plans⁹)

-Isaiah's name attached repeatedly in 1st half but not at all in the 2nd half
-see also: 8:16's school of 'disciples' and Isaiah's intent to pass on his teachings-- students who might have written in Isaiah's name later

⁵ But as LaSor et. al. note: 'All scholars admit that any argument based on style is precarious. An author's style may vary according to purpose, audience, mood, age, and other factors. In fact, scholars often admit that the 'unknown author' of chs. 40-66 deliberately sought to imitate the style of Isaiah of Jerusalem.' Motyer: 'It is intolerably wooden and unimaginative to deny that one author could produce both these styles.'

⁶ Those who support a multiple authorship hypothesis argue that chs. 40-55 were written from within exile and chs. 56-66 were written after exile. One prominent difficulty with this view is that the historical context does not support the rampant idolatry described (e.g., 57:3-13), given that exile seems to have largely cured Israel of that particular sin. Moreover, while Jerusalem is described in chs. 1-39, Babylon is mentioned but not described in chs. 40-66. LaSor et. al. argue further: 'would the viewpoint of the [entire] book of Isaiah have been so far removed from the experience of the 8th-century Judeans?...Many of the northerners had fled south, doubtless with tales to tell, so talk about exile would be quite relevant. [And] with divine revelation (or even without it), he might have indeed foreseen that the future would bring divine retribution upon Judah at the hands of Babylon.' Finally, LaSor et. al. note that Isaiah was clearly looking to the future when his message would be more completely relevant (8:16).

⁷ Miller is interesting in this regard. He is comfortable with Isaiah's prophecy of more recent events (p. 106), but not so with far-off events (p. 91-92). Note also that Isaiah would not necessarily have known that this would be the time-scale. Motyer's "the '200 years' is our contribution to the discussion, not Isaiah's. It comes by our hindsight, not his foresight. He says nothing of it, and for all we know, knew nothing of it."

⁸ Except for Josiah (I Kings 13:2), note also the standard prophetic reluctance to name specific names.

⁹ See also: Is 13:1-14:27 on Babylon and 13:17's Medes-- but without the Persians!

-> and there *are* notable style and thematic differences

-on style, e.g., Motyer argues that chs. 40-55 and 56-66 'read like books with a plan and structure and the craft of a writer'– 'a conscious literary construction, deliberately devised' vs. chs. 1-39 which 'has much more the feeling of a written deposit resulting from a spoken ministry'¹⁰ (see: sermon excerpts in Scripture)

-on themes: e.g., chs. 1-39's their sin and God's judgment; chs. 40-66's God's redemption and their resulting change (individually and corporately)– often described as 'comfort' (13x vs. 1x in chs. 1-39)

-> in sum, could be taken as events from within Isaiah's lifetime (chs. 1-39), from within exile (chs. 40-55), and post-exile (chs. 56-66)

-> but why are style diffs necessarily an issue (weak evidence at best) and why is the combo of sin and salvation surprising in a single book?

-on latter, MH's 'This method the Spirit of Christ took formerly in the prophets and does still, first to convince and then to comfort, and those that would be blessed by the comforts must submit to the convictions.'

-> in any case, all external and many internal evidences point away from multiple supposed authors¹¹

¹⁰ Motyer notes 'a high poetic style chiefly concentrated in chs. 40-55' vs. 'the more workmanlike rhythmic prose or somewhat less artful poetry' of the rest of Isaiah. But 'it would be misleading simply to say that he one is the product of written poetic skill and the other the product of the preached message, for what we have throughout the prophets is not their verbatim messages as preached but a written distillation of their ministry.' In any case, 'these two styles appear throughout the whole book.'

¹¹ See: Motyer, pp. 22-23, 26-30. Among these, he notes 1.) the discussion of idolatry in chs. 56-66 (a far more predominant sin pre-exile); 2.) a consistent description of 8th C. Palestine, not Babylon (e.g., 41:19, 55:13's trees; see also: 41:2, 42:16, 42:22, 43:5-6's apparently Palestinian or pre-exilic viewpoint [see: Motyer's p. 325, 329, 332]); 3.) the absence of 'a Babylonian social and historical milieu'– confusing the 9x mention of Babylon (and 2x mention of Cyrus) with Babylon and exile as the writing context ('the prophet is not offering [reporting detail], but using conventional stereotypes...There is no evidence of eyewitness participation.');

4.) the OT tradition of maintaining separate identities among prophets, incl. 'fragments like Obadiah' ('In the case of the pinnacle of OT prophecy, however, we are invited to believe that this procedure was abandoned.');

5.) the unlikelihood that the identity of an anonymous writer would be concealed or lost; 6.) none of the Dead Sea Scrolls observe such delineations, the LXX does not divide Isaiah, even though it divides Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, and there are no headings within either to hint at such a distinction (e.g., 'the vision of second Isaiah which he saw in the days of X'). See also: 1.) Isaiah's use of 'the Holy One of Israel' (12x in chs. 1-39, 14x in chs. 40-66, 6x elsewhere in the OT); 25 other words which make their only appearance in both parts of Isaiah; and other 'striking verbal parallels.' (See: NIVSB, p. 1014; W&Z, p. 1030-1031.); 2.) the banality of a deuterio-Isaiah's arguments in 41:21-29's 'court case' and 42:9's claim [see:

-Motyer's describes the irony of the liberal position: 'over a period of 300 years, there was a continuing group (of which there is no external evidence) so self-conscious in their unity that they maintained not only theological identity but also identity in presentational skills and in the minutiae of literary styles and figures. This would register for the Isaianic literature [an even greater] claim to uniqueness beyond even what its inherent grandeur demands.'

-> for a more moderate, but less conclusive position...

-LaSor et. al. note that it is no more problematic to have a portion of Isaiah written by an unknown than to have an unknown author of Hebrews

-LaSor et. al. conclude that 'A reasonable *possibility* is that Isaiah's messages were collected and preserved by his disciples and later edited and put into written form.'

-likewise, 'The Gospels are essentially the teachings of Jesus Christ, although he did not write a word of them. [And] the gospel of Mark is very likely the preaching of Peter...'

-and certainly, 'A person's position concerning Isaianic authorship should not be made a test of orthodoxy.'

Isaiah, the book and its prominent/noteworthy topics

-LaSor et. al.'s 'In some respects, Isaiah is the theologian of the OT...[providing] a well-defined doctrine of God [and]...expressions of faith that are in essence, formulations of doctrine.'¹²

1.) God and His holiness

-see: 6:3's holy * 3 (the only cubing of God's character in OT); the most frequent adjective for God (59x in OT; 33x in Is)¹³-- of those, 'Holy One of Israel' * 25 (vs. 7x elsewhere, incl. one as a quote from Isaiah!; and absent from Micah, his contemporary)

-Motyer's 'As far as general stats are concerned, Isaiah is the prophet of holiness.'

Motyer, p. 316, 317's ftn]. See also: 52:4?!; 3.) Is 57:3-8 and no post-exilic examples of this critique. See also: Motyer on Is 57:11.

¹² In making this point, LaSor et. al. cite 11:1-5, 48:12-13, 63:15-17.

¹³ Adding the 'adjectival noun' usage (e.g., 'the God of holiness'), Isaiah has more than 1/3 of OT refs (34 of 90; Motyer, p. 17).

-on the place of 'holiness' in the book, Motyer's Isaiah describes 'the awesome threat which holiness constitutes to an unworthy, careless, rejecting, and unresponsive people (chs. 1-37); the lengths to which the Holy One will go to deal with sin, reclaim the sinner and create a righteous people for Himself (chs. 40-55); and the eternal state of holiness which He will prepare for them and wherein they will enjoy Him forever (chs. 56-66).'

-LaSor et. al. argue that 'holy' gained moral connotations with the Law, but the focus was on ritual and separateness as much as ethics; Isaiah more clearly stresses the moral implications, pointing to the emptiness of ritual (although not anti-ritual since, e.g., 6:1 occurs in the Temple!)

2.) God's sovereignty- esp. in judgment¹⁴

-Assyria as an instrument of divine action to correct/judge Judah (10:5)

-aiming for a new Jerusalem with godly leadership (9:1-7, 11:1-9, 32:1-8)

-near-term hopeful (chs. 9,11 in context of 734 BC's invasion), mid-term messianic, and ultimately eschatological

-based on righteousness (273x in OT; 58 in Is; 12x in other prophets) and justice (Heb. 'mispat'- 420x in OT; 65x in Ps, 40x in Is)

3.) God's mercy/grace and the offer of divine salvation (342x in OT; 50x in Isaiah- e.g., 1:18 and Isaiah's name)

-naturally preceded by God's holiness and judgment, which leads to an indictment on their sin and their need for salvation

-see also: God as 'redeemer' (122x in OT; 26x in Isaiah- most vs. 21x in Lev 25,27, 19x in Ruth, 6x in Num)

-salvation as multi-faceted- beyond personal to corporate, saved from sin and one's enemies, its connection to their doing justice and righteousness

¹⁴ See: Miller's themes-- God's plan, the rationale for that plan, and its implications for public policy.

- 4.) the coming Messiah– as both triumphant ruler and (suffering) servant¹⁵
 -for us, in Christ, the personification of the ‘offer of divine salvation’, but broader and more confusing for Isaiah and his audience
- 5.) the role of the Spirit– past and future
 -more on Him than any OT writer (at least 10x-- 11:2, 32:15, 34:16, 42:1, 44:3, 48:16, 59:21, 61:1, 63:10,14)
- in sum, a focus on the judgment of Judah, its eventual exile because of its sin, and its return and restoration
 -LaSor et. al.’s ‘One reason for the greatness of the prophecy of Isaiah: it stands astride two worlds, speaking to the sinners who face an angry God and also to the remnant who are to receive salvation from that same God, now revealed as Father and Redeemer. For this reason, Isaiah’s prophecy speaks with authority to every man and woman of every age.’

Israel: the relevant history

- LaSor et. al.’s ‘The history of the times is so interwoven with Isaiah’s prophecy that the prophecy cannot be understood without a knowledge of the events.’; and Miller’s ‘Isaiah’s [recorded] prophetic activities were closely intertwined with momentous political and religious events.’
- in a word, the growing threat from world-power Assyria and its westward expansion, sacking the Northern kingdom (in 721 BC) and damaging the Southern kingdom (esp. in 701 BC)
- Miller’s ‘It would be difficult to exaggerate the terror that the Assyrians inspired...the technological sophistication and discipline of their armies were awesome.’ (Is 5:27-28)
- Motyer’s ‘it was soon clear that Judah would have to make up its mind wherein its security lay in a day of threat [God vs. military power and alliances]. It was onto this stage that Isaiah stepped to minister...’

¹⁵ See: W&Z, p. 1032 on Isaiah’s use of different names for God. See also: Motyer’s ‘three portraits’– as King (chs. 1-37), Servant (chs. 38-55), and ‘Anointed Conqueror’ (chs. 56-66). ‘Standing back from the portraits, however, we discover [many of] the same features in each...they are meant as facets of the one Messianic person.’ Motyer notes that each is ‘endowed with Spirit and word’, driven by righteousness, connected to David, both man and God, and ‘embraces equally Israel and the Gentile world’ (p. 13-14). None of these portraits are dated and all are potentially imminent, but the Servant is different in that “there is no ‘in that day’ expectation...the Servant is a medium-term expectation, in contrast with the long-term expectation of King and Conqueror’.

-> *the key events...*

-the Judean kings under which Isaiah served: Uzziah (??-740), Jotham (740-735), Ahaz (735-716), Hezekiah (715-686)

-the relevant Assyrian kings: Tiglath-pileser III (744-727), Shalmaneser V (726-722), Sargon II (721-705), Sennacherib (704-681)

-734: the Syro-Ephraimite war (chs. 7-8)

-Ahaz wisely refused to join Syria & the Northern kingdom's revolt vs. Assyria

-was attacked by them, intending to replace him with an ally (II Kings 15:32,37, II Chron 28:5-8,17-18)

-rejecting Isaiah's advice, Ahaz turned to Assyria for assistance (II Chron 28:16); Motyer's 'Ahaz refused Isaiah's call to faith, choosing instead the pathway of worldly security.'

-one of Isaiah's big themes-- not to depend on foreign alliances and military strength, but God (see: 7:4-9-- and later, 30:15-17, 31:1-6)

-> spiritually: idolatry; practically: SR vs. LR effectiveness

-on the former, Motyer's 'Is the security of the Lord's people no different from that of nations to whom he has not revealed himself or claimed as his own?'

-on the latter, in submitting to the Assyrians if they would deal with the Aram/Ephraim threat, Motyer's '[Ahaz's] short-term solution was purchased at...a long-term price, for in every real sense, the house of David ended with Ahaz. The remaining kings in David's line inherited a puppet throne by courtesy, first of Assyria, then Babylon.'

-after Assyria responds (17:3; II Kings 15:29), the rebellion is squashed (incl. Damascus sacked in 731; II Kings 18:9-12)

-721: the Northern kingdom rebels again and is sacked for good (7:7-9, 9:8-11, 28:1-4)

-now, with Assyria on the northern doorstep of Judah (the Southern kingdom)-- a sense of crisis and doom (sets up 9:1ff), but also a catalyst for sweeping repentance and reform under Hezekiah¹⁶ (II Kings 18:1-8)

-714: rebellion west of Judah (among Philistines; Is 20)-- beaten back by Assyria, 'leaving Judah practically an island'¹⁷

-Judah stays out of it though and escapes unharmed

-704: Sargon II dies, setting off a string of revolts (common practice), including Judah this time under Hezekiah, encouraged by Egypt and Babylon (Is 30:1-5, 31:1-3; 39:1-3?)

¹⁶ Oddly, there is no reference to this in Isaiah-- perhaps from modesty, since he must have played a prominent role given his closeness to Hezekiah (chs. 36-39).

¹⁷ LaSor et. al., p. 367.

-despite Isaiah exhorting him to depend on God-- with God's promises in hand (28:16, 30:15, 38:6)

-Motyer's 'Like his father before him, however, Hezekiah found the lure of politics and militarism too strong'

-Sennacherib finally gets around to squashing Judah's rebellion in 701

-Hezekiah asks for terms and the Assyrians impose a heavy tax (II Kings 18:13-16) before reneging (II Kings 18:17ff)

-Isaiah then re-emerges (Is 36-39) finally convincing Hezekiah to trust God; the Lord delivers and rescues Jerusalem¹⁸

-> w/ app. to us; Motyer's "[The concept of] 'Justification by faith' is not a 'Sunday' truth bearing only on our relationship with God but also a 'Monday' truth for the conduct of life in all its challenges. This is what Ahaz refused to face and Hezekiah forgot. In each case the Lord offered promises backed by divine guarantees; in each case, they chose the road of personal endeavor, a do-it-yourself salvation based on the worldly specifics of arms and alliances."

Structure within chs. 1-39

-remember differences in chs. 1-39, 40-55, 56-66; now, breaking a huge book into smaller pieces...

-chs. 1-5 as an overview of his message-- a preface or backdrop of the book (preceding and explaining the context for ch. 6's formal calling)

-chs. 6-12's Syro-Ephraimite crisis under Ahaz and chs. 28-35's parallel-- the Egyptian/Babylonian crisis under Hezekiah: historical with visions of the Davidic future

-followed by chs. 13-27's confirming the Lord's purposes¹⁹; chs. 36-37's confirming the Lord's power

-chs. 36-39 (repeated in II Kings) as the primary prose section and an historical interlude or transition between the two primary sections of Isaiah²⁰

¹⁸ Sadly, Hezekiah didn't apparently express this later to the Babylonians (39:5-6); Motyer's 'Although what he said to them is not recorded, he certainly did not send them away with the message that the Lord, and not force of arms, would restore his sovereign freedom.'

¹⁹ Note: chs. 1-12 on Judah; chs. 13-23's woes against foreign countries.

²⁰ Motyer divides it chs. 36-37 & 38-39 to emphasize transition to Babylon in chs. 40-55.

Intro to ISAIAH (outline)

A large book: 2nd in Dead Sea Scrolls, 2nd in chapters, 4th in verses, 5th in words, most different words in OT; most oft-cited OT book in NT; most oft-named OT prophet in NT; 4th and 7th most-cited verses (6:1, 53:7)

Isaiah, the man

- name means 'the Lord [Yahweh] saves' or 'the Lord is salvation'
- married to a prophetess (8:3) and had at least two sons (7:3, 8:3; 7:14?)
- very educated and a great writer/poet
 - perhaps a priest (given Ch. 6's vision) or a teacher (given 8:16's 'school')
- long ministry with remarkable access to four consecutive kings
- a Judean (southern kingdom) prophet, centered in Jerusalem
- tradition: killed by Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, after Hezekiah died in 686 (Heb 11:37)

Isaiah, the book and its structure

- the first (in Scripture vs. chronology) and most comprehensive of the prophets
- chs. 1-39's mostly events during his lifetime vs. chs. 40-66's return from exile & beyond
 - 'words of judgment' vs. 'words of comfort'
- > when written?
 - conservative view: chs. 1-39's historical; chs. 40-66's prophetic
 - but most scholars argue for at least two Isaiahs-- given supposed differences in style, historical perspective, theological viewpoints
 - note: willingness (or not) to assume an ability to foretell events given Babylon's 9x in chs. 43-48, Cyrus (44:28, 45:1)
 - see also: 8:16's school of 'disciples'
 - > events in his lifetime (ch. 1-39), exile (ch. 40-55), post-exile (ch. 56-66)
 - > but all external and many internal evidences point away from multiple authors

Isaiah, the book and its prominent/noteworthy topics

- 1.) God and His holiness (6:3; 'Holy One of Israel' * 25)
- 2.) God's sovereignty-- esp. in judgment
 - Assyria as an instrument of divine action to correct/judge Judah (10:5, 14:25-26)
 - aiming for a new Jerusalem with godly leadership (9:1-7, 11:1-9, 32:1-8)-- near-term hopeful, mid-term messianic, and ultimately eschatological
 - based on righteousness and justice (huge themes in Isaiah)
- 3.) the offer of divine salvation (1:18; see also: God as 'redeemer'-- most OT refs in Is)
- 4.) the coming Messiah-- as both triumphant ruler and (suffering) servant
- 5.) the role of the Spirit-- past and future (10x in Isaiah)

Israel: the relevant history (esp. with Assyria)

-the Judean kings under which Isaiah served: Uzziah (??-740), Jotham (740-735), Ahaz (735-716), Hezekiah (715-686)

-the relevant Assyrian kings: Tiglath-pileser III (744-727), Shalmaneser V (726-722), Sargon II (721-705), Sennacherib (704-681)

-> the key events...

1.) 734 BC: the Syro-Ephraimite war (chs. 7-8)

-Ahaz wisely refused to join Aram & the Northern kingdom's revolt vs. Assyria, but rejecting Isaiah's advice, Ahaz turned to Assyria for help (II Chron 28:16)

-one of Isaiah's big themes- not to depend on foreign alliances and military strength, but God (see: 7:4-9-- and later, 30:15-17, 31:1-6)

-spiritually: idolatry; practically, SR solution w/ LR consequences

-attacked by Aram & Ephraim, intending to replace him with an ally (II Kings 15:32,37, II Chron 28:5-8,17-18)

-> Assyria comes to their aid (17:3; II Kings 15:29) and squashes the rebellion (incl. Damascus sacked in 731-- II Kings 18:9-12)

2.) 721: the Northern kingdom rebels again and is sacked for good (7:7-9, 9:8-11, 28:1-4)

-sense of doom in Judah as a catalyst for Hezekiah's reforms (II Kings 18:1-8)

3.) 704: Sargon II dies, setting off a string of revolts, including Judah (Hezekiah encouraged by Egypt and Babylon- Is 30:1-5, 31:1-3; 39:1-3)

-despite Isaiah exhortation, and with God's promises in hand (28:16, 30:15, 38:6)

-Sennacherib finally gets around to squashing Judah's rebellion in 701

-Hezekiah asks for terms and the Assyrians impose a heavy tax (II Kings 18:13-16) before reneging (II Kings 18:17ff)

-Isaiah then re-emerges finally convincing Hezekiah to trust God; the Lord miraculously delivers and rescues Jerusalem (Is 36-37)

Structure within chs. 1-39

-chs. 1 and 1-5 as an overview of his message, preceding ch. 6's formal calling

-chs. 7-12's Syro-Ephraimite crisis under Ahaz and chs. 28-35's parallel- the Egyptian/Babylonian crisis under Hezekiah

-vs. chs. 13-27's confirming the Lord's purposes and chs. 36-37's confirming the Lord's power

-chs. 36-39 as the primary prose section and an historical interlude or transition between the two primary sections