

Isaiah: The Fifth Gospel — Week 3: Isaiah 13–39; Isaiah 40–55

Rev'd Benjamin Giffone, PhD — April 2025

OTE 2023 , p. 482	Isaiah 1–12	Isaiah 13–27	Isaiah 28–38
Litany of Judgments	Six “woes” (5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22)	Ten “burdens” (13:1; 14:28; 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:1; 21:11; 21:13; 22:1; 23:1)	Six “woes” (28:1; 29:1; 29:15; 30:1; 31:1; 33:1)
Antagonistic Empire	Assyria (7–10)	Babylon (13–14; 21:9; 23:13; 24–27) Assyria (20)	Assyria (28–33; 36–38)
Empire: YHWH's Instrument	Against Aram, Israel, other nations, Judah (7:20; 8:4–8; 10:5–6, 15)	Against Judah (13:3–16)	Against Ephraim (28:11–13, 18), Ariel (29:1–4), other nations (36:18–20)
Self-Exalting, Blasphemous Ruler	King of Assyria (10:8–14)	King of Babylon (14:12–15)	King of Assyria (30:31–33); Sennacherib (36:18–20; 37:10–13)
Reliance on Other Nations Condemned	Rely on Assyria against Israel–Aram (7:15–20; 8:4–8)	Rely on Egypt and Cush against Assyria (20)	Rely on Egypt against Assyria (30:1–5, 16–17; 31:1–3; 36:6, 9)
Intense Trial, Cataclysmic Destruction	5:24–30; 6:11–13; 7:21–25; 8:22	“Isaiah Apocalypse” (24:1–25:5)	The nations (34); Assyrian army (37); Hezekiah (38:1–8)
Rebirth/Restoration Following Trial	6:13; 9:2–7; 11:1ff	25:6–12	Return from exile (35); Jerusalem rescued (37:36–38); “Resurrected” king (38:9, 21)
Idealized Davidic Ruler	Branch (4:2) Child (9:6–7) Shoot from Jesse's stump (11:1ff.)	House of David (16:4b–5)	Hezekiah (36–38)
Poems of Praise in the Day of Salvation	Two songs (12:1–3, 4–6)	Two songs (26:1–6; 27:1–5)	YHWH's song against Sennacherib (37:22b–29) Hezekiah's writing (or <i>miktam</i> ?) of healing (38:9–20)

Sennacherib's annals ([ANET 287–288](#)): “As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countess small villages in their vicinity, and conquered (them) by means of well-stamped (earth-)ramps, and battering-rams brought (thus) near (to the walls) (combined with) the attack by foot soldiers, (using) mines, breeches as well as sapper work. I drove out (of them) 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered (them) booty. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, **like a bird in a cage**. I surrounded him with earthwork in order to molest those who were leaving his city's gate. His towns which I had plundered, I took away from his country and gave them (over) to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza. Thus I reduced his country, but I still increased the tribute and the *katrū*-presents (due) to me (as his) overlord which I imposed (later) upon him beyond the former tribute, to be delivered annually. Hezekiah himself, whom the terror-inspiring splendor of my lordship had overwhelmed and whose irregular and elite troops which he had brought into Jerusalem, his royal residence, in order to strengthen (it), had deserted him, did send me, later, to Nineveh, my lordly city, together with 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, precious stones...”

Compare to the boasts of the King of Assyria (Isa 10:8–14), the Rabshakeh (36:4–20), and Sennacherib (37:8–13).

Events are noted as positive (+), negative (-), or not related to Hezekiah (•).

Reconstructed Chronological Order	2 Kings 18–20	Isaiah 36–39
+ Cultic reforms	+ Cultic reforms (18:3–6)	
• (Northern Israel succumbs to Assyria)	• (Northern Israel succumbs to Assyria; 17; 18:9–12)	
+ Illness and recovery	- Invasion of Judah; Hezekiah pays tribute (18:14–16)	
+ Prayer after recovery	+ Siege of Jerusalem, faith, reprieve (18:13, 18:17–19:8)	+ Siege of Jerusalem, faith, reprieve (36:1–37:8)
- Babylonian emissary	+ Siege again, faith, victory (19:9–37)	+ Siege again, faith, victory (37:9–38)
(+ Other achievements, including pool and tunnel—advance of the siege?)	+ Illness and recovery (20:1–11)	+ Illness and recovery (38:1–8, 21–22)
- Invasion of Judah; Hezekiah pays tribute		+ Prayer after recovery (38:9–20)
+ Siege of Jerusalem, faith, reprieve	- Babylonian emissary (20:12–19)	- Babylonian emissary (39)
+ Siege again, faith, victory	+ Other achievements, including pool and tunnel (2 Kgs 20:20)	
Order: + • + + - (+?) - + +	Order: + • - + + + - +	Order: + + + + -

The Book of Isaiah — Speaking Into Various Contexts

Part I c. 740–680	Isaiah 1–12	Alternating Condemnation and Hope (1–5) Commissioning (6) Syro-Ephraimite Crisis; Assyria on the Rise (7–10)
	Isaiah 13–27	Ten Oracles/Burdens Concerning the Nations
	Isaiah 28–35	Syro-Ephraimite Crisis Assyria on the Rise
	Isaiah 36–39 // 2 Kings 18–20	c. 715–701 Sennacherib (Assyria) Crisis
Babylonian Period (598–539)		
Part II c. 550–540	Isaiah 40–55 (links backward to 35, 39)	Babylonian conquest has happened; New Exodus on the horizon Audacious hope in YHWH, not idols (41–44) Cyrus of Persia rising (45) Inclusion of the Gentiles (42; 45; 49; 52; 55) The Servant of YHWH (41–45; 48–50; 53) The (re)marriage of YHWH and Zion (49; 51–52; 54)
Part III c. 530–500	Isaiah 56–66	Return from exile is disappointing Hopes fully “eschatologized” Inclusion of the Gentiles

Song: “You Are Precious,” by Rev. Joe Hesh – lyrics from Isaiah 43:1–4, 22–25