

prophetic sections, chapters 1 to 35, is, in turn, divided into several smaller sections, most of which spring from a particular historical situation. These situations consist mostly of a particular act of a king, or a particular danger of war, or some matter of immediate concern. Chapters 40 to 66 are different: in them we find no mention of a relationship to a particular incident that occurred during the lifetime of Isaiah. The entire section deals with the great problem of the exile and the predicted deliverance. It discusses these matters at length. It cannot, like the earlier part of the book, be divided into sharply defined sections dealing with particular incidents, but forms a long and continuous unit, in which there is progress of thought, beginning with return from exile and then dealing with other parts of God's program for His people.

The Babylonian captivity is either in the background or the foreground of the mind of the writer in most of the material from chapters 40 to 52, but thereafter it largely disappears from his attention as his thought moves forward to the time following the people's return to their homeland. In recent years this change of viewpoint led to an interesting development in connection with the discussion of the criticism of the book. When arguments were first advanced seeking to prove that the book of Isaiah consisted of two different writings by two different authors, many passages were quoted from Isaiah 40 and following to show that the latter part of the book has as its background the time of the exile rather than of the time of Isaiah under the Judean kings. Although these passages were mostly taken from chapters 40 to 52 the claim was made that 40 to 66 was the so-called "second Isaiah." In answer the conservative defenders of the unity of the book brought evidence to show that the background was not one of people in a Babylonian captivity but of people in Palestine and it was found that most of the evidence of this type came from sections after chapter 52. Before long the critics changed their claim that the latter part of the book formed a "second Isaiah" and began to say that there was actually "a third Isaiah," written after the people returned to Palestine. We who believe in the unity of the book, as it was held by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, do not take this position but say rather that the thought of the prophet moves