

He says there is going to be protection so Jerusalem would not be destroyed. He was going to show his power and yet give a further period of grace to the land but eventually he is going to send them into exile and then afterwards he has great future blessings. This is said between ch. 1 and 39 repeatedly and repeatedly and in Isaiah 30-66 he never predicts exile and if he does at all it is not 1/30th as often. He assumes deliverance and also assumes exile as a present. He talks with people in captivity and discusses the misery and the despair of the people in captivity who wonder if God even exists. The others have overrun everything and there is no sign of God's power. They know they should believe in God but it is hard to do and he says "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people" and he gives the assurance that the God who seems to be far away and intangible is actually the one who has created the universe and it is His will to bring them back to their own land and to deliver them from their difficulties and eventually to give a remarkable blessing. There is a different historical background presupposed. We do not advance the cause in any way by explaining it. We cannot assume either that the fact is not there. This is especially true in Isaiah 40-52 and in these chapters you have over and over again the note of captivity and a desire for release from exile and the idea of God's deliverance which is coming from exile and coming from freedom from the Babylonians and when you get beyond that you do not have the thought of exile brought into mind. It tells what God is going to do and it shows God's will in doing the thing. Exile and captivity is not much in mind after ch. 55 or 56 but devastation and ruin is very much in mind in the background of this chapter. There is then somewhat of a different historical background of the section of 40-66. The difference between these two is nothing compared to the difference between that which is common to the two of them and the background of Is. 1-39. That is a fact and then you may find chapters in the earlier part that have this background. Ch. 53 and 56 have little historical reference to background. We place it with what proceeds as it is bound to it in the organization of the book but taking it by itself there is nothing there to tell what the historical background is at all. Between 41 and 52 is the place where the background takes place and then the other chapters go along with it. Ch. 53-55 deal with great theological matters and so they combine with what precedes. That is what I mean then when I speak of background being in a different area but if you are going to make a division in 40-66 the logical place to make it is at the end of ch. 55 or about there somewhere. I think in the early part of 57 might