

The fact that this prophecy came true is no presupposition against it for one who believes that there is a God. And the other criterion, that an exile is presupposed, is singularly lacking. The interpretation of this section also is without difficulty. It simply says that Babylon will fall at the hands of Elam and Media. Elam, a province of the Persian empire, is put, as Alexander suggests, for the whole of the Persian Empire. And here in the most natural connection Media and Persia are united in the invasion. There remains only to complete the picture that which is actually supplied in later passages, that the head of the accompanying army is Cyrus the Persian.

It would be difficult to say with certainty that the previous two passages were written before the present section, Is. 39: 1-8. In fact it seems probable that the reverse order is more correct. It was approximately in the year 712, fifteen years before Hezekiah's death, that the embassy came from Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon, to Hezekiah to congratulate him upon his recovery. Hezekiah, it will be remembered, showed him all his ~~treasures~~ treasures and then was rebuked by the prophet, who said that at the time would come when his treasures and even his own sons would be carried to Babylon. Nothing would be left. The exegesis of this passage is simple enough, for it is couched not even in the exalted language of prophecy. The question does arise, however, why this passage was put in the place where it was found. Obviously chs. 38 and 39 are before part at least of the invasion of 701. We do not intend to follow Naegelsbach's of ch. 37 speaking of Sennacherib's ingenious hypothesis that chs. 38 and 39 were intended to be put first, but were changed in order to provide an introduction to the latter section of Isaiah, and thus has arisen the mistake in 36:1 that Sennacherib came in the 14th year of Hezekiah, whereas was really