

Isaiah and Ezekiel

05 Isaiah 28–39

As the first half of Isaiah's prophecy comes to a conclusion, Isaiah reiterates that trusting Yahweh leads to ultimate deliverance; unbelief leads to destruction. First, Isaiah sets out the principles and promises by which his triumph will be guided. He defends God's justice in his judgment against the people. He points to Ephraim's spiritual stupor and their destruction, and he calls Judah to trust his wisdom and to hope in his promises. Next he reminds them that Egypt will not be able to help them against Assyria and immediately assures them that they will not need Egypt's help in any case: Yahweh will defeat Assyria. Indeed, Yahweh will bring about a bright future for Zion through his chosen king, though the people must return through the desert to find it.

Having set out the principle of trust and the promise of deliverance, Isaiah records two examples from the life of Hezekiah. The history illustrates two examples of trust that result in triumph and an example of unbelief that leads to destructive consequences.

1. Isaiah 28–35: In principle and prophecy, God triumphs over unbelief for the sake of his people.

- 1.1. Isaiah 28–29: Isaiah compares Ephraim and Judah; his justice is discerning.
 - 1.1.1. Isaiah 28:1–22: The crown of Ephraim's drunkards will be trampled despite their deal with death.
 - 1.1.2. Isaiah 28:23–29: Yahweh grants discernment to the farmer, so he knows how to judge.
 - 1.1.3. Isaiah 29:1–16: David's city will be judged by many nations.
 - 1.1.4. Isaiah 29:17–24: Righteousness and honor will be restored to the house of Jacob.

- 1.2. Isaiah 30–31: Egypt cannot save; Assyria will not succeed.
Yahweh will heal his people's wounds.
 - 1.2.1. Isaiah 30:1–26: Egypt's help is completely worthless; therefore, I call her: "Rahab Who Just Sits."
 - 1.2.2. Isaiah 30:27–31:9: Assyria will be shattered by the voice of Yahweh, so do not look to Egypt.
- 1.3. Isaiah 32–35: Yahweh establishes a new society, judges his foes, and brings his people home.
 - 1.3.1. Isaiah 32: Yahweh's king will reign righteously, and his people will dwell in safety.
 - 1.3.2. Isaiah 33: Yahweh is our judge, lawgiver, and king; he will save us.
 - 1.3.3. Isaiah 34: Yahweh is angry with all the nations; he will set them apart for destruction.
 - 1.3.4. Isaiah 35: The ransomed of Yahweh will return and come to Zion with singing.

2. Isaiah 36–39: In practice, God triumphs over unbelief for the sake of his people.

- 2.1. Isaiah 36–37: Yahweh delivers Jerusalem from Sennacherib.
 - 2.1.1. Isaiah 36: Sennacherib taunts Hezekiah (and his God).
 - 2.1.2. Isaiah 37: Yahweh pulls Sennacherib away and ultimately defeats his vast army.
- 2.2. Isaiah 38–39: Yahweh delivers Hezekiah from illness, but he foolishly courts Babylonian aid.
 - 2.2.1. Isaiah 38: Hezekiah becomes ill, so he prays, and Yahweh delivers him.
 - 2.2.2. Isaiah 39: Hezekiah foolishly shows Babylonian emissaries his wealth; Isaiah predicts Babylonian captivity.