

## An overview of

# Isaiah

## THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

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is like a miniature Bible. The first nine chapters (like the thirty-nine of the Old Testament) are filled with prophecies against immoral and idolatrous men.

often forget that content, time, and circumstances typically affect any author's style. In addition, there is no theological contradiction when the emphasis on the Messiah as King and as suffering Servant in 40—66. When the Servant is different, the Messiah is seen in both ways as Servant and King.

Messiah is coming as a Savior and a King to bear a cross and to wear a crown.

Isaiah's prophetic ministry, spanning the reign of King Hezekiah, covers at least forty years.

42:9). The theory cannot explain the messianic prophecies of Isaiah that were fulfilled in the life of Christ (see "The

WHAT HAS 66 PARTS, TWO  
MAJOR SECTIONS OF 39 AND 27  
PARTS? THE FIRST PART SPEAKS  
PRIMARILY OF JUDGMENT AND  
THE SECOND PART FOCUSES ON  
REDEMPTION?

1. THE BIBLE

2. THE BOOK OF ISAIAH



# "Isaiah is like a miniature Bible" (1)

- 66 chapters, with **two interconnected yet distinctive sections** (39 chapters, 27 chapters) → **A coincidental pattern?**
- First 39 chapters → **A particular focus on sin & judgement**
- Last 27 chapters → **A particular focus on hope of redemption**

**Romans 11:22 ESV - 22 Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.**

# "Isaiah is like a miniature Bible" (2)

- **Ch. 1** – rebellion and its sentence (cp. **Genesis** 'fall of man')

Isaiah 1:2, 19-20 ESV - 2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken: "Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. ... 19 If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; 20 but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

- **Ch. 40** – the hope of coming comfort (cp. **Matthew** & gospel)

Isaiah 40:1-5 ESV - 1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

# Aside: Isaiah and 'higher criticism'

- Perhaps in part because of their different character, **some have suggested two (or even three) writers of Isaiah**, i.e. separating chapters 1-39 and 40-66 (or even further sub-splitting chapters 40-55 and 56-66)
- This, to be clear, has **only been suggested in the past ~~150~~<sup>200+</sup>-or-so years** (and is altogether absent from Jewish rabbinical writings, ancient translations, e.g. LXX, or Dead Sea Scrolls)
- **As clear evidence against multiple writers we have verses such as John 12 v 38-41** (which quotes from Isaiah chapters 6 and 53, without any differentiation or demarcation)

# Some other facts about the book

- Based on the number of words it is **the 5<sup>th</sup> largest book in the Bible** (and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest prophecy)

Isaiah is the most referred to OT book in NT with 165 quotations, allusions or possible allusions (18% of OT total), next highest is Psalms with 147 (16% of OT total).

**Isaiah has 62 (direct) quotations in the New Testament and is second only to Psalms with 82 direct quotations. These two are significantly higher than any other prophet, Jeremiah being next with 12. Isaiah was therefore a critical source for the NT writers, when they, through the spirit, expounded God's truth**

# Some other facts about the book

- It is notable that 19 copies of the book of Isaiah were found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls
  - The most iconic of these being *The Great Isaiah Scroll*, see link: <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/Isaiah>





Col IV - Is:3:24-5:14

Col III - Is:2:21-3:24

Col II - Is:1:26-2:21

Col I - Is:1:1-2:6



# The prophet himself – who was he?

- Born c.760-755 BC, his name means ‘Yahweh saves’ or ‘salvation is of Yahweh’ **Similar to Joshua, Hosea and Jesus**

- Connections with Isaiah’s name are embedded a number of times in the book e.g. 12 v 3, 25 v 9, 26 v 1, 52 v 7 & 60 v 18

Isaiah 12:3 - With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

# The prophet himself – who was he?

- 13 times in scripture he is referred to as the “son of Amoz” (7x in Isaiah, 3x in each of 2 Kings / 2 Chronicles) = important
- Jewish tradition suggests that **Amoz was brother of Amaziah the King** i.e. Isaiah was a member of the royal family **BUT...**
- He was **married** (8 v 3) and had at least **two sons** (7 v 3, 8 v 3)
- Jewish tradition that was **sawn asunder** (NB: Heb. 11 v 37) in a hollow log by King Manasseh (cp. 2 Kings 21 v 16, 24 v 3-4)

# The timing and context of the prophecy

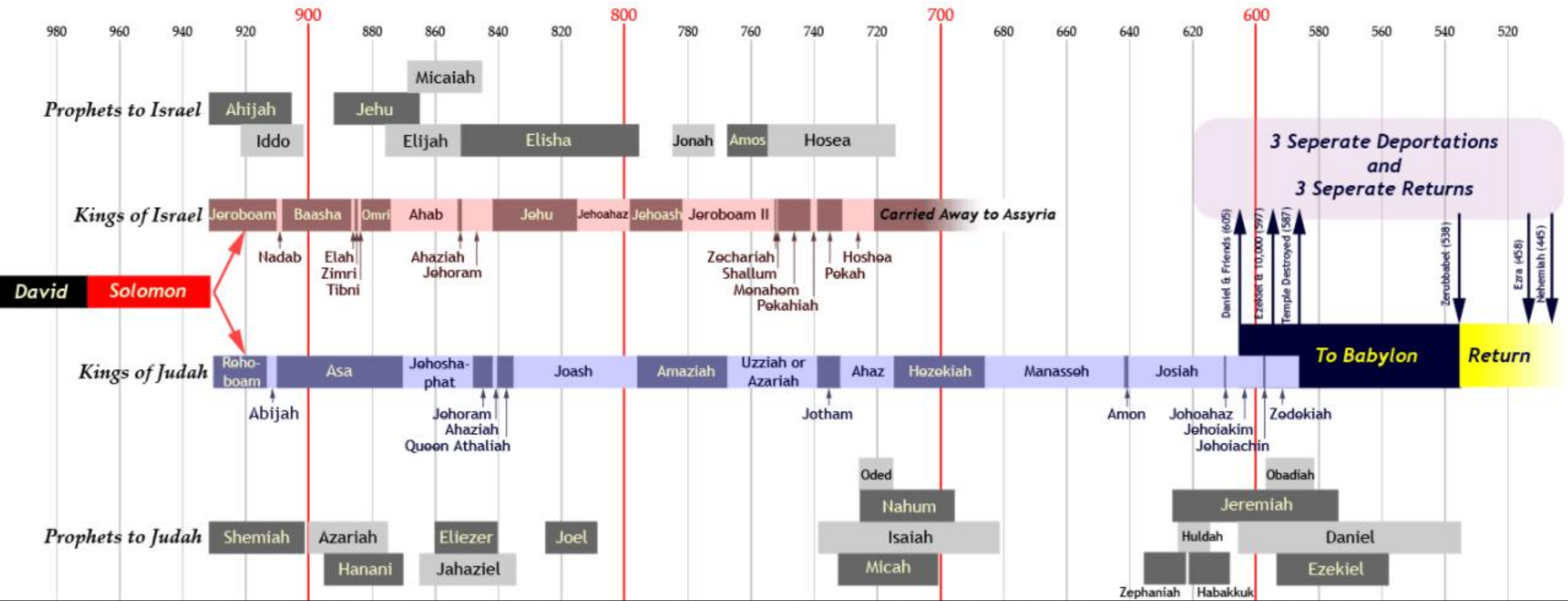
- Isaiah probably prophesied from about **739-680 BC**, during the reigns of Kings Uzziah<sup>790-739 BC</sup>, Jotham<sup>739-731 BC</sup>, Ahaz<sup>731-715 BC</sup> and Hezekiah<sup>715-686 BC</sup> (as confirmed by Isaiah 1 v 1)
- At this time **Assyria was the prominent world power** and around 709 BC she brought to an end the Northern Kingdom (which would have been witnessed by Isaiah, albeit he was a prophet to Judah)
- He was **contemporary with** the prophets **Hosea** (a prophet to Israel) and **Micah** (a fellow prophet to Judah)





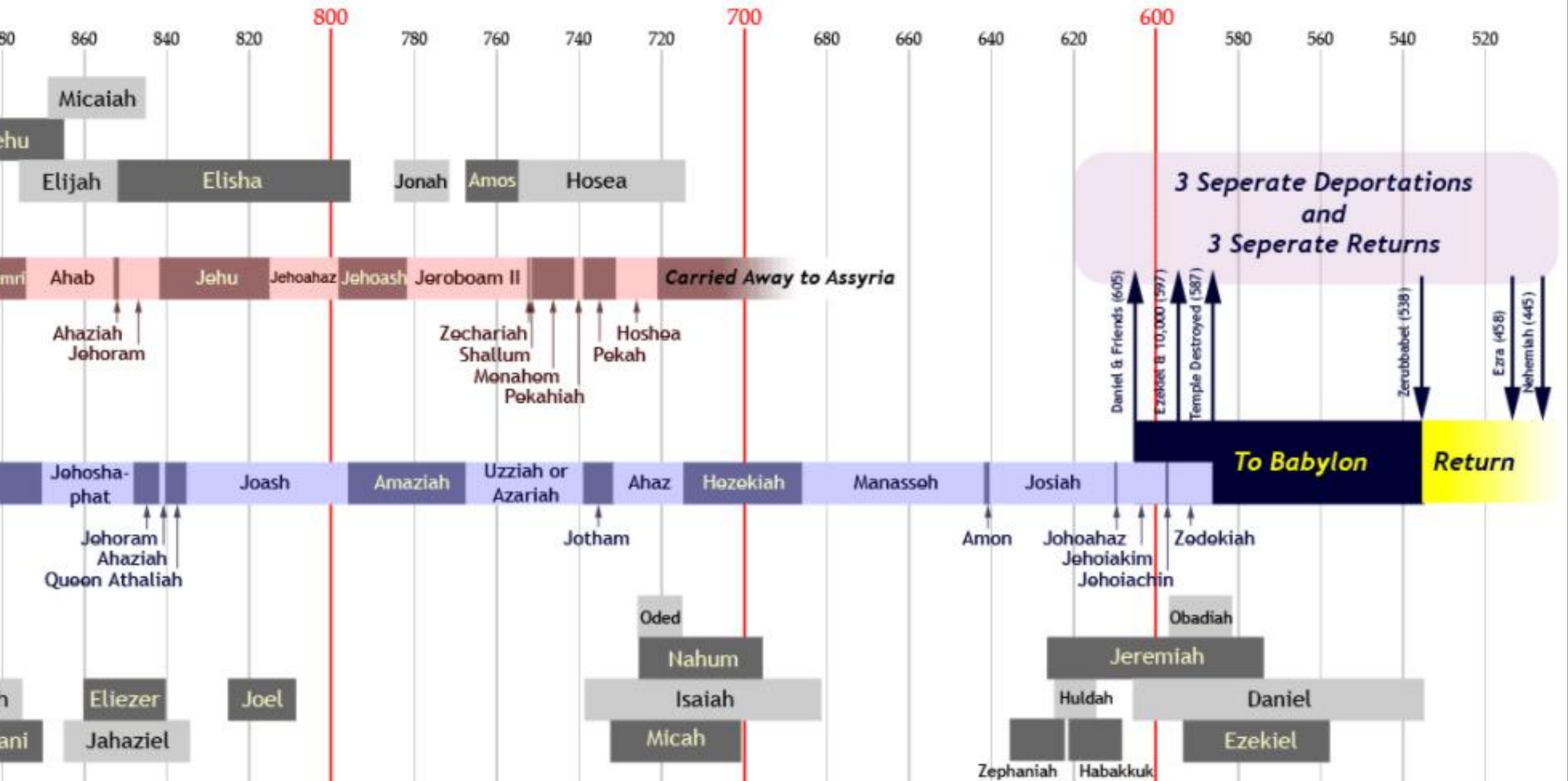
**The Babylonian and Assyrian Empires**

## Timeline for 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles & Associated Prophets

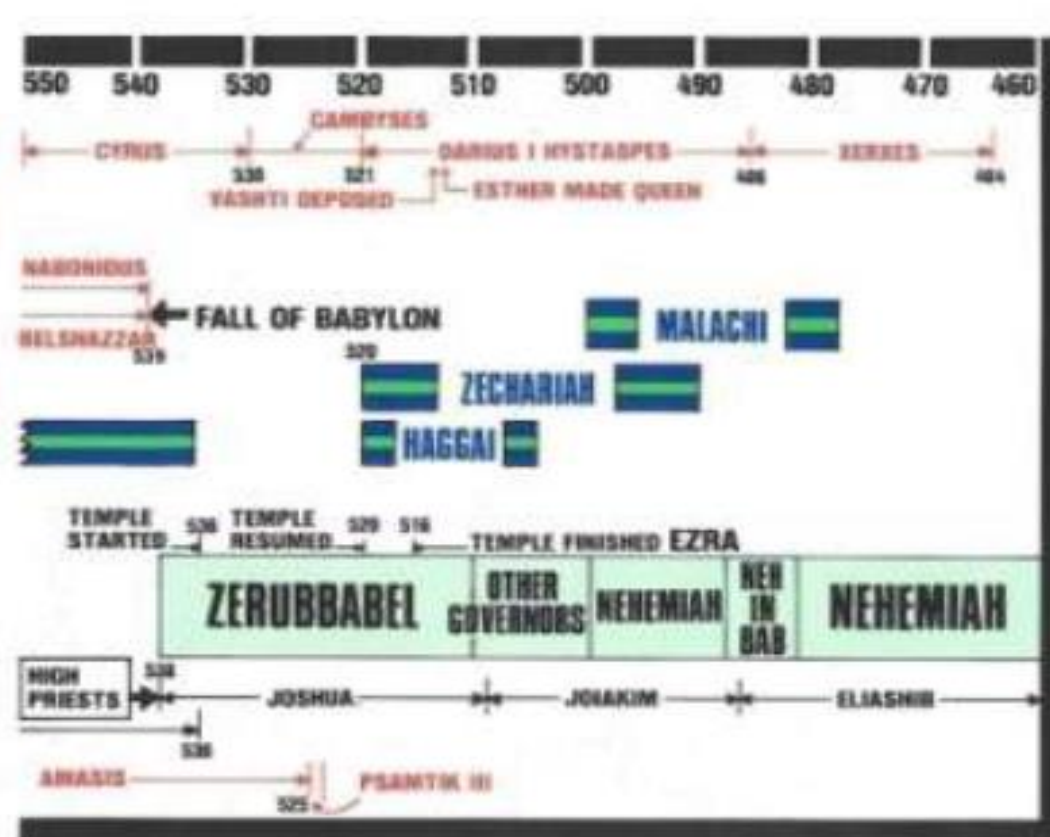
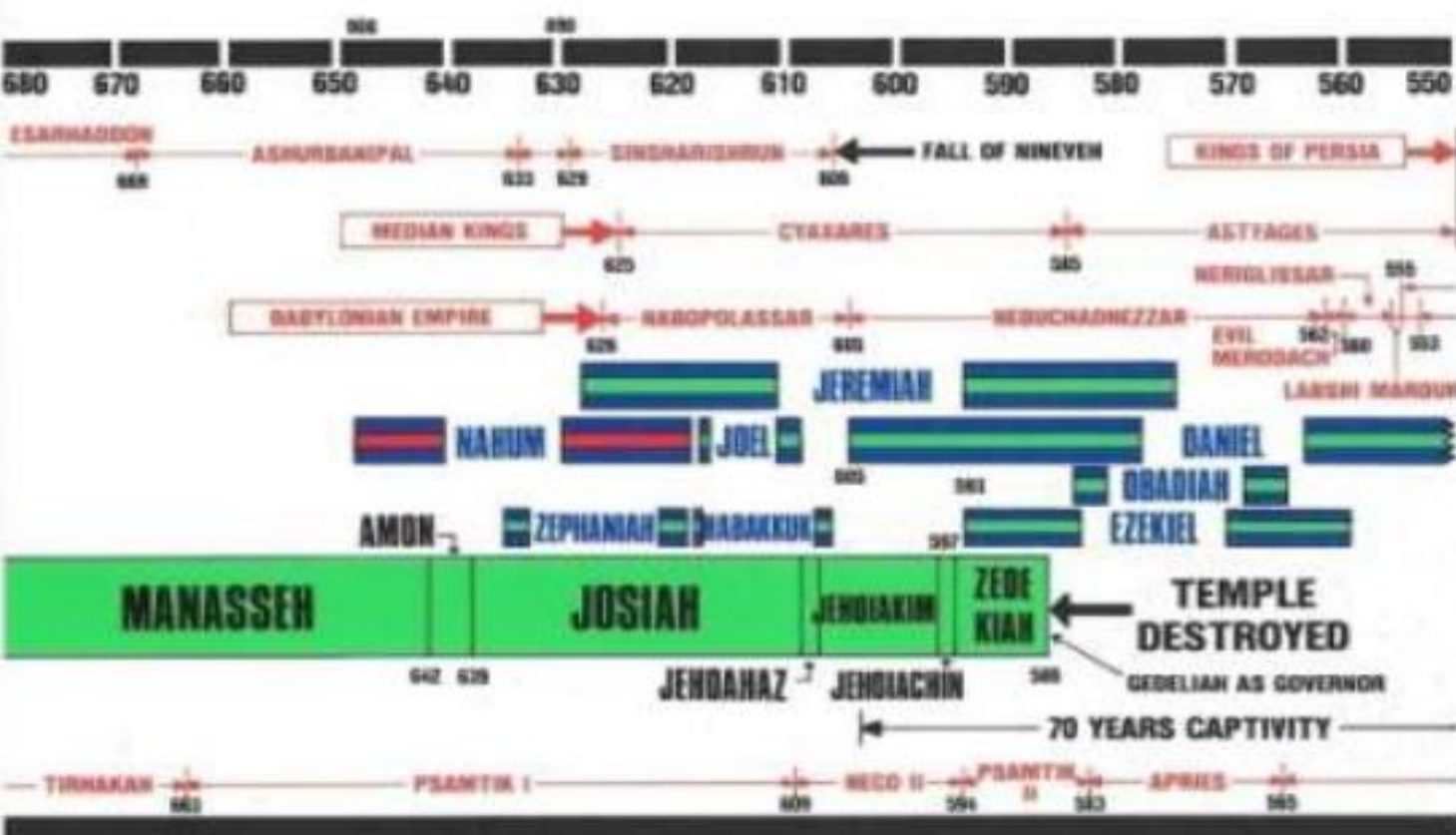




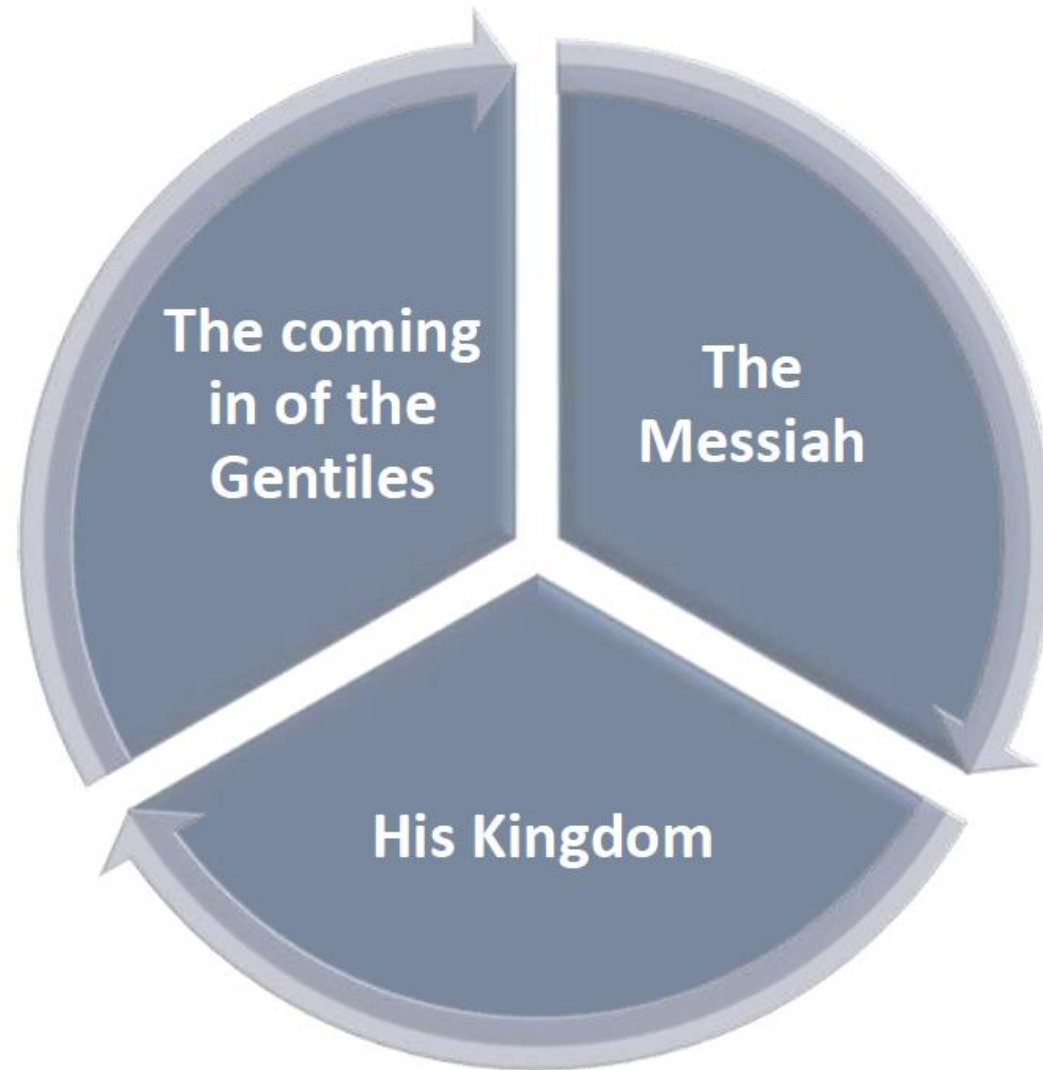
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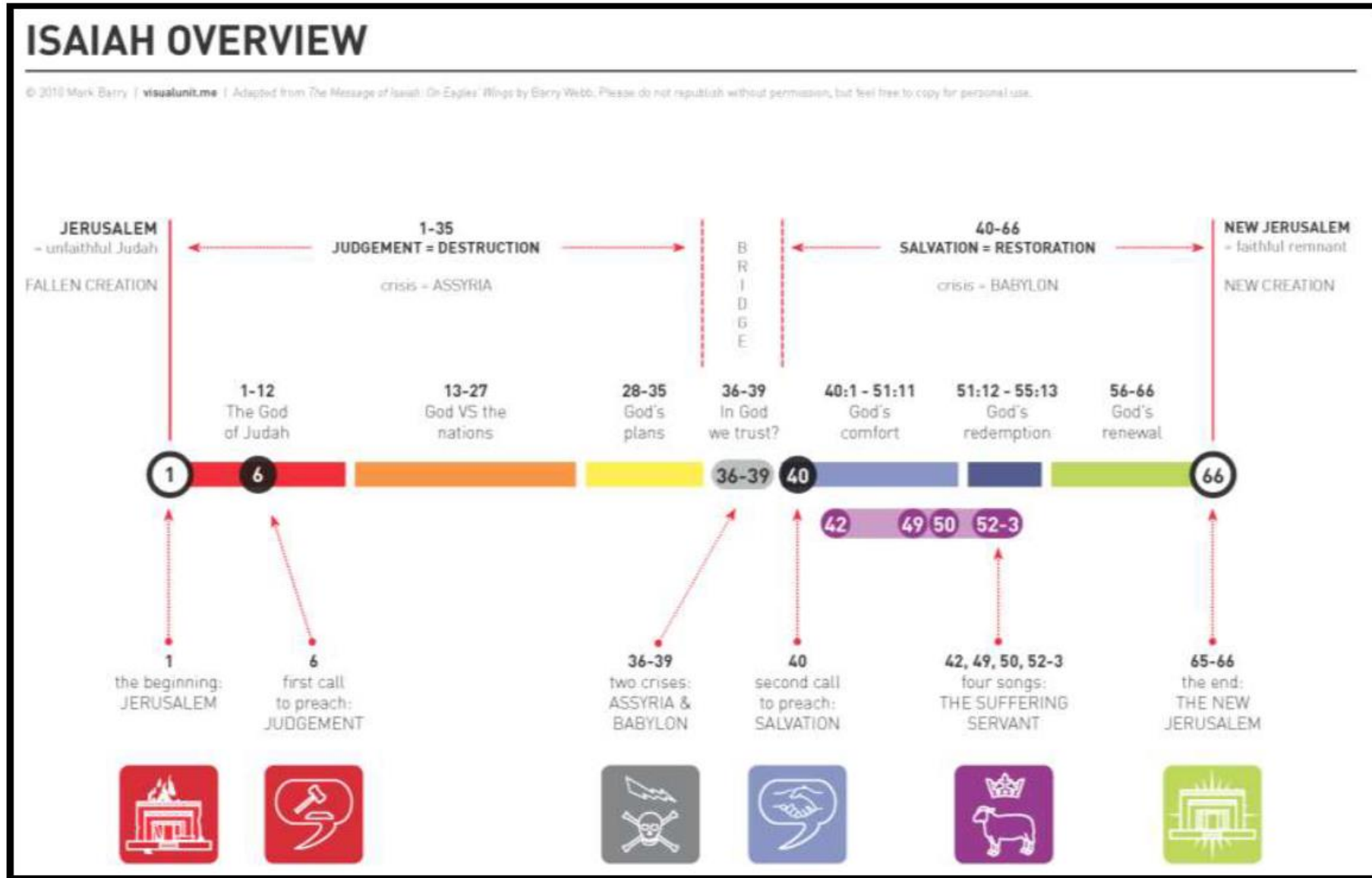




# Some grand themes from Isaiah



# A Helpful Chart



An overview of Isaiah



# Key takeaways from our Isaiah overview

- “Isaiah is like a **miniature Bible**” – a wonderful pattern
- Hezekiah **biography** is the ‘**pivot point**’ in the book
- A clear response to **unfounded ‘higher critics’** suggestions
- The **importance** of **Isaiah in the NT** (most referred to book)
- A **book about salvation**, as embedded in Isaiah’s own name
- Deep **Messianic content**, alongside grand themes of **Kingdom** and coming in of **Gentiles**
- Points of **context** – royal line? / N. Kingdom / martyred?
- Judgment **and** hope / Severity **and** goodness

# Final treasured passages for comfort

Isaiah 32:1 ESV - 1 Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule in justice.

Isaiah 32:17 ESV - 17 And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

Isaiah 35:1 ESV - 1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;

Isaiah 40:31 ESV - 31 but they who wait for the **LORD** shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 65:17 ESV - 17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.