

Isaiah Part II (Chs. 40-66)
Comfort: “The Rhapsody of Zion Redeemed”
John Hepp, Jr.

Section A: The Restoration (chs. 40-48)

This section emphasizes the LORD’s restoring His people to their land through a deliverer He anoints.

ch. 40 Introduction to Part II of Isaiah

A cosmic court scene in which the Lord decrees forgiveness and return to the Land. Gives the main themes of the rhapsody.

41:1—42:9 (another cosmic court scene—or perhaps two: 41:1-20 and 41:21 to 42:9)

The LORD shows the nations His control of history by summoning two deliverers: (a) one from the north and east, (b) His Servant.

42:10-25

Through these two deliverers the LORD will destroy all Israel’s enemies and liberate them from idolaters.

43:1—44:5

The LORD will redeem unworthy Israel to be His witnesses, who proclaim that He is the only God and is sovereign.

44:6—45:25 (center and high point of chs. 40-48)

The LORD, the only God, gives proof that He controls history by announcing the name of Israel’s deliverer from the east, Cyrus.

ch. 46

The LORD shows His superiority to the useless gods of Babylon by carrying His people to His city.

ch. 47

The LORD predicts the destruction in shame of Babylon.

ch. 48

Exhortations to Israel based on the fulfillment of the prophecies just given—primarily to flee from Babylon.

Section B: The Restorer (chs. 49-57)

This section emphasizes the One through whom the LORD restores Israel both physically and morally: *His suffering Servant*.

chs. 49-50

Though rejected, the LORD's obedient Servant will restore Israel spiritually and materially and bring light to the nations.

51:1—52:12

When the LORD, the Creator, exalts the righteous remnant of Israel, His kingdom will reach everywhere and His reputation be restored.

52:13—53:12 (The fourth Servant Song and the high point of chs. 49–57. Has five stanzas of three verses each: 52:13-15; 53:1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12.)

Makes the clearest statements in the Old Testament of one (the Servant) dying to pay for the sins of others.

The introductory stanza (52:13-15) sketches the Servant's degradation (humiliation) and final exaltation. In the other stanzas the speakers are the Servant's people, after they have changed their mind about Him. A student should summarize each stanza in his own words.

chs. 54-55

The LORD rebuilds Zion, His bridal city (ch. 54) and invites everyone to come in repentance to His inaugural feast (ch. 55).

chs. 56-57

Godly foreigners will be accepted in the LORD's coming kingdom; wicked Israelites will be condemned.

Section C: The Restored Ones (chs. 58-66)

This section looks at the wicked in Isaiah's time in contrast to the coming restoration.

The LORD will bring peace and prosperity—centered in Zion—to the whole world (ch. 60). This He will do through the coming of Messiah and His own coming (61:1 to 63:6), in answer to the nation's prayer (63:7 to 65:25).

chs. 58-59

Contrasts the wickedness and false worship in Isaiah's day to the obedience God expects—and its great benefits. Only the LORD could and will restore the nation.

ch. 60

Beautifully sketches the future glory, peace, and prosperity for Zion redeemed (in the coming kingdom).

61:1—63:6

The coming of Messiah (ch. 61) and the coming of the LORD (62:1 to 63:6). Israel will inherit; Zion will have joy. Eager to come to Zion, the LORD arrives with His garments stained with the blood of Zion's enemies.

63:7—65:25

The Jewish believing remnant in captivity recall the past and repent. Though they do not deserve it, they ask the LORD to return and to smite their enemies. In response, He promises to create His kingdom, the "new heavens and new earth."

ch. 66

Draws section C—and the whole book—to a close by reviewing the LORD's judgment and salvation. For all eternity redeemed Israel and the saved nations will worship the LORD, but rebels will be eternally destroyed.