*C&S – Come & See - Isaiah*

*NCBC – New Collegeville Commentary on Isaiah*

*NJBC – New Jerome Biblical Commentary*

*SN = Special Notes*

*NAB = New American Bible*

*SK = Chinese Bible*

*CCC = Catholic Catechism*

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| **A** | **Overview of Isaiah 36-43**   * This section concludes the first book of Isaiah, the portion written by Isaiah, including chapters 1-39, with the exception of 24-27, the “Revelation of Isaiah” written by Trito Isaiah. Chapters 36-39 recount the story of King Hezekiah. The same stories also appear in 2Kings 18:13 – 20:19.      * The second book, chapters 40 to 55, focuses on God’s promise of bringing the people back from their Exile, his consolation, and the Servant Songs. |  |
| **B** | **Content and Key Teachings – Hezekiah**   * Is 36:1-37:13 – When Hezekiah was king, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, threatened Jerusalem. God is mocked, and the people are taunted. * Is 37:14-38 – “The angel of the Lord” brings death to 185000 Assyrian soldiers, causing the retreat of the Assyrian army. The king was eventually assassinated by his own son. * Is 38:1-22 – Hezekiah offered a prayer of thanksgiving after recovery from a life-threatening illness. His answered prayer and supplication to God reveals his intimate relationship with God. Only God could make “the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined” (Is 38:8). * Is 39:1-8 – Hezekiah acts foolishly in revealing his treasures to the Babylonian visitors. As a result, he has brought destruction to his nation. Just as the Tower of Babel symbolizes human pride, Hezekiah’s pride has offended God and as a result, he has brought forth destruction. * Reflection on the conclusion of the first book of Isaiah: God is so powerful that He could rescue a whole nation and bring Hezekiah back from the verge of death. We must trust in God despite of the challenges ahead. | Is 36-39  SN1, C&S Chp 10  NCBC p 95-97  SN2 - Angelology  C&S p 96-97  C&S p 98  C&S p 98 |
| **C** | **Content and Key Teachings – Here is your God! The Servant of God**   * Is 40:1-31 – Bringing comfort to those who were in exile “she has served her term”, Zion will become “herald of good tidings … Here is your God!” God will “feed his flock like a shepherd”. God is all powerful and absolutely trustworthy. (Handel: *Comfort Ye My People*)   **Content and Key Teachings – Here is your God! The Servant of God (cont’d)**   * A voice cries out in the wilderness => For Judah in exile: “the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles”. Miraculously, they shall return with joy; John the Baptist. (Handel: Ev’ry Valley Shall be Exalted) * The good news proclaimed by the Prophet: 9:2, 12:6, 40:9, 49:13. * Isaiah reveals that God has already forgiven Judah and will continue to protect and care for them through the imagery of the victor general and the good shepherd. This offers consolation to the exiled people of Judah. This section is the backbone of Is 40-55. Both images can also be found in other parts of Scripture, all pointing towards Christ. * Is 41:1-29 – “Who has roused a victor from the east” – Cyrus => History is in the hands of God, therefore, the Israelites shall not fear: “do not fear, I will help you”; God “will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water” (41:18). * Is 42:1-9 – One of the four “Songs of the Servant” in Isaiah (42:1-8, 49:1-9a, 50:4-11, 52:13-53:12). Four possibilities for the four oracles. The conversion of Chief Rabbi of Rome Zolli is interpreted by Matthew as Christ. * Is 42:10-25 – “Sing to the Lord a new song” (42:10) represents a new era => reunification and salvation. The meaning of the imagery of a man and a woman: warrior, an expecting mother. * Is 43:1-28 – The Israelites shall return and Babylon shall be destroyed, “Do not fear!” (43:5). JPII’s experience of his own assassination exemplifies this phrase. Our world is filled with evil and injustice; however, we should not fear as our whole history is in God’s hands. “I am *He*” (43:10) => Jn 8:28, meaning YHWH. Jesus is God. | Is 40-43  Is 40-43  Pope Francis, *Joy of Gospel* #4  40:10-11, NCBC p 105-106; Jn 10:1-18, Ezek 34, Ps 23 (Moses, David); Rev 19:11-16  NCBC p 109  SK42 Note 1  C&S p 115-6  NCBC p 112  Mt 12:15-21  Is 96:1-4  C&S p 117-8  NCBC p 113  Allen Hunt, *Confessions of a Mega Church Pastor*, p 46-50  J. Naz I, p 347 |
| **D** | **Appreciation of Scripture**   * A voice cries out: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 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’ * Get up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Here is your God!’ * I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. * Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth! | 40:3-4  40:9  42:6-67  42:10 |

**SPECIAL NOTES**

1. Hezekiah, Ahaz’s Son: A comparison of father and son

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| Ahaz | Hezekiah |
| Evil; turned against God | Filled with wisdom; trust in God |
| Became king at age 20; reigned for 16 years | Became king at age 25; reigned for 29 years |
| Made molten images for the Baals; steeped in idolatry | Cleaned up the Temple and restored Temple worship; restored Passover; destroyed all idols (2 Chronicles 29-31) |
| Refused to ask God for signs (Is 7:12) | Turned to God for signs, God made “the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined” (2 Chron 20:8-11) |

(Ref. C&S p 95)

2. Angelology

What are angels? An angel is a pure spirit created by God; messengers employed by God as the ministers of His will. They are immortal (Lk 20:35-36).

Why need angels? They bridge the huge gap between the holiness and perfection of God in heaven and the shortcomings of dying people on this planet.

9 choirs/orders of angels Seraphim - Highest order. Attendants or guardians before God's throne. Seraphim have six wings, two cover their faces, two cover their feet, and two are for flying. (Is 6:1-7)

Cherubim – 2nd highest. Manlike in appearance, double-winged, guardians of God’s glory, symbolizing God’s power and mobility.

Thrones – Pure humility, peace and submission. Lower choir of angels need the thrones to access God.

Dominions – Angels of leadership; regulate the duties of the angels, making known God’s commands.

Virtues – Known as the Spirits of Motion or “the shining ones”; control the weathers, govern the nature, in charge of miracles.

Powers – Warrior angels against evil, defending the cosmos and humans.

Archangels – “Chief or leading angels” (Jude 9, 1 Thes 4:16), most frequently mentioned throughout the Bible. They may be of this or other hierarchies as St. Michael Archangel, who is a princely Seraph. God’s messenger to men at critical times in history and salvation (Jn 5:4, Rv 12:7-9) as in Annunciation and Apocalypse.

Principalities – Spiritual beings hostile to God and humans due to sin (Rom 8:38, Eph 1:21, 3:10).

Angels – Closest to the material world and humans, deliver prayers/answers to/from God. Most caring and social.

Angels with names Michael (Dan 12:1), Gabriel (Dan 9:21, Lk 1:19), Raphael (Tobit 12:15)

Fallen angels These beings, because of pride, did not return God's love. God did not destroy them, but permits them a limited scope of activity. Their condition is permanent for no additional reflection could change the mind of a purely spiritual being who has turned away. Demons are fallen angels under the command of Satan. (Ref: Rev 12:7-8)

Guardian angels Assigned by God to watch over each of us during our lives (Ps. 91:10-12), guiding us to good thoughts, works and words, and to preserve us from evil. Jesus attested to guardian angels (Mt. 18:10).

Man lower than angels Angels made to live forever; man sins and dies. Ref: Ps. 8:4-5, Heb 2:9).

(Ref: Catholic Online – Saints and Angels)