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World Bible Translation Center
P.O. Box 820648
Fort Worth, Texas 76182, USA
Telephone: 1-817-595-1664
Toll-Free in US: 1-888-54-BIBLE
E-Mail: info@wbtc.com
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Isaiah

1 This is the vision* of Isaiah son of Amoz. God showed Isaiah things that would happen to Judah and Jerusalem. Isaiah saw these things during the time Uzziah,* Jotham,* Ahaz,* and Hezekiah* were kings of Judah.

God's Case Against His People

2 Heaven and Earth, listen to the Lord! The Lord says,

“I raised my children.
I helped my children grow.
But my children turned against me.
3 A cow knows its master.
And a donkey knows the place where
its owner feeds it.
But the people of Israel don't know me.
My people don't understand.”

4 The nation of Israel is full of guilt. This guilt is like a heavy weight the people have to carry. Those people are like bad children from evil families. They left the Lord. They insulted the Holy One (*God*) of Israel. They left him and treated him like a stranger.

5 God says, “Why should I continue to punish you people? I punished you, but you did not change. You continue to rebel against me. Now every head and every heart is sick. **6** From the bottom of your feet to the top of your head, every part of your body has wounds, hurts, and open sores. You have not

cared for your sores. Your wounds are not cleaned and covered.

7 “Your land is ruined. Your cities have been burned with fire. Your enemies have taken your land. Your land is ruined like a country destroyed by armies. **8** The Daughter of Zion (*Jerusalem*) is now like an empty tent left in a field of grapes. It is like an old house left in a field of cucumbers. It is like a city that has been defeated by enemies.” **9** [This is true,] but the Lord All-Powerful did allow a few people to continue living. We were not completely destroyed like the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.*

God Wants True Service

10 You leaders of Sodom, listen to the Lord's message! You people of Gomorrah, listen to God's teachings! **11** [God says,] “Why do you continue giving me all these sacrifices?* I have had enough of your sacrifices of goats and fat from bulls, sheep, and goats.

12 “When you people come to meet with me, you trample (*walk on*) everything in my yard. Who told you to do this?

13 “Don't continue bringing worthless sacrifices to me. I hate the incense* you give me. I can't bear your feasts for the New Moon,* the Sabbath,* and your holidays. I hate the evil you do during your holy

Sodom, Gomorrah Two cities that God destroyed because the people were so evil.

sacrifices Gifts to God. Sometimes these were special kinds of animals that were killed and burned on an altar.

incense A kind of spice that smells good when it is burned. It was burned as a gift to God.

New Moon The first day of the Jewish month. This was a special day of worship.

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

vision Like a dream. God gave messages to his special people by letting them see and hear things in visions.

Uzziah A king of Judah. He ruled about 767–740 B.C.

Jotham A king of Judah. He ruled about 740–735 B.C.

Ahaz A king of Judah. He ruled about 735–727 B.C.

Hezekiah A king of Judah. He ruled about 727–687 B.C.

meetings. ¹⁴With my whole self I hate your monthly meetings and councils. These meetings have become like heavy weights to me. And I am tired of carrying those weights.

¹⁵“You people will raise your arms to pray to me—but I will refuse to look at you. You people will say more and more prayers—but I will refuse to listen to you. Why? Because your hands are covered with blood.

¹⁶“Wash yourselves. Make yourselves clean. Stop doing the bad things you do. I don’t want to see those bad things. Stop doing wrong! ¹⁷Learn to do good things. Be fair with other people. Punish the people that hurt others. Help the children that have no parents. Help the women whose husbands are dead.”

¹⁸The Lord says, “Come, let’s discuss these things. Your sins are red like scarlet,* but they can be washed away and you will be white like snow. Your sins are bright red, but you can become white like wool.

¹⁹“If you listen to the things I say, then you will have the good things from this land. ²⁰But if you refuse to listen, you are against me. And your enemies will destroy you.”

The Lord himself said those things.

Jerusalem Is Not Loyal to God

²¹[God says,] “Look at Jerusalem. She was a city that trusted and followed me. What caused her to become like a prostitute?* She does not follow me now. Jerusalem should be filled with fairness. People living in Jerusalem should live the way God wants. But now, murderers live there.

²²“Goodness is like silver. But your silver has become worthless. Your wine (*goodness*) has been mixed with water—it is now weak. ²³Your rulers are rebels and friends of thieves. All of your rulers demand bribes—they accept money for doing wrong things. All of your rulers take pay for cheating people. Your rulers don’t try to help the children that have no parents. And your rulers don’t listen to the needs of the women whose husbands are dead.”

scarlet An expensive, bright red dye or piece cloth.

prostitute A woman that sells her body for sex. Sometimes this also means a person that stops following God.

²⁴Because of all these things, the Master, the Lord All-Powerful, the Mighty One of Israel, says, “I will punish you, my enemies. You will not cause me any more trouble.

²⁵People use lye* to clean silver. [In the same way,] I will clean all your wrongs away. I will take all the worthless things out from you. ²⁶I will bring back the kind of judges you had in the beginning. Your counselors will be like the counselors you had long ago. Then you will be called ‘The Good and Faithful City.’”

²⁷[God is,] good and does the things that are right. So he will rescue Zion* and the people that come back to him. ²⁸But all criminals and sinners will be destroyed. (They are the people that don’t follow the Lord.)

²⁹[In the future,] people will be ashamed of the oak trees* and special gardens* you choose to worship. ³⁰This will happen because you people will be like oak trees with leaves that are dying. You people will be like a garden dying without water. ³¹Powerful people will be like small dry pieces of wood. And the things those people do will be like sparks [that start a fire,]—the powerful people and the things they do will begin to burn. And no person will be able to stop that fire.

2 Isaiah son of Amoz saw this message about Judah and Jerusalem.

²In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s temple* will be on the highest of the mountains. It will be raised higher than all the hills. There will be a steady stream of people from all nations going there. ³Many people will go there. They will say, “Come! Let’s go up to the Lord’s mountain. Let’s go up to the temple of the God of Jacob. Then God will teach us his way of living. And we will follow him.”

The teachings from God—the Lord’s message—will begin in Jerusalem on the mountain of Zion* and go out to all the world. ⁴Then God will be a judge for the people of

lye A chemical used like soap.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

oak trees These trees were like idols that people worshiped.

special gardens Gardens where people worshiped false gods.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

all nations. God will end the arguments for many people. Those people will stop using their weapons for fighting. They will make plows from their swords. And they will use their spears as tools for cutting plants. People will stop fighting against other people. People will never again train for war.

⁵Family of Jacob, you should follow the Lord. ⁶I say this to you because you have left your people. Your people have become filled with the wrong ideas of the people in the east. Your people try to tell the future like the Philistines.* Your people have completely accepted those strange ideas. ⁷Your land has been filled with silver and gold from other places. There are many, many treasures there. Your land has been filled with horses. There are many, many chariots* there. ⁸Your land is full of statues that people worship. The people made those idols* and the people worship them. ⁹People have become worse and worse. People have become very low. God, surely you will not forgive them, will you?*

God's Enemies Will Be Afraid

¹⁰Go hide in the dirt and behind the rocks! You should be afraid of the Lord and you should hide from his great power!

¹¹Proud people will stop being proud. Those proud people will bow down to the ground with shame. At that time, only the Lord will still stand high.

¹²The Lord has a special day planned. On that day, the Lord will punish the proud and boastful people. Then those proud people will be made not important. ¹³Those proud people are like tall cedar trees from Lebanon.* They are like great oak trees from Bashan.* But God will punish those people. ¹⁴Those proud people are like tall mountains and high hills. ¹⁵Those proud people are like tall towers and high, very strong walls. But God will punish

Philistines People living on the coast of Palestine. They were one of Israel's enemies.

chariots Small wagons used for war.

idols Statues of false gods that people worshiped.

God ... will you Literally, "Surely you will not raise them up."

Lebanon A country north of Israel. It was famous for its great cedar and pine trees.

Bashan An area northeast of Israel.

those people. ¹⁶Those proud people are like great ships from Tarshish.* (These ships are full of important things.) But God will punish those proud people.

¹⁷At that time, people will stop being proud. The people that are now proud will bow low to the ground. And at that time, only the Lord will stand high. ¹⁸All the idols (*false gods*) will be gone. ¹⁹People will hide behind rocks and in cracks in the ground. People will be afraid of the Lord and his great power. This will happen when the Lord stands to make the earth shake.

²⁰At that time, people will throw away their gold and silver idols. (The people made those statues so the people could worship them.) The people will throw those statues into holes in the ground where bats and moles* live. ²¹Then the people will hide in cracks in the rocks. They will do this because they will be afraid of the Lord and his great power. This will happen when the Lord stands to make the earth shake.

Israel Should Trust God

²²You should stop trusting other people to save you. They are only people—and people die. So, you should not think they are strong like God.

3 Understand these things I am telling you. The Master, the Lord All-Powerful, will take away all the things Judah and Jerusalem depend on. God will take away all the food and all the water. ²God will take away all the heroes and great soldiers. God will take away all the judges,* the prophets,* the people that do magic, and the elders.* ³God will take away the military leaders and the government leaders. God will take away the skilled

ships from Tarshish This is probably a special type of cargo ship.

bats and moles Small animals that live in caves and holes in the ground.

judges In Israel, judges were people that judged, led, and protected the people.

prophets A true prophet was a person called by God to be a special servant. God used dreams and visions to show them things to teach the people.

elders Older men that were city leaders; they helped make decisions for the people.

counselors and the wise men that do magic and try to tell the future.

⁴God says, “I will cause young boys to be your leaders. ⁵Every person will be against every other person. Young people will not respect older people. Common people will not respect the important people.”

⁶At that time, a person will grab one of his brothers from his own family. That person will tell the brother, “You have a coat,* so you will be our leader. You will be the leader over all these ruins.”

⁷But that brother will stand and say, “I can’t help you. I don’t have enough food or clothes in my house. You will not make me your leader.”

⁸This will happen because Jerusalem has stumbled and has done wrong. Judah has fallen and has stopped following God. The things they say and do are against the Lord. The Lord’s glorious eyes clearly see all these things.

⁹The faces of the people show that they are guilty of doing wrong. And they are proud of their sin. They are like the people of Sodom*—they don’t care who sees their sin. It will be very bad for them. They have brought much trouble to themselves.

¹⁰Tell the good people that good things will happen to them. They will receive a reward for the good things they do. ¹¹But it will be very bad for the evil people. Much trouble will come to them. They will be punished for all the wrong things they have done. ¹²Children will defeat my people. Women will rule over my people. My people, your guides lead you in the wrong way. They turn you away from the right way.

God’s Decision About His People

¹³The Lord will stand to judge the people. ¹⁴The Lord will give his judgment against the elders* and leaders for the things they have done.

coat Or, “robe.” This showed a person was a leader of the people.

Sodom A city God destroyed because its people were so evil.

elders Older men that were city leaders; they helped make decisions for the people.

The Lord says, “You people have burned the field of grapes (*Judah*). You took things from poor people, and those things are still in your houses. ¹⁵What gives you the right to hurt my people? What gives you the right to push the faces of the poor people into the dirt?” My Master, the Lord All-Powerful said these things.

¹⁶The Lord says, “The women in Zion* have become very proud. They walk around with their heads in the air, acting like they are better than other people. Those women flirt with their eyes. And they dance around making noise with their ankle bracelets.”

¹⁷My Master will make sores on the heads of those women in Zion.* The Lord will make the women lose all their hair. ¹⁸At that time, the Lord will take away all the things they are proud of: the beautiful ankle bracelets, the necklaces that look like the sun and the moon, ¹⁹the earrings, bracelets, and veils (*face coverings*), ²⁰the scarves, the ankle chains, the sashes worn around their waists, the bottles of perfume, and the charms,* ²¹the signet rings,* and the nose-rings, ²²the fine robes, capes, shawls, and purses, ²³the mirrors, linen dresses, turbans, and long shawls.

²⁴Those women now have sweet smelling perfume, but at that time, their perfume will become moldy and rotten. Now they wear belts. But at that time, they will have only ropes to wear. Now they have their hair fixed fancy ways. But at that time, their heads will be shaved—they will have no hair.* Now they have party dresses. But at that time, they will have only clothes to show sadness. They have beauty marks on their faces now. But at that time, they will have another mark. It will be a mark burned into their skin.

²⁵At that time, your men will be killed with swords. Your heroes will die in war. ²⁶There

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

charms Things people wore on bracelets and necklaces. People thought these things would protect them from evil or danger.

signet rings Rings with special shapes that could be used like a rubber stamp. When pressed into wet clay, they left a mark. This mark was like a signature.

they will have no hair This shows that those people will become slaves.

will be crying and sadness in the meeting places near the city gates. Jerusalem will sit there empty like a woman that has lost everything to thieves and robbers. She will sit on the ground [and cry].

4 At that time, seven women will grab one man. The women will say, “We will make our own bread to eat. And we will make our own clothes to wear. We will do all these things for ourselves if you will only [marry us]. Let us have your name. Please, take away our shame.”

²At that time, the Lord’s plant (*Judah*) will be very beautiful and great. The people still living in Israel will be very proud of the things the land grows. ³At that time, all the people that are still living in Zion* and Jerusalem will be called holy (*special*) people. This will happen to all the people that have their names on a special list; the list of people that will be allowed to continue living.

⁴The Lord will wash away the blood* from the women of Zion.* The Lord will wash all the blood out of Jerusalem. God will use the spirit of justice [and judge fairly]. And he will use the spirit of burning, [and make everything pure].

⁵[At that time, God will prove that he is with his people.] During the day, God will make a cloud of smoke. And during the night, God will make a bright flaming fire.* These proofs will be in the sky over every building and over every meeting of the people on the mountain of Zion.* There will be a covering over every person* for protection. ⁶This covering will be a place of safety. The covering will protect the people from the heat of the sun. The covering will be a safe place to hide from all kinds of floods and rain.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

wash away the blood This is like a special ceremony for washing the blood after a menstrual period. After this a man and wife could be together and show their love for each other.

cloud of smoke ... fire These were signs that God used to show he was with his people.

person Literally, “glory,” but this also means “soul,” “person” (see Psalm 16:9).

Israel, God’s Special Garden

5 Now, I will sing a song for my friend (*God*). This song is about the love my friend has for his field of grapes (*Israel*).

My friend had a vineyard*
in a very rich field.

2 My friend dug and cleared the field.
He planted the best grapevines there.
He built a tower in the middle
of the field.

He hoped for good grapes to grow there.
But there were only bad grapes.

3 [So God said]:
“You people living in Jerusalem,
and you, man of Judah,*
think about me and my vineyard.*

4 What more could I do for my field
of grapes?
I did everything I could.
I hoped for good grapes to grow.
But there were only bad grapes.
Why did that happen?

5 Now, I will tell you what I will do to my field of grapes:

I will pull up the thorn bushes
[that are protecting the field],
and I will burn them.

I will break down the stone wall,
and the stones will be walked on.

6 I will make my vineyard* an empty field.
No person will care for the plants.
No person will work in the field.
Weeds and thorns will grow there.

I will command the clouds
not to rain on the field.”

⁷The field of grapes that belongs to the Lord All-Powerful is the nation of Israel. The grapevine—the plant the Lord loves—is the man of Judah.*

vineyard A garden for growing grapes.

You people ... man of Judah Or “Rulers of Jerusalem and leader of Judah...”

man of Judah This could mean either, “the king of Judah” or simply, “people of Judah.”

The Lord hoped for justice,
 but there was only killing.
 The Lord hoped for fairness,
 but there were only cries
 from people being treated badly.

⁸You people live very close together. You build houses until there is no place for anything else. But the Lord will punish you, and you will be made to live alone. You will be the only people in the whole land!* ⁹The Lord All-Powerful said this to me, and I heard him, “There are many houses now. But I promise that all the houses will be destroyed. There are nice, big houses now. But those houses will be empty. ¹⁰At that time, a ten-acre field of grapes will make only a little wine.* And many sacks of seed will grow only a little grain.*”

¹¹You people rise early in the morning and go looking for beer to drink. You stay awake late at night, becoming drunk with wine. ¹²You party with your wine, harps,* drums, flutes, and other musical instruments. And you don’t see the things the Lord has done. The Lord’s hands have made many, many things—but you don’t notice those things. So, it will be very bad for you people.

¹³The Lord says, “My people will be captured and taken away. Why? Because they don’t really know me. Some of the people living in Israel are important now. They are happy with their easy lives. But all those great people will become very thirsty and very hungry. ¹⁴Then they will die and Sheol,* the place of death, will get more and more people. That place of death will open her mouth with no limit. And all those people will go down into Sheol.”

You people ... in the whole land Or, “You join houses to houses and fields to fields until there is no room (for other people), until you are left living alone in the land.”

only a little wine Literally, “one bath.” A bath is a measure that equals about 6 gallons.

only a little grain Literally, “A homer of seed will grow only an ephah of grain.” A homer equals about 6 bushels. An ephah equals about one-half bushel.

harps Musical instruments with several strings.

Sheol This is the place where all people go when they die. Usually this means the grave, but it can mean the place where our spirits go.

¹⁵Those people will be humbled. Those great people will bow their heads and look at the ground. ¹⁶The Lord All-Powerful will judge fairly, and people will know he is great. The Holy God will do the things that are right, and the people will respect him. ¹⁷God will make the people of Israel leave their country; the land will be empty. Sheep will go any place they want. Lambs will walk on the land that rich people once owned.

¹⁸Look at those people! They pull their guilt and sins behind them like people pull wagons with ropes.* ¹⁹Those people say, “We wish God would hurry and do the things he plans to do. Then we would know what will happen. We wish the Lord’s plan would happen soon. Then we would know what his plan is.”

²⁰Those people say that good things are bad, and bad things are good. Those people think light is darkness, and darkness is light. Those people think sour is sweet, and sweet is sour. ²¹Those people think they are very smart. They think they are very intelligent. ²²Those people are famous for drinking wine. They are champions at mixing drinks. ²³And if you pay those people money, they will forgive a criminal. But they don’t allow good people to be judged fairly. ²⁴Bad things will happen to those people. Their descendants* will be completely destroyed—like straw and leaves are burned by fire. Their descendants will be destroyed like a root that dies and becomes dust. Their descendants will be destroyed like a fire destroys a flower—the ashes blow away in the wind.

Those people have refused to obey the teachings* of the Lord All-Powerful. Those people hated the message from the Holy One (God) of Israel. ²⁵So the Lord has become very angry with his people. And the Lord will raise his hand and punish them. Even the mountains will be frightened. Dead bodies will lie in the streets like garbage. But God

ropes Literally, “useless ropes.” The Hebrew words for useless ropes are like the words meaning “useless things—idols.”

descendants A person’s children, and all the people born from those children.

teachings This can also mean “laws.” Sometimes this means the laws God gave Moses to teach to the people of Israel.

will still be angry. His hand will still be raised to punish the people.

God Will Bring Armies to Punish Israel

²⁶Look! God is giving a sign to the nations in a faraway land. God is raising a flag, and he is whistling to call those people. The enemy is coming from a faraway land. The enemy will soon enter the country. They are moving very quickly. ²⁷The enemy never becomes tired or falls down. They never become sleepy and fall asleep. Their weapon belts are always ready. Their shoestrings never break. ²⁸The enemy's arrows are sharp. All of their bows are ready to shoot. The horses' feet are hard like rock. Clouds of dust rise from behind their chariots.*

²⁹The enemy shouts, and their shout is like a lion's roar. It is loud like a young lion. The enemy growls and grabs the people it is fighting against. The people struggle and try to escape. But there is no person to save them. ³⁰So, the "lion" roars loud like the waves of the sea. And the captured people look at the ground, and then there is only darkness. All light becomes dark in this thick cloud.

God Calls Isaiah to Be a Prophet

6In the year that King Uzziah* died,* I saw my Master. He was sitting on a very high and wonderful throne.* His long robe filled the temple.* ²Seraph angels* stood around the Lord. Each Seraph angel had six wings. The angels used two of their wings to cover their faces. The angels used two of their wings to cover their feet. And the angels used two of their wings for flying. ³Each angel was calling to the other angels. The angels said, "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord All-Powerful is very holy. His Glory* fills the whole earth." The

chariots Small wagons used for war.

Uzziah A king of Judah. He ruled from about 767–740 B.C.

year ... died This was probably 740 B.C.

throne A special chair a king or queen sits on.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

Seraph angels Special angels God used as messengers. The name might mean they were bright like fire.

His Glory The "Glory of the Lord," one of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.

angels' voices were very loud. ⁴Their voices caused the frame around the door to shake. Then the temple* began filling with smoke.*

⁵I became very scared. I said, "Oh, no! I will be destroyed. I am not pure (*good*) enough to speak to God. And I live among people that are not pure enough to speak to God.* Yet I have seen the King, the Lord All-Powerful."

⁶There was a fire on the altar.* One of the Seraph angels* used a pair of tongs* to take a hot coal from the fire. The angel flew to me with the hot coal in his hand. ⁷The Seraph angel touched my mouth with the hot coal. Then the angel said, "Look! Because this hot coal touched your lips the wrong things you have done are gone from you. Your sins are now erased."

⁸Then I heard my Lord's voice. The Lord said, "Who can I send? Who will go for us?"

So I said, "Here I am. Send me!"

⁹Then the Lord said, "Go and tell this to the people: 'Listen closely, but don't understand! Look closely, but don't learn!'" ¹⁰Confuse the people. Make the people not able to understand the things they hear and see. If you don't do this, then people might really understand the things they hear with their ears. The people might really understand in their minds. If they did this, then the people might come back to me and be healed (*forgiven*)!"

¹¹Then I asked, "Master, how long should I do this?"

The Lord answered, "Do this until the cities are destroyed, and the people are gone. Do this until there are no people left living in the houses. Do this until the land is destroyed and left empty."

¹²The Lord will make the people go far away. There will be large areas of empty land in the country. ¹³But a tenth of the people will be allowed to stay in the land. These people will return to the Lord, even though they were to be destroyed. These people will be

smoke This showed that God was in the temple. See Ex. 40:34–35.

people ... God Literally, "people that do not have pure lips."

altar A stone table used for burning sacrifices as gifts to God.

tongs A "U-shaped" tool for holding hot things.

like an oak tree. When the tree is chopped down, a stump is left. This stump (*the people remaining*) is a very special seed.

Trouble with Aram

7 Ahaz* was the son of Jotham.* Jotham was the son of Uzziah.* Rezin* was the king of Aram,* Pekah son of Remaliah* was the king of Israel. During the time Ahaz was king of Judah, Rezin and Pekah went up to Jerusalem to fight against it. But they were not able to defeat the city.

²A message was told to the family of David.* The message said, “The army of Aram and the army of Ephraim (*Israel*) have joined together. The two armies are camped together.”

When King Ahaz heard this message, he and the people became very scared. They were shaking with fear like trees of the forest blowing in the wind.

³Then the Lord told Isaiah, “You and your son Shear Jashub* should go out and talk to Ahaz. Go to the place where the water flows into the upper pool. This is on the street going to Laundryman’s Field.

⁴“Tell Ahaz, ‘Be careful, but be calm. Don’t be afraid. Don’t let those two men, Rezin and Remaliah’s son,* scare you! Those men are like two burnt sticks. In the past they were burning hot. But now they are only smoke. Rezin, Aram, and Remaliah’s son are angry. ⁵They have made plans against you. They said: ⁶We should go and fight against Judah. We will divide Judah for ourselves. We will make Tabeel’s son the new king of Judah.”

⁷The Lord my Master says, “Their plan will not succeed. It will not happen. ⁸It will not

happen while Rezin* is the ruler of Damascus.* Ephraim (*Israel*) is now a nation, but 65 years in the future Ephraim (*Israel*) will not be a nation. ⁹Their plan will not succeed while Samaria is the capital of Ephraim (*Israel*) and while the ruler of Samaria is Remaliah’s son.* If you don’t believe this message then people should not believe you.”

Immanuel—God Is with Us

¹⁰Then the Lord continued to speak to Ahaz.* ¹¹The Lord said, “Ask for a sign to prove to yourself that these things are true. You can ask for any sign you want. The sign can come from a place as deep as Sheol,* or the sign can come from a place as high as the skies.*”

¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask for a sign as proof. I will not test the Lord.”

¹³Then Isaiah said, “Family of David,* listen very carefully! You test the people’s patience—and this is not important to you. So, now you test my God’s patience. ¹⁴But [God,] my Master, will show you a sign:

Look at the young woman.*

She is pregnant,

and she will give birth to a son.

She will name him Immanuel.*

¹⁵ Immanuel will eat butter and honey.*

[He will live like this,] to learn how

to choose to do good and

to refuse to do evil.

¹⁶ But before the child [is old enough,]

to learn about good and evil,

the land of Ephraim (*Israel*) and Aram

will be empty.

Ahaz A king of Judah. He ruled about 735–727 B.C.

Jotham A king of Judah. He ruled about 740–735 B.C.

Uzziah A king of Judah. He ruled about 767–740 B.C.

Rezin A king of Aram. He ruled about 740–731 B.C.

Aram A country north of Israel.

Pekah son of Remaliah A king of north Israel. He ruled about 740–731 B.C.

family of David The royal family of Judah. God promised that men from David’s family would be kings in Judah.

Shear Jashub This is a name that means “a few people will come back.”

Remaliah’s son This is Pekah, the king of north Israel. He ruled about 740–731 B.C.

Damascus A city in the country of Aram (Syria).

The sign ... Sheol Or, “make your question deep.” The Hebrew word for “question” is like the word for Sheol.

the sign ... skies Literally, “make your question very high.”

young woman Or, “Look at the virgin. She will become pregnant and give birth to a son.” This is possibly the meaning of the ancient Greek version that was translated about 150 B.C. See Gen. 16:11,12 and Luke 1:30–35 for similar announcements.

Immanuel This name means “God is with us.”

butter and honey This probably means the food that even poor people could find to eat.

“You are afraid of those two kings now. ¹⁷But you should be afraid of the Lord. Why? Because the Lord will bring some troubled times to you. Those troubles will come to your people and to the people of your father’s family. What will God do? God will bring the king of Assyria* to fight against you.

¹⁸“At that time, the Lord will call for the ‘Fly.’ (The ‘Fly’ is now near the streams of Egypt.) And the Lord will call for the ‘Bee.’ (The ‘Bee’ is now in the country of Assyria.*) These enemies will come to your country. ¹⁹These enemies will camp in the rocky canyons near the desert streams and near the bushes and watering holes. ²⁰The Lord will use Assyria to punish Judah. Assyria will be hired and used like a razor. It will be like the Lord is shaving the hair from Judah’s head and legs. It will be like the Lord is shaving off Judah’s beard.*

²¹“At that time, a person will be able to keep only one young cow and two sheep alive. ²²There will be only enough milk for that person to eat butter. Every person in the country will eat butter and honey.* ²³In this land, there are now fields that have 1,000 grapevines. Each grapevine is worth 1,000 pieces of silver. But these fields will become full of weeds and thorns. ²⁴The land will become wild and useful only as a hunting ground. ²⁵People once worked and grew food on these hills. But at that time, people will not go there. The land will be filled with weeds and thorns. Only sheep and cattle will go to those places.”

Assyria Will Come Soon

8 The Lord told me, “Get a large scroll* and use a pen* to write these words: ‘This is for Maher Shalal Hash Baz.’ (This means ‘There will soon be looting and stealing.’)”

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

shaving off Judah’s beard This showed that the people of Judah would be made slaves.

butter and honey This probably means the food that poor people also can find and eat.

scroll This Hebrew word might also mean “a clay or stone tablet.”

pen Literally, “stylus of a man.” This might be a special pen for writing on clay.

²¹I gathered some people that could be trusted to be witnesses. (These people were Uriah the priest, and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah.) These men watched me write those words. ³Then I went to the woman prophet. She became pregnant and had a son. Then the Lord told me, “Name the boy Maher Shalal Hash Baz. ⁴Why? Because before the boy learns to say, ‘Mama’ and ‘Daddy,’ God will take all the wealth and riches from Damascus* and Samaria,* and God will give those things to the king of Assyria.*”

⁵Again the Lord spoke to me. ⁶My Master said, “These people refuse to accept the slow-moving waters of the pool of Shiloah.* These people are happy with Rezin* and Remaliah’s son (*Pekah*). ⁷But I, the Lord, will bring the king of Assyria and all his power against you. They will come like a powerful flood of water from the Euphrates River. It will be like water rising up and over the river banks. ⁸That water will spill out of that river and flow into Judah. The water will rise to Judah’s throat—it will almost drown Judah.

“Immanuel, this flood will spread until it covers your whole country.*”

The Lord Protects His Servants

- ⁹ All you nations, prepare for war!
You will be defeated.
Listen, all you faraway countries!
Prepare for battle!
You will be defeated.
- ¹⁰ Make your plans for the fight!
Your plans will be defeated.
Give orders to your armies!
Your orders will be useless.
Why? Because God is with us!*

Damascus A city in the country of Aram (Syria).

Samaria The capital city of north Israel.

Shiloah A pool of water in Jerusalem. In the New Testament this pool is called, “Siloam.”

Rezin A king of Aram. He ruled about 740–731 B.C.

Immanuel ... country Literally, “Then the edge of his garment will fill your whole land. God is with us.” The name “Immanuel” means “God is with us.”

God is with us! In Hebrew, this is like the name Immanuel.

Warnings to Isaiah

¹¹The Lord spoke to me with his great power. The Lord warned me not to be like these other people.* The Lord said, ¹²“Every person is saying that other people are making plans against him. You should not believe those things. Don’t be afraid of the things those people fear. Don’t be afraid of those things!”

¹³The Lord All-Powerful is the One you should be afraid of. He is the One you should respect. He is the One you should fear. ¹⁴If you will respect the Lord and consider him holy, then he will be a safe place for you. But you don’t respect him. So God is like a rock that you people fall over. He is a rock that makes the two families of Israel stumble. The Lord is a trap to catch all the people of Jerusalem. ¹⁵(Many people will fall over this rock. Those people will fall and be broken. They will be trapped and caught.)

¹⁶Isaiah said, “Make an agreement and seal* it. Save my teachings for the future. Do this while my followers are watching. ¹⁷This is the agreement:

I will wait for the Lord to help us.
The Lord is ashamed of the family of Jacob.
He refuses to look at them.
But I will wait for the Lord.
He will save us.

¹⁸“My children and I are signs and proofs for the people of Israel. We have been sent by the Lord All-Powerful—the Lord who lives on the Mount Zion.*”

¹⁹Some people say, “Ask the fortune tellers and wizards what to do.” (These fortune tellers and wizards whisper and make sounds like birds [to make people think that they know secret things].) [But I tell you that] people should ask their God [for help]! Those fortune tellers and wizards ask dead people

what to do. Why should living people ask something from the dead?

²⁰You should follow the teachings and the agreement.* If you don’t follow these commands, then you might follow the wrong commands. (The wrong commands are those commands that come from the wizards and fortune tellers. Those commands are worth nothing; you will gain nothing by following those commands.)

²¹[If you follow those wrong commands,] then there will be troubles and hunger in the land. People will become hungry. Then they will become angry and say things against their king and his gods.* Then they will look up [to God for help]. ²²If they look around them at their land, then they will see only trouble and depressing darkness—the dark sadness of people forced to leave their country. And the people that are trapped in that darkness will not be able to free themselves.

A New Day Is Coming

9In the past, people thought the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali were not important. But at a later time, [God] will make that land great: the land near the sea, the land across the Jordan River, and Galilee where the non-Jews live.

²Those people lived in darkness. But they will see a great light. Those people lived in a place as dark as the place of death. But the “Great Light” will shine on them.

³God, you will cause the nation to grow. You will make the people happy. And the people will show their happiness to you. It will be like the joy during harvest time. It will be like the joy when people take their share of things they have won in war. ⁴Why? Because you will take away the heavy burden. You will take away the heavy pole on the people’s backs. You will take away the rod that the enemy uses to punish your people. This will be like the time you defeated Midian.*

The Lord spoke ... people Or, “The Lord spoke to me. With his great power he prevented me from living like these other people.”

seal This showed that the agreement should not be changed.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

agreement Usually this means the agreement God made with Israel through Moses. Here it probably means the agreement in verse 17.

his gods Or possibly, “his God.”

This ... Midian See Num. 22–31.

⁵Every boot that marched in battle will be destroyed. Every uniform stained with blood will be destroyed. Those things will be thrown into the fire. ⁶This will happen when the special child is born. God will give a son to us. This son will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be “Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace.” ⁷Power and peace will be in his kingdom. It will continue to grow for this king from David’s family. This king will use goodness and fair judgment to rule the kingdom forever and ever.

The Lord All-Powerful has a strong love* _{for his people}. And this strong love will cause him to do these things.

God Will Punish Israel

⁸My Lord gave a command against the people of Jacob (*Israel*). That command against Israel will be obeyed. ⁹Then every person in Ephraim (*Israel*), even the leaders in Samaria, will know that God _{punished them}.

Those people are very proud and boastful now. Those people say, ¹⁰“These bricks might fall, but we will build again. And we will build with _{strong} stone. These small trees might be chopped down. But we will put new trees there. And the new trees will be large, strong trees.”

¹¹So the Lord will find people to fight against Israel. The Lord will bring Rezin’s* enemies against them. ¹²The Lord will bring the Arameans from the east and the Philistines from the west. Those enemies will defeat Israel with their armies. But the Lord will still be angry with Israel. The Lord will still be ready to punish the people.

¹³God will punish the people, but they will not stop sinning. They will not return to him. They will not follow the Lord All-Powerful. ¹⁴So the Lord will cut off Israel’s head and tail. The Lord will take away the branch and the stalk in one day. ¹⁵(The head means the

elders* and important leaders. The tail means the prophets that speak lies.)

¹⁶The men that lead the people are leading them the wrong way. And the people that follow them will be destroyed. ¹⁷All the people are evil. So the Lord is not happy with the young men. And the Lord will not show mercy to their widows and orphans.* Why? Because all the people are evil. The people do things that are against God. The people speak lies. So God will continue to be angry with the people. God will continue to punish the people.

¹⁸Evil is like a small fire. First, the fire burns weeds and thorns. Next, the fire burns the larger bushes in the forest. And finally, it becomes a great fire—and everything goes up in smoke.

¹⁹The Lord All-Powerful is angry, so the land will be burned. All the people will be burned in that fire. No person will try to save his brother. ²⁰People will grab something on the right, but they will still be hungry. They will eat something on the left, but they will not be filled. Then each person will turn and eat his own body. ²¹(_{This means} Manasseh will fight against Ephraim, and Ephraim will fight against Manasseh. And then both of them will turn against Judah.)

The Lord is still angry against Israel. The Lord is still ready to punish his people.

10 Look at the lawmakers that write evil laws. Those lawmakers write laws that make life hard for people. ²Those lawmakers are not fair to the poor people. They take away the poor people’s rights. They allow people to steal from widows and orphans.*

³Lawmakers, you will have to explain the things you have done. What will you do at that time? Your destruction is coming from a faraway country. Where will you run for help? Your money and your riches will not help you. ⁴You will have to bow down like a prisoner. You will fall down like a dead person. But that

elders Older men that were city leaders; they helped make decisions for the people.

widows and orphans Widows are women whose husbands have died, and orphans are children whose parents have died. Often these people have no one to care for them.

strong love This Hebrew word means strong feelings like love, hate, anger, zeal, or jealousy.

Rezin A king of Aram. He ruled about 740–731 B.C.

will not help you! God will still be angry. God will still be ready to punish you.

⁵God will say, “I will use Assyria* like a stick. In anger, I will use Assyria to punish Israel. ⁶I will send Assyria to fight against the people that do evil things. I am angry at those people, and I will command Assyria to fight against them. Assyria will defeat them and Assyria will take their wealth from them. Israel will become like dirt for Assyria to trample (*walk on*) in the streets.

⁷“But Assyria* does not understand that I will use him. Assyria does not think that he is a tool for me. Assyria only wants to destroy other people. Assyria only plans to destroy many nations. ⁸Assyria says to himself, ‘All of my leaders are like kings! ⁹The city Calno is like the city Carchemish. And the city Arpad is like the city Hamath. The city Samaria is like the city Damascus. ¹⁰I defeated those evil kingdoms and now I control them. The idols* those people worship are better than the idols of Jerusalem and Samaria. ¹¹I defeated Samaria and her idols. I will also defeat Jerusalem and the idols her people have made.’”

¹²My Master will finish doing the things he planned to Jerusalem and Mount Zion.* Then the Lord will punish Assyria.* The king of Assyria is very proud. His pride made him do many bad things. So God will punish him.

¹³The king of Assyria* says, “I am very wise. By my own wisdom and power I have done many great things. I have defeated many nations. I have taken their wealth. And I have taken their people to be slaves. I am a very powerful man. ¹⁴With my own hands I have taken the riches of all these people—like a person taking eggs from a bird’s nest. A bird often leaves its nest and eggs. And there is nothing to protect the nest. There is no bird to chirp and fight with its wings and beak. So people take the eggs. [In the same way,] there was no person to stop me from taking all the people on earth.”

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

idols Statues of false gods that people worshiped.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

God Controls Assyria’s Power

¹⁵An axe is not better than the person that cuts with it. A saw is not better than the person that saws with it. [But Assyria thinks he is more important and powerful than God.] And this is like a stick being more powerful and important than the person that picks it up and uses it to punish someone.

¹⁶[Assyria* thinks he is great.] But the Lord All-Powerful will send a terrible disease against Assyria. Assyria will lose his wealth and power like a sick man loses weight. Then Assyria’s glory will be destroyed. It will be like a fire burning until everything is gone. ¹⁷Israel’s Light (*God*) will be like a fire. The Holy One will be like a flame. He will be like a fire that first burns the weeds and thorns. ¹⁸Then the fire grows and burns away the great trees and vineyards.* Finally, everything is destroyed—even the people. [It will be like that when God destroys Assyria.] Assyria will be like a rotting log. ¹⁹There might be a few trees left standing in the forest. But even a child will be able to count them.

²⁰At that time, the people that are left living in Israel, the people from Jacob’s family, will not continue to depend on the person that beats them. They will learn to truly depend on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. ²¹The people that are left in Jacob’s family will again follow the powerful God.

²²Your people are very many. They are like the sands of the sea. But only a few of the people will be left to come back to the Lord. Those people will return to God, but first, your country will be destroyed. God has announced that he will destroy the land. And then goodness will come into the land; it will be like a river flowing full. ²³My Master, the Lord All-Powerful, will surely destroy this land.

²⁴My Master, the Lord All-Powerful, says, “My people living in Zion,* don’t be afraid of Assyria!* He will beat you like Egypt beat you in the past. It will be like Assyria is using a stick to hurt you. ²⁵But after a short time my anger will stop. I will be satisfied that Assyria has punished you enough.”

vineyards Gardens for growing grapes.

²⁶Then the Lord All-Powerful will beat Assyria with a whip. In the past, the Lord defeated Midian at Raven Rock.* It will be the same when the Lord attacks Assyria. [In the past, the Lord punished Egypt—he lifted the stick over the sea,* and led his people from Egypt. It will be the same when the Lord saves his people from Assyria.

²⁷[Assyria* will bring troubles to you—those troubles will be like weights you have to carry on] a pole across your shoulder. But, that pole will be taken off your neck. That pole will be broken by your strength (*God*).

The Army of Assyria Invades Israel

²⁸* The army will enter near the “Ruins” (Aiath). The army will walk on the “Threshing Floor” (Migron). The army will keep its food in the “Storehouse” (Micmash). ²⁹The army will cross the river at the “Crossing” (Maabarah). The army will sleep at Geba.* Ramah* will be afraid. The people at Gibeah of Saul* will run away.

³⁰Cry out, Bath Gallim!* Laishah, listen! Anathoth, answer me! ³¹The people of Madmenah are running away. The people of Gebim* are hiding. ³²This day, the army will stop at Nob. And the army will prepare to fight against Mount Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

³³Watch! Our Master, the Lord All-Powerful, will chop down the great tree (*Assyria*). The Lord will do this with his great power. The great and important people will be cut down—they will become not important. ³⁴The Lord will cut down the forest with his axe. And the great trees in Lebanon* (*important people*) will fall.

Midian at Raven Rock Or “Midian at the Rock of Oreb” See Judges 7:25.

he lifted the stick ... sea See Ex. 14:1–15:21.

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

Verses 28–32 Isaiah uses word games to show how the Assyrian army would come and fight against Judah.

Geba, Ramah, Gibeah of Saul Towns north of Jerusalem.

Bath Gallim Gallim, a city south of Jerusalem. This name means “daughter of the waves,” and might also mean “seagull.” These birds make very loud noises.

Gebim An unknown city. This name is like the Hebrew word for “pit” or “cistern,” a hole in the ground for storing water.

Lebanon A country north of Israel. It was famous for its great cedar and pine trees.

The King of Peace Is Coming

11 A small tree (*child*) will begin to grow from the stump (*family*) of Jesse.* That branch will grow from Jesse’s roots. ²The Lord’s Spirit will be in that child. The Spirit gives wisdom, understanding, guidance, and power. And the Spirit [will help this child] know and respect the Lord. ³This child will respect the Lord, and this will make the child happy.

This child will not judge people by the way things look. He will not judge by the things he hears. ^{4–5}He will judge the poor people fairly and honestly. He will be fair when he decides the things to do to the poor people of the land. [If he decides people should be beaten,] then he will give the command, and those people will be beaten. [If he decides people must die,] then he will give the command, and those evil people will be killed. Goodness and fairness will [give this child strength]. They will be like a belt he wears around his waist.

⁶At that time, wolves will live in peace with lambs. And tigers will lie down in peace with young goats. Calves, lions, and bulls will live together in peace. A little child will lead them. ⁷Cows and bears will live together in peace. All of their children will lie down together and will not hurt each other. Lions will eat hay like cows. Even snakes will not hurt people. ⁸A baby will be able to play near a cobra’s* home. A baby will be able to put his hand into the home of a poisonous snake.

⁹[All these things show that there will be peace]—no person will hurt any other person. People on my holy mountain will not want to destroy things. Why? Because people will truly know the Lord. They will be full of knowledge [about him,] like the sea is full of water.

¹⁰At that time, there will be a special person from Jesse’s* family. This person will be like a flag. This “flag” will show all the nations that they should come together around him. The nations will ask him the things they should do. And the place where he is will be filled with glory.

Jesse King David’s father.

cobra A very poisonous snake.

¹¹At that time, my Master (*God*) will again reach out and take his people that are left. This will be the second time God has done this. (These are God’s people that are left in countries like Assyria, North Egypt, South Egypt, Ethiopia, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath, and all the faraway countries around the world.)

¹²God will raise this “flag” as a sign for all people. The people of Israel and Judah were forced to leave their country. The people were scattered to all the faraway places on earth. But God will gather them together.

¹³At that time, Ephraim (*Israel*) will not be jealous of Judah. Judah will have no enemies left. And Judah will not cause trouble for Ephraim. ¹⁴But Ephraim and Judah will attack the Philistines.* These two nations will be like birds flying down to catch a small animal. Together, they will take the riches from the people in the east. Ephraim and Judah will control Edom, Moab,* and the people in Ammon.*

¹⁵The Lord became angry and divided the sea of Egypt. ¹⁶In the same way, the Lord will wave his arm over the Euphrates River. He will hit the river, and the river will divide into seven small rivers. The small rivers will not be deep—people will be able to walk across those rivers with their shoes on. ¹⁶God’s people that are left will have a way to leave Assyria. It will be like the time God took the people out of Egypt.

A Song of Praise to God

12 At that time, you will say:
 “I praise you Lord!
 You have been angry at me.
 But don’t be angry with me now!
 Show your love to me.”

² God saves me.
 I trust him.
 I am not afraid.
 He saves me.

Philistines People living on the coast of Palestine. They were one of Israel’s enemies.

Edom, Moab Two countries east of Israel. They were Israel’s enemies for many, many years.

Ammon A country east of Israel.

The Lord Yah is my strength.
 He saves me.
 And I sing songs of praise
 about him.*

³ Get your water from the spring
 of salvation.
 Then you will be happy.
⁴ Then you will say,
 “Praise the Lord!
 Worship his name!
 Tell all people about the things
 he has done!”
⁵ Sing songs of praise about the Lord!
 Why? Because he has done
 great things!
 Spread this news about God
 through the whole world.
 Let all people know these things.
⁶ People of Zion,* shout about these things!
 The Holy One of Israel is with you
 in a powerful way.
 So, be happy!

God’s Message to Babylon

13 God showed Isaiah son of Amoz this sad message about Babylon. ²God said: ¹

“Raise a flag on that mountain*
 where nothing grows.
 Call out to the men.
 Wave your arms.
 Tell them to enter through the gates
 for important people!”

³God said: ¹

“I have separated those men
 from the people.
 And I myself will command them.
 I am angry.
 I gathered my best men
 to punish the people.
 I am proud of these happy men!

The Lord Yah ... him Literally, “YAH, YAHWEH is my strength and praise. And he becomes my salvation.” This comes from the victory song of Moses. (Ex. 15:2.)

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

mountain This probably means Babylon.

- 4 “There is a loud noise in the mountains.
Listen to the noise!
It sounds like many, many people.
People from many kingdoms
are gathering together.
The Lord All-Powerful is calling
his army together.
- 5 The Lord and this army
are coming from a faraway land.
They are coming from beyond the horizon.
The Lord will use this army like a weapon
to show his anger.
This army will destroy the whole country.”

⁶The Lord’s special day is near. So cry and be sad for yourselves. A time is coming when the enemy will steal your wealth. God All-Powerful will make that happen.* ⁷People will lose their courage. Fear will make the people weak. ⁸Every person will be afraid. Their fear will cause their stomachs to hurt like a woman giving birth to a baby. Their faces will become red like fire. The people will be amazed because this look of fear will be on all their neighbors’ faces.

God’s Judgment Against Babylon

⁹Look, the Lord’s special day is coming! It will be a terrible day. God will become very angry, and he will destroy the country. God will force all people that sin to leave the country. ¹⁰The skies will be dark. The sun, the moon, and the stars will not shine.

¹¹[God says,] “I will cause bad things to happen to the world. I will punish the evil people for their sin. I will cause the proud people to lose their pride. I will stop the bragging of the people that are mean to others. ¹²There will be only a few people left. There will not be many, the same as gold is hard to find. And these people will be worth much more than pure gold. ¹³With my anger, I will make the sky shake. And the earth will be moved from its place.”

That will happen on the day the Lord All-Powerful shows his anger. ¹⁴Then the people

from Babylon will run away, like wounded deer. They will run like sheep that have no shepherd. Every person will turn and run back to his own country and people. ¹⁵[But the enemy will chase the people of Babylon. And when the enemy,] catches a person, the enemy will kill that person with a sword. ¹⁶Everything in their houses will be stolen. Their wives will be raped. And their little children will be beaten to death while the people are watching.

¹⁷[God says,] “Look, I will cause the armies of Media to attack Babylon. [The armies of Media will not stop attacking,] even if they are paid silver and gold. ¹⁸The soldiers will attack and kill the young men of Babylon. The soldiers will not show mercy to the babies. The soldiers will not be kind to the children. Babylon will be destroyed—it will be like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.* God will cause this destruction, and there will be nothing left.

¹⁹“Babylon is the most beautiful of all kingdoms. The Babylonian* people are very proud of their city. ²⁰But Babylon will not continue to be beautiful. People will not continue to live there in the future. Arabs will not put their tents there. Shepherds will not bring their sheep to let them eat there. ²¹The only animals living there will be wild animals from the desert. People will not be living in their houses in Babylon. The houses will be full of owls and large birds. Wild goats* will play in the houses. ²²Wild dogs and wolves will howl in the great and beautiful buildings of Babylon. Babylon will be finished. The end of Babylon is near. I will not let Babylon’s destruction wait until later.”

Israel Will Return Home

14 [In the future,] the Lord will again show his love to Jacob. The Lord will again choose the people of Israel. [At that time,] the Lord will give those people their land. Then

Sodom and Gomorrah Two cities that God destroyed because the people were so evil.

Babylonian Literally, “Chaldean.”

Wild goats The Hebrew word means “hairy,” “goat,” or “goat-demon.”

A time ... happen This is a word play in Hebrew. The word meaning “stealing things in war” is like the word meaning “God All-Powerful.”

non-Jewish people* will join themselves to the Jewish people. Both people will join and become one family—Jacob’s family. ²Those nations will take the people of Israel back to Israel’s land. Those men and women from the other nations will become slaves to Israel. ¹In the past, ¹ those people forced the people of Israel to become their slaves. But ¹at this time, ¹ the people of Israel will defeat those nations and Israel will then rule over them. ³The Lord will take away your hard work, and he will comfort you. ¹In the past, ¹ you were slaves. Men forced you to do very hard work. But the Lord will end this hard work for you.

A Song About the King of Babylon

⁴At that time, you will begin to sing this song about the king of Babylon:

- The king was mean when he ruled us.
But now his rule is finished.
- ⁵ The Lord breaks the scepter* of evil rulers.
The Lord takes away their power.
- ⁶ In anger, the king of Babylon beat people.
He never stopped beating people.
That evil ruler ruled the people in anger.
He never stopped hurting people.
- ⁷ But now, the whole country rests.
The country is quiet.
Now the people begin to celebrate.
- ⁸ You were an evil king,
and now you are finished.
Even the pine trees are happy.
The cedar trees of Lebanon are happy.
The trees say,
“The king chopped us down.
But now the king has fallen,
and he will never stand again.”
- ⁹ Sheol,* ¹the place of death ¹is excited
because you are coming.
Sheol is waking the spirits of all
the leaders of the earth for you.

non-Jewish people Usually this means “People that live in a country, but are not yet citizens of that country.” Here it is the non-Jewish people that decided to follow God.

scepter A special stick. Kings and leaders carried scepters to show they were rulers.

Sheol This is the place where all people go when they die. Usually this means the grave, but it can mean the place where our spirits go.

Sheol is making the kings stand
from their thrones.

They will be ready for your coming.

- ¹⁰ All these leaders will make fun of you.

They will say,

“Now you are a dead body like us.
Now you are just like us.”

- ¹¹ Your pride has been sent down to Sheol.*

The music from your harps announces
the coming of your proud spirit.

Maggots (*flies*) will eat your body.

You will lie on them like a bed.

Worms will cover your body
like a blanket.

- ¹² You were like the morning star,
but you have fallen from the sky.

In the past, all the nations on earth
bowed down before you.

But now you have been cut down.

- ¹³ You always told yourself,

“¹I will be like God Most-High,
¹I will go to the skies above.

I will put my throne above God’s stars.

I will sit on holy mountain, Zaphon.*

I will meet ¹with the gods,
on that mountain.

- ¹⁴ I will go up to the altar in the clouds.
I will be like God Most-High.”

- ¹⁴ I will go up to the altar in the clouds.
I will be like God Most-High.”

- ¹⁵ But that did not happen.

You did not go to the sky with God.

You were brought down to the deep pit—
Sheol,* the place of death.

- ¹⁶ The people look at you and think about
you.

¹They see that you are only a dead body,
and the people say,

“Is this the same man that caused great fear
in all the kingdoms on earth?

- ¹⁷ Is this the same man that destroyed cities
and changed the land into a desert?

Is this the same man that captured people
in war and would not let them

go home?”

- ¹⁸ Every king on earth has died with glory.

Every king has his own grave.

holy mountain, Zaphon Literally, “Zaphon.” This Hebrew word means “north, hidden” or “the heavenly mountain where the Canaanite people believed their gods met together.”

- 19 But you, evil king, have been thrown
from your grave.
You are like a branch cut from a tree.
That branch is cut and thrown away.
You are like a dead man that fell in battle,
and other soldiers walked on him.
Now, you look like any other dead person.
You are wrapped in burial clothes.
- 20 Many other kings have died.
And they all have their own graves.
But you will not join them.
Why? Because you ruined your
own country.
You killed your own people.
Your children will not continue
to destroy like you did.
Your children will be stopped.
- 21 Prepare to kill his children.
Kill them because their father is guilty.
His children will never again
take control of the land.
They will never again
fill the world with their cities.

²²The Lord All-Powerful said, “I will stand and fight against those people. I will destroy the famous city, Babylon. I will destroy all the people of Babylon. I will destroy their children, their grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren.” The Lord himself said those things.

²³The Lord said, “I will change Babylon. That place will be for animals,* [not people]. That place will be a swamp. I will use the ‘broom of destruction’ to sweep Babylon away.” The Lord All-Powerful said those things.

God Will also Punish Assyria

²⁴The Lord All-Powerful has made a promise. The Lord said, “I promise, these things will happen exactly like I thought. These things will happen exactly the way I planned. ²⁵I will destroy the king of Assyria in my country. I will trample (*walk on*) that king on my mountains. That king made my people be his slaves; he put a yoke* on their necks.

animals Literally, “porcupines.”

yoke A pole that was put on the shoulders of men or animals to help them carry or pull things. This often showed that a person was a slave.

That pole will be taken off Judah’s neck. That burden will be removed. ²⁶That is the thing I plan to do for my people. And I will use my arm (*power*) to punish all nations.”

²⁷When the Lord makes a plan, no person can stop that plan. When the Lord raises his arm to punish people, no person can stop him.

God’s Message to Philistia

²⁸This sad message was given the year King Ahaz died.*

²⁹Country of Philistia, you are very happy because the king that beat you is now dead. But you should not be really happy. It is true that his rule has ended. But the king’s son will come and rule. And it will be like one snake giving birth to a more dangerous snake. This new king will be like a very quick and dangerous snake to you. ³⁰But my poor people will be able to eat safely. Their children will be safe. My poor people will be able to lie down and feel safe. But I will kill your family with hunger. And all your people that are left will die.

- 31 You people near the city gates, cry!
You people in the city, cry out!
All of you people in Philistia
will be frightened.
Your courage will melt like hot wax.

Look to the north!

There is a cloud of dust!

[An army from Assyria is coming!]

All the men in that army are strong!*

- 32 [That army will send messengers
to their country.]

What will those messengers tell
their people?

They will announce:

[Philistia was defeated.]

but the Lord made Zion* strong.

And his poor people went there
for safety.

year King Ahaz died About 727 B.C.

All the men ... strong Or, “There are no stragglers in that group.”

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

God's Message to Moab

- 15** This is a sad message about Moab:*
- One night, armies took the wealth
from Ar, Moab.
That night, the city was destroyed.
One night, armies took the wealth
from Kir, Moab.
That night, the city was destroyed.
- 2** The king's family and the people
of Dibon*
are going to the places of worship*
to cry.
The people of Moab are crying
for Nebo* and Medeba.*
The people shaved their heads and beards
to show they are sad.
- 3** Everywhere in Moab,
on the housetops and in the streets,
people are wearing black clothes,
people are crying.
- 4** People in the cities Heshbon and Elealeh
are crying very loudly.
You can hear their voices far away
in the city Jahaz.
Even the soldiers are scared.
The soldiers are shaking from fear.
- 5** My heart cries with sorrow for Moab.
People are running for safety.
They run far away to Zoar.
They run to Eglath Shelishiyah.
The people are crying as they go up
the mountain road to Luhith.
The people are crying very loudly
as they walk on the road to Horonaim.
- 6** But Nimrim Brook is dry like a desert.
All the plants are dead.
Nothing is green.
- 7** So the people gather the things they own,
and they leave Moab.

Moab A country east of Israel.

Dibon A city in the country Moab. This name is like a Hebrew word meaning "to be very sad."

places of worship Or "high places," places for worshipping God or false gods. These places were usually on the hills and mountains.

Nebo A city in the country Moab and the name of a false god.

Medeba A city in the country Moab. This name is like a Hebrew word meaning "to be very sad."

They carry those things,
and cross the border at Poplar Creek.*

- 8** Crying can be heard everywhere in Moab.
The people are crying
far away in the city Eglaim.
And the people are crying
in the city Beer Elim.*
- 9** The water of Dimon* is full of blood.
And I (*the Lord*) will bring
even more troubles to Dimon.
A few people living in Moab
have escaped the enemy.
But I will send lions to eat those people.

16 You people should send a gift to the
king of the land. You should send a
lamb from Sela, through the desert, to the
mountain of the Daughter of Zion.*

- 2** The women of Moab* try to cross
the river Arnon.
They run from one place to another
looking for help.
They are like little birds lost
on the ground
after their nest has fallen from a tree.
- 3** They say,
"Help us! Tell us what to do!
Protect us from our enemies
like shade protects us
from the noon sun.
We are running from our enemies.
Hide us! Don't give us to our enemies."
- 4** Those people from Moab were forced
to leave their homes.
So let them live in your land.
Hide them from their enemies.
The looting will stop.
The enemy will be defeated.
The men that hurt other people
will be gone from the land.

Poplar Creek A small stream in the country Moab, also called "Arabah Stream."

Beer Elim A city in the country Moab.

Dimon This is probably the city Dibon. Dimon is like the Hebrew word meaning "blood."

Daughter of Zion Another name for Jerusalem.

- 5 Then a new king will come.
 This king will be from David’s family.*
 He will be loyal.
 He will be loving and kind.
 This king will judge fairly.
 He will do things that are right and good.

⁶We have heard that the people of Moab* are very proud and conceited. These people are violent and they boast. But the boasts are only empty words.

⁷_lThe whole country of Moab will suffer because of that pride. All the people of Moab will cry. The people will be sad—they will want the things they had in the past. They will want the fig-cakes made in Kir Hareseth.*
⁸_lThe people will be sad because the fields of Heshbon and the vines of Sibmah are not able to grow grapes. Foreign rulers have cut down the grapevines. The _lenemy armies have_l spread far to the city of Jazer and into the desert. And they have spread down to the sea.*

A Sad Song about Moab

- 9 “I will cry with the people of Jazer and Sibmah
 because the grapes have been destroyed.
 I will cry with the people
 of Heshbon and Elealeh
 because there will be no harvest.
 There will be no summer fruit.
 And there will be no shouts of joy.
 10 There will be no joy and singing
 in Carmel.*
 I will end the happiness at harvest time.
 The grapes are ready to become wine.
 But they will all be wasted.
 11 So, I am very sad for Moab.
 I am very sad for Kir Heres.*
 I am very, very sad for these cities.

David’s family The royal family of Judah. God promised that men from David’s family would be kings in Judah.

Moab A country east of Israel.

Kir Hareseth A city in the country Moab.

Foreign rulers ... the sea Or, “These grapes made many foreign rulers drunk. The vines spread far to the city Jazer and into the desert. The vines have spread down to the sea.”

Carmel A name that means, “God’s vineyard.” There are several cities and a mountain in north Israel with this name.

Kir Heres This is Kir Hareseth, a city in the country of Moab. Kir Heres means “a city chosen to be destroyed.”

- 12 The people of Moab will go to their places of worship.*
 The people will try to pray.
 But they will see what happened,
 and they will be too weak to pray.”

¹³The Lord said these things about Moab many times. ¹⁴And now the Lord says, “In three years (the way a hired helper counts time) all those people and the things they are proud of will be gone. There will be a few people left, but there will not be many.”

God’s Message to Aram

17 This is the sad message for Damascus.* The Lord says these things will happen to Damascus:

- “Damascus is now a city.
 But Damascus will be destroyed.
 Only destroyed buildings will be left in Damascus.
 2 People will leave the cities of Aroer.*
 Flocks of sheep will wander freely in those empty towns;
 There will be no person to bother them.
 3 The fort cities of Ephraim (*Israel*) will be destroyed.
 The government in Damascus will be finished.
 The same thing that happens to Israel, will happen to Aram.*
 All the important people will be taken away.”
 The Lord All-Powerful said those things would happen.
 4 At that time, Jacob’s (*Israel’s*) wealth will all be gone.
 Jacob will be like a man who was sick and became weak and thin.

⁵That time will be like grain harvest in Rephaim Valley.* The workers gather plants

places of worship Places for worshiping God or false gods. These places were usually on the hills and mountains.

Damascus A city in the country of Aram (Syria).

Aroer A place in the country of Aram (Syria).

Aram A country north of Israel.

Rephaim Valley A valley southwest of Jerusalem.

that grow in the field. Then they cut the heads of grain from the plants. And they collect the grain.

⁶That time will also be like the time people harvest olives. People knock olives from olive trees. But a few olives are usually left at the top of the tree. Four or five olives are left on some of the top branches. It will be the same for those cities. The Lord All-Powerful said those things.

⁷At that time, people will look up to [God], the One who made them. Their eyes will see the Holy One of Israel. ⁸The people will not trust the great things they have made. They will not go to the special gardens* and altars* [they made for false gods].

⁹At that time, all the fort cities will be empty. Those cities will be like the mountains and the forests* in the land before the people of Israel came. [In the past,] all the people ran away because the people of Israel were coming. [In the future,] the country will be empty again. ¹⁰This will happen because you have forgotten the God who saves you. You have not remembered that God is your place of safety.

You brought some very good grapevines from faraway places. You can plant those grapevines, but those plants will not grow. ¹¹You will plant your grapevines one day and try to make them grow. The next day the plants will begin to grow. But at harvest time, you will go to gather the fruit from the plants, and you will see that everything is dead. A sickness will kill all the plants.

- ¹² Listen to the many, many people!
They are crying loud like the noise
from the sea.
Listen to the noise.
It is like the crashing
and crashing of waves in the sea.

- ¹³ [And the people will be like those waves—]
God will speak harshly to the people,
and they will run away.

special gardens Gardens where people worshiped false gods.

altars These might be altars for burning incense or they might be altars for worshipping a special false god.

mountains and the forests This might mean “The Horite and Amorite people.”

The people will be like chaff*
being chased by the wind.

The people will be like tumbleweeds*
being chased by a storm.

The wind blows and the weeds go far away.

- ¹⁴ That night, the people will be frightened.
Before morning, nothing will be left.
So our enemies will get nothing.
They will come to our land,
but nothing will be there.

God's Message to Ethiopia

18 Look at the land along the rivers of Ethiopia.* [The land is filled with insects; you can hear] their buzzing wings. ²That land sends people across the sea in reed boats.*

Fast messengers, go to the people that are tall and strong! (People in all places are afraid of these tall and strong people. They are a powerful nation. Their nation defeats other nations. They are in a country divided by rivers.) ³Warn those people that something bad will happen to them.] All the people in the world will see this thing happen to that nation. People will see this thing clearly like a flag raised on a mountain. All the people living on earth will hear about the thing that happens to these tall people. They will hear it clearly like the noise from a horn before a battle.

⁴The Lord said, “I will be in the place prepared for me.* I will quietly watch these things happen: ⁵On a beautiful summer day, at noon, people will be resting. (It will be during the hot harvest time when there is no rain, but only early morning dew.) Then something terrible will happen. The time will be after the flowers have bloomed. The new grapes will be budding and growing. But before harvest, the enemy will come and cut the plants. The enemy will break the vines

chaff The seed coverings and stems separated from the seeds of plants like wheat or barley. Farmers saved the seeds and let the wind blow the useless chaff away.

tumbleweeds A small plant with short roots. When a strong wind blows, the plant is pulled loose and blown away.

Ethiopia Also called Cush, a country in Africa, by the Red Sea.

reed boats These boats were made by tying many, many reeds (a type of water plant) together.

the place prepared for me Probably the temple in Jerusalem.

and throw them away. ⁶The vines will be left for the birds from the mountains and the wild animals to eat. Birds will live on the vines during the summer. And that winter, wild animals will eat the vines.”

⁷At that time, a special offering will be brought to the Lord All-Powerful. The offering will come from the people that are tall and strong. (People in all places are afraid of these tall and strong people. They are a powerful nation. Their nation defeats other nations. They are in a country divided by rivers.) This offering will be brought to the Lord’s place, Mount Zion.*

God’s Message to Egypt

19The sad message about Egypt: Look! The Lord is coming on a fast cloud. The Lord will enter Egypt, and all the false gods of Egypt will shake [with fear. Egypt was brave, but that courage will melt away like hot wax.

²[God says,] “I will cause the people of Egypt to fight against themselves. Men will fight their brothers. Neighbors will be against neighbors. Cities will be against cities. States will be against states.* ³The people of Egypt will be confused. The people will ask their false gods and wise men what they should do. The people will ask their wizards and magicians. But their advice will be worthless.”

⁴The Master, the Lord All-Powerful, says, “I (*God*) will give Egypt to a hard master. A powerful king will rule over the people. ⁵The Nile River will become dry. The water will be gone from the sea. ⁶All the rivers will smell very bad.* The canals in Egypt will become dry and the water will be gone. All the water plants will rot. ⁷All the plants along the river banks will die and blow away. Even the plants at the widest part of the river will be dead.

⁸“The fishermen, all the people that catch fish from the Nile River, will become sad and they will cry. They depend on the Nile River

for their food, but it will be dry. ⁹All the people that make cloth will be very, very sad. These people need flax* to make linen.* [But the river will be dry, and these plants will not grow.] ¹⁰The people that make dams to save water will have no work, so they will be sad.

¹¹“The leaders of the city Zoan are fools. Pharaoh’s ‘wise advisers’ give wrong advice. Those leaders say they are wise. They say they are from the old family of the kings. But they are not wise like they think.”

¹²Egypt, where are your wise men? Those wise men should learn what the Lord All-Powerful has planned for Egypt. They should be the people to tell you what will happen.

¹³The leaders of Zoan have been fooled. The leaders of Noph have believed false things. So the leaders lead Egypt the wrong way. ¹⁴The Lord made the leaders confused. They wander and lead Egypt in the wrong ways. Everything the leaders do is wrong. They are like drunk people rolling with sickness on the ground. ¹⁵There is nothing the leaders can do. (These leaders are “the heads and the tails.” They are “the tops and the stalks of plants.”)*

¹⁶At that time, the Egyptians will be like scared women. They will be afraid of the Lord All-Powerful. The Lord will raise his arm to punish the people, and they will be afraid. ¹⁷The land of Judah will be a place for all the people in Egypt to fear. Any person in Egypt that hears the name Judah will be scared. This will happen because the Lord All-Powerful has planned terrible things to happen to Egypt. ¹⁸At that time, there will be five cities in Egypt where people speak the language of Canaan (*the Jewish language*). One of these cities will be named “Destruction City.”*

The people will promise to follow the Lord All-Powerful. ¹⁹At that time, there will be an altar* for the Lord in the middle of Egypt. At the border of Egypt there will be a monument

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on.

Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

States will be against states Literally, kingdom will be against kingdom. This means Egyptians will fight other Egyptians.

smell very bad In Hebrew this is like a name for the Nile River.

flax A plant used to make linen.

linen A type of cloth.

the heads and ... stalks of plants See Isa. 9:14–15.

Destruction City This name is like a name meaning “Sun City.” This is probably the city On (Heliopolis).

altar A stone table used for burning sacrifices as gifts to God.

to show honor to the Lord. ²⁰This will be a sign to show that the Lord All-Powerful does powerful things. Any time the people cry for help from the Lord, the Lord will send help. The Lord will send a person to save and defend the people. That person will rescue the people from other people that do wrong things to them.

²¹At that time, the people in Egypt will truly know the Lord. The people of Egypt will love God. The people will serve God and give many sacrifices.* They will make promises* to the Lord. And they will keep those promises.

²²The Lord will punish the people of Egypt. And then the Lord will heal (*forgive*) them, and they will come back to the Lord. The Lord will listen to their prayers and heal (*forgive*) them.

²³At that time, there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria.* Then people from Assyria will go to Egypt, and people from Egypt will go to Assyria. Egypt will work with Assyria.*

²⁴At that time, Israel, Assyria, and Egypt will join together and control the land. This will be a blessing for the land. ²⁵The Lord All-Powerful will bless these countries. He will say, “Egypt, you are my people. Assyria, I made you. Israel, I own you. You are all blessed!”

Assyria Will Defeat Egypt and Ethiopia

20 Sargon* was the king of Assyria.* Sargon sent Tarton* to Ashdod to fight against that city. Tarton went there and captured the city. ²At that time, the Lord spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz. The Lord said, “Go, take the cloth of sadness off your waist. Take your shoes off your feet.” Isaiah obeyed the Lord. And Isaiah walked around without clothes and without shoes.

³Then the Lord said, “Isaiah has walked around without clothes and without shoes for three years. This is a sign for Egypt and

Ethiopia. ⁴The king of Assyria* will defeat Egypt and Ethiopia. Assyria will take prisoners and lead them away from their countries. The old people and young people will be led without clothes and without shoes. They will be completely naked. The people from Egypt will be shamed. ⁵People looked to Ethiopia for help. Those people will be broken. People were amazed by Egypt’s glory. Those people will be shamed.”

⁶Those people living near the sea will say, “We trusted those countries to help us. We ran to them so they would rescue us from the king of Assyria.* But look at them. Those countries have been captured, so how will we be able to escape?”

God’s Message to Babylon

21 The sad message about the Desert of the Sea:*

Something is coming from the desert.

It is coming like wind blowing
from the Negev.*

It is coming from a terrible country.

² I have seen something very terrible
that will happen.

I see traitors* turning against you.

I see people taking your wealth.

Elam, go and fight against the people!

Media, put your armies around the city
and defeat it!

I will end all the evil things in that city.

³I saw those terrible things, and now I am scared. My stomach hurts because of my fear. That pain is like the pain of giving birth. The things I hear make me very afraid. The things I see make me shake with fear. ⁴I am worried and I am shaking from fear. My pleasant evening has become a night of fear.

⁵ _┌ The people think everything is fine.

The people are saying,_┐

“Prepare the table!

Eat and Drink!”

sacrifices Gifts to God. Sometimes these were special kinds of animals that were killed and burned on an altar.

promises A special kind of promise to God. See Lev. 22:18–33.

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

Egypt will work with Assyria Or, Egypt will worship with Assyria.

Sargon A king of Assyria. He was king about 721–705 B.C.

Tarton An Assyrian military commander.

Desert of the Sea Probably Babylon.

Negev The desert area south of Judah.

traitors People that turn against their country, friends, or family and do bad things to them.

⌊At the same time
the soldiers are saying,⌋
“Post the guard!
Officers, get up
and polish your shields!”

⁶My Master said to me, “Go find a man to guard this city. He must report whatever he sees. ⁷If the guard sees rows of horse soldiers, donkeys, or camels, the guard should listen carefully—very carefully.”

⁸⌊Then one day, the guard called out the warning,⌋ “Lion!” ⌊The guard said,⌋ “My Master, every day I have been in the watchtower* watching. Every night I have been standing and guarding, but ... ⁹Look! They are coming! I see rows of men and horse soldiers.”

⌊Then a messenger,⌋ said,
“Babylon ⌊has been defeated,⌋
Babylon has fallen to the ground.
All the statues of her false gods
have been thrown to the ground
and have broken to pieces.”

¹⁰⌊Isaiah said,⌋ “My people, I have told you everything that I heard from the Lord All-Powerful, the God of Israel. You will be crushed like grain on a threshing floor.*

God’s Message to Edom

¹¹The sad message about Dumah.*
Someone called me from Seir (*Edom*).
He said,
“Guard, how much of the night is left?
How much longer will it be night!”

¹² The guard answered,
“Morning is coming,
But then night will come again.
If you have something to ask,
then come back* and ask.”

watchtower A tall building where guards stood and watched to see if anyone was coming near their city.
threshing floor A place where grain is walked on to remove the hulls from the grain.
Dumah Edom. This Hebrew word means “silence” or “destruction.”
come back This can also mean “change your heart, repent.”

God’ Message to Arabia

¹³The sad message about Arabia.
A caravan* from Dedan spent the night
near some trees in Arabian desert.

¹⁴ They gave water to some thirsty travelers.
The people of Tema gave food
to some people that were traveling.

¹⁵ Those people were running from swords
that were ready to kill.
They were running from bows
that were ready to shoot.
They were running from a hard battle.

¹⁶The Lord, my Master, told me those things would happen. The Lord said, “In one year, (the way a hired helper counts time) all Kedar’s* glory will be gone. ¹⁷At that time, only a few of the archers,* the great soldiers of Kedar, will be left alive.” The Lord, the God of Israel, told me those things.

God’s Message to Jerusalem

22 The sad message about the Valley of Vision:*

What is wrong with you people?
Why are you hiding on your housetops?

² ⌊In the past,⌋ this city was a very busy city.
This city was very noisy—
and very happy.
⌊But now, things have changed,⌋
Your people have been killed—
but not with swords.
The people died—
but not while fighting.

³ All of your leaders ran away together.
But they have all been captured—
and without bows.
All the leaders ran far away together.
But they have been captured.

caravan A group of traders and their animals that carry wealth from one place to another.
Kedar’s A country east of Israel.
archers Soldiers that use bows and arrows in war.
Valley of Vision This probably means one of the valleys near Jerusalem.

4 So I say,
 “Don’t look at me!
 Let me cry!
 Don’t rush to comfort me about
 the destruction of Jerusalem.”

⁵The Lord has chosen a special day. On that day there will be riots and confusion. People will trample (*walk on*) each other in the Valley of Vision.* The city walls will be pulled down. The people in the valley will be shouting at the people in the city on the mountain. ⁶The horse soldiers from Elam will take their bags of arrows and ride to battle. The people from Kir will make noise with their shields. ⁷The armies will meet in your special valley. The valley will be filled with chariots.* Horse soldiers will be put in front of the city gates. ⁸At that time, the people of Judah will want to use the weapons they keep at the Forest Palace.*

The enemy will pull down the walls protecting Judah. ⁹⁻¹¹The walls of the City of David will begin to crack, and you will see those cracks. So, you will count the houses, and you will use stones from the houses to fix the walls. You will make a place between the double walls for saving water from the old stream, and you will save the water.

You will do all this to protect yourselves. But you will not trust the God who made all these things. You will not see the One (*God*) who made all these things long ago.

¹²So, my Master, the Lord All-Powerful, will tell the people to cry and be sad _{for their dead friends}. People will shave their heads and wear clothes of sadness.

¹³But look! The people are happy now. The people are rejoicing. _{The people are saying:}

Kill the cattle and the sheep.
 We will celebrate.
 Eat your food and drink the wine.
 Eat and drink because tomorrow we die.

Valley of Vision This probably means the valley near Jerusalem.

chariots Small wagons used for war.

Forest Palace Or, Beth HaYaar, a city built by Solomon for storing his weapons and wealth.

¹⁴The Lord All-Powerful said these things to me and I heard it with my ears: “You are guilty of doing wrong things. And I promise, you will die before this guilt is forgiven.” My Master, the Lord All-Powerful said those things.

God’s Message to Shebna

¹⁵My Master, the Lord All-Powerful, told me these things: “Go to that servant Shebna. That servant is the palace manager. ¹⁶_{Ask that servant,} ‘What are you doing here? Is any person from your family buried here? Why are you making a grave here?’”

_{Isaiah said,} “Look at this man! He is making his grave in a high place. This man is cutting into rock to make his grave.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸“Man, the Lord will crush you. The Lord will roll you into _{a small} ball and throw you far away into the open arms of another country. And there you will die.”

_{The Lord said,} “You are very proud of your chariots.* But in that faraway land your new ruler will have better chariots. And your chariots will not look important in his palace. ¹⁹I will force you out of your important job here. Your new leader will take you away from your important job. ²⁰At that time, I will call for my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiah. ²¹I will take your robe and put it on that servant. I will give him your scepter.* I will give him the important job you have. That servant will be like a father to the people of Jerusalem and Judah’s family.

²²“I will put the key to David’s house around that man’s neck. If he opens a door, that door will stay opened. No person will be able to close it. If he closes a door, that door will stay closed. No person will be able to open it. That servant will be like a very honored chair in his father’s house. ²³I will make him strong like a nail that is hammered into a very strong board. ²⁴All the honored and important things of his father’s house will hang on him. All the adults and little children will depend on him. Those people will be like small dishes and large water bottles hanging on him.

scepter A special stick. Kings and leaders carried scepters to show they were rulers.

²⁵“At that time, the nail (*Shebna*) that is now hammered into a very strong board will become weak and it will break. That nail will fall to the ground and all the things hanging on that nail will be destroyed. Then everything I said in this message will happen.” (Those things will happen because the Lord said them.)

God’s Message To Lebanon

23 The sad message about Tyre: You ships from Tarshish,* be sad! Your harbor has been destroyed. (The people on these ships were told this news while on their way from the land of Kittim.)*

²You people living near the sea should stop and be sad. Tyre was the “Merchant* of Sidon.” That city by the sea sent businessmen across the seas, and those men filled you with riches. ³Those men traveled the seas looking for grain. Those men from Tyre bought the grain that grows near the Nile River, and they sold the grain to other nations.

⁴Sidon, you should be very sad. Why? Because now the Sea, and the Fort of the Sea* say:

I have no children.
 I have not felt the pain of birth.
 I have not given birth to children.
 I have not raised young men and women.
⁵ Egypt will hear the news about Tyre.
 This news will make Egypt hurt
 with sorrow.
⁶ You ships should return to Tarshish.*
 You people living near the sea
 should be sad.
⁷ In the past, you enjoyed the city of Tyre.
 That city has been growing
 since the beginning.
 People from that city have traveled
 far away to live.

ships from Tarshish This is probably a special type of cargo ship.

Kittim This could be the island of Cyprus or the island of Crete.

Merchant A businessman who buys and sells things for a living.

Fort of the Sea Another name for the city Tyre.

Tarshish A city far away from Israel, probably in Spain. Tarshish was famous for its large ships that sailed the Mediterranean Sea.

⁸ The city of Tyre has produced many leaders.
 Businessmen from that city are like princes.
 The people that buy and sell things
 are honored everywhere.

So who made plans against Tyre?

⁹ It was the Lord All-Powerful.

He decided to make them not important.

¹⁰ You ships from Tarshish should go back
 to your country.

Cross the sea like it is a small river.

No person will stop you now.

¹¹ The Lord has stretched his arm
 over the sea.

The Lord is gathering kingdoms
 to fight against Tyre.

The Lord commands Canaan*

to destroy [Tyre],
 her place of safety.

¹² The Lord says,

“Virgin Daughter of Sidon,*

you will be destroyed.

You will not rejoice any more.”

┌ But the people of Tyre say,┐

“Cyprus* will help us!”

But if you cross the sea to Cyprus,
 you will not find a place to rest.

¹³ ┌ So the people of Tyre say,┐

“The people of Babylon will help us!”

But look at the land of the Chaldeans!*

Babylon is not a country now.

Assyria* attacked Babylon and built war
 towers around it.

The soldiers took everything from
 the beautiful houses.

Assyria made Babylon
 a place for wild animals.

They changed Babylon
 into a place of ruins.

¹⁴ So, be sad, you ships from Tarshish.*

Your place of safety (*Tyre*)
 will be destroyed.

Canaan The land where the Canaanite people lived. This includes part of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria.

Virgin Daughter of Sidon The city Sidon.

Cyprus Literally, “Kittim.” This could also mean “Crete.”

Chaldeans The people of the land of Babylon.

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

¹⁵People will forget about Tyre for 70 years. (That is, about the length of a certain king's rule.) After 70 years, Tyre will be like the prostitute* in this song:

¹⁶ Oh woman that men forgot,
take your harp and walk through the city.
Play your song well.
Sing your song often.
Then maybe people will remember you.

¹⁷After 70 years, the Lord will review Tyre's case, and he will give her a decision. Tyre will again have trade. Tyre will be like a prostitute* for all the nations on earth. ¹⁸But Tyre will not keep the money she earns. Tyre's profit from her trade will be saved for the Lord. Tyre will give that profit to the people that serve the Lord. So the Lord's servants will eat until they are full, and they will wear nice clothes.

God Will Punish Israel

24 Look! The Lord will destroy this land. The Lord will completely clean everything from the land. The Lord will force the people to go far away.

²At that time, the common people and the priests will be the same. Slaves and masters will be the same. Women slaves and their women masters will be the same. The buyers and sellers will be the same. The people that borrow and the people that lend will be the same. The bankers and the people that owe the bank will be the same. ³All the people will be forced out of the land. The wealth will all be taken. This will happen because the Lord commanded it. ⁴The country will be empty and sad. The world will be empty and weak. The great leaders of the people in this land will become weak.

⁵The people on the land have made the land dirty. [How did this happen?] The people did wrong things against God's teaching. The people did not obey God's laws. The people made an agreement with God a long time ago,

but those people broke their agreement with God. ⁶The people living in this land are guilty of doing wrong. So God promised to destroy the land. The people will be punished. Only a few people will survive.

⁷The grapevines are dying. The new wine is bad. In the past, people were happy. But now those people are sad. ⁸People have stopped showing their joy. All the happy sounds have stopped. The happy music from the drums and harps has ended. ⁹People don't sing happy songs while they drink their wine. The beer now tastes bitter to the person drinking it.

¹⁰"Total Confusion" is a good name for this city. The city has been destroyed. People can't enter the houses. The doors are blocked. ¹¹People still ask for wine in the market places. But all the happiness is gone. Joy has been carried far away. ¹²Only destruction is left for the city. Even the gates are crushed.

¹³ At harvest time, people knock olives from olive trees.
But, a few olives are left in the trees.
It will be like that in this land
among the nations.

¹⁴ The people that are left will
begin shouting.
They will be louder than the noise
from the ocean.
They will be happy because of
the Lord's greatness.

¹⁵ Those people will say,
"People in the east, praise the Lord!
People in faraway lands,
praise the name
of the Lord God of Israel."

¹⁶ We will hear songs of praise for God from every place on earth.
These songs will praise the Good God.
But I say;
"Enough! I have had enough!
The things I see are terrible.
Traitors* are turning against people
and hurting them.

prostitute A woman that sells her body for sex. Sometimes this also means a person that stops following God.

Traitors People that turn against their country, friends, or family and do bad things to them.

- 17 I see danger for the people living
in this land.
I see fear, holes, and traps for them.
- 18 People will hear about danger
and they will be scared.
Some of the people will run away.
But they will fall into holes
and be trapped.
Some of those people
will climb out of the holes,
but they will be caught in another trap.”
The flood gates in the sky above will open,
and the floods will begin.
The foundations of the earth will shake.
- 19 There will be earthquakes.
And the earth will split open.
- 20 The sins of the world are very heavy.
So the earth will fall under that weight.
The earth will shake like an old house.
The earth will fall like a drunk person.
The earth will not be able to continue.
- 21 At that time, the Lord will judge
the heavenly armies in heaven
and the earthly kings on earth.
- 22 Many people will be gathered together.
Some of them have been locked in the Pit.
Some of them have been in prison.*
But finally, after much time,
they will be judged.
- 23 The Lord will rule as king
on Mount Zion* in Jerusalem.
His Glory* will be before the elders.*
His Glory will be so bright that
the moon will be embarrassed,
the sun will be ashamed.

A Song of Praise to God

25 Lord, you are my God.
I honor you and praise your name.
You have done amazing things.

Pit ... prison This is probably “Sheol,” the grave.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on.
Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

His Glory The “Glory of the Lord,” one of the forms God used
when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.
See Ex. 40:34–36.

elders Older men that were city leaders; they helped make
decisions for the people.

- The words you said long ago
are completely true.
Everything has happened
exactly as you said it would.
- 2 You have destroyed the city.
It was a city protected by strong walls.
But now it is only a pile of rocks.
The foreign palace has been destroyed.
It will never be built again.
- 3 People from powerful nations
will honor you.
Powerful people from strong cities
will fear you.
- 4 Lord, you are a safe place
for poor people that have needs.
Many problems begin to defeat
these people,
but you protect them.
Lord, you are like a house
protecting people
from floods and heat.
Troubles are like terrible winds and rain.
The rain hits the wall and runs down,
but the people in the house are not hurt.
- 5 The enemy shouts and makes noise.
The terrible enemy shouts challenges.
But you, God, will stop them.
In the desert during the summer
plants wilt and fall to the ground.
In the same way, you will defeat the enemy
and force them to their knees.
Thick clouds stop the summer heat.
In the same way, you will stop the shouts
of the terrible enemy.

God’s Banquet for His Servants

⁶At that time, the Lord All-Powerful will
give a feast for all the people on this mountain.
At the feast, there will be the best foods and
wines. The meat will be tender and good.

⁷But now, there is a veil* covering all
nations and people. This veil is called,
“death.” ⁸But death will be destroyed
forever.* And the Lord my Master will wipe

veil A piece of cloth used to cover a person’s face.

death will be destroyed forever This can also be translated,
“death will be swallowed in victory.”

away every tear from every face. [In the past,] all of his people were sad. But God will take away that sadness from the earth. All of this will happen because the Lord said it would.

- 9 At that time, people will say,
 “Here is our God!
 He is the One we have been waiting for.
 He has come to save us.
 We have been waiting for our Lord.
 So we will rejoice and be happy
 when the Lord saves us.”
- 10 The Lord’s power is on this mountain.
 And Moab* will be defeated.
 The Lord will trample (*walk on*) the enemy.
 It will be like walking on straw
 in a pile of waste.
- 11 The Lord will spread his arms
 like a person that is swimming.
 Then the Lord will gather
 all the things the people are proud of.
 The Lord will gather
 all the beautiful things they made.
 And he will throw those things away.
- 12 The Lord will destroy the people’s
 high walls and safe places.
 The Lord will throw them down
 into the dust on the ground.

A Song of Praise to God

26 At that time, people will sing this song
 in Judah:

- [The Lord] gives us our salvation.
 We have a strong city.
 Our city has strong walls and defenses.
- 2 Open the gates
 and the good people will enter.
 Those people obey God’s good teachings.
- 3 Lord, you give true peace
 to people who depend on you,
 to people who trust you.
- 4 So, trust the Lord always.
 Why? Because in the Lord Yah,* you
 have a place of safety forever!

Moab Or “the enemy.” This name is like a Hebrew word meaning, “enemy.”

Lord Yah Or, “YAH YAHWEH,” a Hebrew name for God.

- 5 But the Lord will destroy the proud city.
 And he will punish the people
 living there.
 The Lord will throw that high city down
 to the ground.
 It will fall into the dust.
- 6 Then poor and humble people will walk
 on those ruins.
- 7 Honesty is the way of living for
 good people.
 Good people follow the way
 that is straight and true.
 And God, you make that way smooth
 and easy to follow.
- 8 But Lord, we are waiting for your
 way of justice.
 Our souls want to remember
 you and your name.
- 9 My soul wants to be with you at night.
 And the spirit in me wants to be with you
 at the dawning of every new day.
 When your way of justice comes
 to the land,
 people will learn the right way of living.
- 10 An evil person will not learn to do good
 if you show him only kindness.
 An evil person will do bad things,
 even if he lives in a good world.
 That evil person might never see
 the Lord’s greatness.
- 11 But Lord, get ready to punish those people.
 Surely they will see it, won’t they?
 Lord, show the evil people the strong love*
 that you have for your people.
 Surely the evil people will be ashamed.
 Surely your enemies will be burned
 in their own fire (*evil*).
- 12 Lord, you have succeeded in doing
 all the things that we tried to do.
 So give us peace.

God Will Give New Life to His People

- 13 Lord, you are our God.
 But in the past, we followed other lords.*

strong love This Hebrew word means strong feelings like love, hate, anger, zeal, or jealousy.

lords The Hebrew word can mean “husbands, lords,” or “Baals” (false gods that the Canaanite people worshiped).

We belonged to other masters.
 But now we want people to remember
 only one name, your name!
 14 Those dead [lords*] will not come to life.
 Those ghosts will not rise from death.
 You decided to destroy them.
 And you destroyed everything that
 makes us think about them.
 15 You have helped the nation you love.
 You stopped other people
 from defeating that nation.*
 16 Lord, people remember you
 when they are in trouble.
 People say quiet prayers to you
 when you punish them.
 17 Lord, when we are not with you,
 we are like a woman
 giving birth to a baby.
 She cries with birth pains.
 18 In the same way, we have pain.
 We give birth, but only to wind.
 We don't make new people
 for the world.
 We don't bring salvation to the land.
 19 [But the Lord says,]
 "Your people have died,
 but they will live again.
 The bodies of my people
 will rise from death.
 Dead people in the ground,
 stand and be happy!
 The dew covering you is like
 the dew sparkling in the light
 of a new day.
 It shows a new time is coming
 when the earth
 will give up the dead people
 that are in it."

Judgment: Reward or Punishment

20 My people, go into your rooms.
 Lock your doors.
 Hide in your rooms for a short time.
 Hide until God's anger is finished.

lords The Hebrew word can mean "husbands, lords," or "Baals" (false gods that the Canaanite people worshiped).

You have helped ... nation. Or, "You gathered together the nation you love, the nation that you drove away into faraway lands."

21 The Lord will leave his place*
 to judge the people of the world
 for the bad things they have done.
 The earth will show the blood
 of the people that have been killed.
 The earth will not cover the dead people
 any more.

27 At that time, the Lord will judge
 Leviathan,* the crooked snake.
 The Lord will use his great sword,
 his hard and powerful sword, to punish
 Leviathan, the coiled snake.
 The Lord will kill
 the large creature in the sea.*
 2 At that time, people will sing
 about the pleasant vineyard.*
 3 "I, the Lord, will care for that garden.
 I will water the garden at the right time.
 I will guard that garden day and night.
 No one will hurt that garden.
 4 I am not angry.
 But if there is war and someone builds
 a wall of thorn bushes,*
 then I will march to it and burn it.
 5 But if any person comes to me for safety
 and wants to make peace with me,
 then let him come,
 and make peace with me.
 6 People will come [to me].
 Those people will help Jacob
 [to be strong]
 like a plant with good roots.
 Those people will cause Israel to grow
 like a plant beginning to bloom.
 Then the land will be filled
 with [the children of Israel]
 like fruit from plants."

his place Probably the temple in Jerusalem.

Leviathan The Dragon, or giant snake. Some ancient stories say the Dragon was an enemy of God.

large creature in the sea This is probably Rahab. Some ancient stories tell of Rahab fighting with God.

vineyard A garden for growing grapes.

a wall of thorn bushes Literally, "thorns and thistles." Farmers planted walls of thorn bushes around vineyards to protect them from animals. See Isa. 5:5.

God Will Send Israel Away

⁷How will the Lord punish his people? In the past, enemies hurt the people. Will the Lord hurt them that same way? In the past, many people were killed. Will the Lord do the same thing and kill many people?*

⁸The Lord will settle his argument with Israel by sending her far away. The Lord will speak harshly to Israel. His words will burn like the hot desert wind.

⁹How will Jacob's guilt be forgiven? What will happen so his sins can be taken away? These things will happen; The rocks of the altar will be crushed to dust; the statues* and altars* for worshiping false gods will all be destroyed.

¹⁰At that time, the great city will be empty—it will be like a desert. All the people will be gone—they will run away. That city will be like an open pasture. Young cattle will eat grass there. The cattle will eat leaves from the branches of the vines. ¹¹The vines will become dry. And the branches will break off. Women will use those branches for firewood.

The people refuse to understand. So God, their Maker, will not comfort them. Their Maker will not be kind to them.

¹²At that time, the Lord will begin separating his people from others. He will begin at the Euphrates River.* The Lord will gather all his people from the Euphrates River to the River of Egypt.*

You people of Israel will be gathered together one by one. ¹³Many of my people are now lost in Assyria.* Some of my people have run away to Egypt. But at that time, a great trumpet will be blown. And all those people will come back to Jerusalem. Those

How ... people Or, "Israel was not hurt as badly as the enemy who tried to hurt it. Not as many of its people were killed as were those who tried to kill them."

statues Idols, statues of false gods that people worshiped.

altar(s) A stone table used for burning sacrifices as gifts to God.

separating his people ... Euphrates River Literally, "He will begin threshing at the stream of the river." This Hebrew word for stream is like the word meaning "head of grain."

Euphrates River to the River of Egypt These are the borders of the land God promised to give to Israel.

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

people will bow down before the Lord on that holy mountain.

Warnings to North Israel

28 Look at Samaria!
The drunk people of Ephraim
are proud of that city.
That city sits on a hill
with a rich valley around it.
The people of Samaria think their city
is a beautiful crown of flowers.
But they are drunk with wine.
And this "Beautiful Crown"
is just a dying plant.

- ² Look, my Master has a person
that is strong and brave.
That person will come into the country
like a storm of hail and rain.
He will come like a storm
into the country.
He will be like a powerful river of water
flooding the country.
He will throw that crown (*Samaria*)
down to the ground.
- ³ The drunk people of Ephraim are proud of
their "Beautiful Crown."
But that city will be walked on.
- ⁴ That city sits on a hill
with a rich valley around it.
And that "Beautiful Crown of Flowers"
is just a dying plant.
That city will be like the first figs
of summer.
When a person sees one of those figs,
he quickly picks it and eats it.

⁵At that time, the Lord All-Powerful will become the "Beautiful Crown." He will be the "Wonderful Crown of Flowers" for his people that are left. ⁶Then the Lord will give wisdom to the judges that rule his people. The Lord will give strength to the people in battles at the city gates. ⁷But now those leaders are drunk. The priests and prophets are all drunk with wine and beer. They stumble and fall down. The prophets are drunk when they see their dreams. The judges are drunk when they make their decisions. ⁸Every table is covered with vomit. There is not a clean place anywhere.

God Wants to Help His People

⁹The Lord is trying to teach a lesson to the people. The Lord is trying to make the people understand his teachings. But the people are like little babies. They are like babies that were at their mother's breast only a very short time ago. ¹⁰So the Lord speaks to them like they are babies:

Saw lasaw saw lasaw
Qaw laqaw qaw laqaw
Ze'er sham ze'er sham.*

¹¹The Lord will use this strange way of talking and he will use other languages to speak to these people.

¹²In the past God spoke to those people, and he said, "Here is a resting place. This is the peaceful place. Let the tired people come and rest. This is the place of peace."

But the people did not want to listen to God. ¹³So the words from God were like a foreign language:*

Saw lasaw saw lasaw.
Qaw laqaw qaw laqaw.
Ze'er sham ze'er sham."*

The people did like they wanted to do. So the people fell back and were defeated. The people were trapped and captured.

No One Escapes God's Judgment

¹⁴You leaders in Jerusalem should listen to the Lord's message. But now you refuse to listen to him. ¹⁵You people say, "We have made an agreement with death. We have a contract with Sheol—the place of death. So we will not be punished. Punishment will pass us without hurting us. We will hide behind our tricks and lies."

¹⁶Because of those things, the Lord my Master says, "I will put a rock—a cornerstone—

Saw lasaw ... ze'er sham This is probably a Hebrew song to teach little children how to write. It sounds like baby talk or a foreign language, but it can also be translated, "A command here, a command there. A rule here, a rule there. A lesson here, a lesson there."

foreign language Or, "gibberish" or "baby talk."

in the ground in Zion.* This will be a very precious stone.* Everything will be built on this very important rock. Any person that trusts [in that rock] will not be disappointed.

¹⁷"[People use] a measuring line with a weight [to show a wall is straight. In the same way], I will use justice and goodness [to show what is right].

"You evil people are trying to hide behind your lies and tricks. But you will be punished. It will be like a storm or a flood is coming to destroy your hiding places. ¹⁸Your agreement with death will be erased. Your contract with Sheol* will not help you.

"Some person will come and punish you. He will make you like the dirt he walks on. ¹⁹That person will come and take you away. Your punishment will be terrible. Your punishment will come early in the morning, and it will continue late into the night.

²⁰"Then you will understand this story: A man tried to sleep on a bed that was too short for him. And he had a blanket that was not wide enough to cover him. [The bed and blanket were useless, and so were your agreements]."

²¹The Lord will fight like he did at Mount Perazim. The Lord will be angry like he was in Gibeon Valley.* Then the Lord will do the things he must do. The Lord will do some strange things. But he will finish his work. His work is a stranger's job. ²²Now, you must not fight against those things. If you do, the ropes around you will become tighter.

The words I heard will not change. Those words came from the Lord All-Powerful, the ruler of all the earth. And those things will be done.

The Lord Punishes Fairly

²³Listen closely to the message I am telling you. ²⁴Does a farmer plow his field all the

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

very precious stone This also means a stone has been tested and shown that it has no cracks.

Sheol This is the place where all people go when they die. Usually this means the grave, but it can mean the place where our spirits go.

Mount Perazim ... Gibeon Valley See 1 Chron. 14:8–17.

time? No! Does he work the soil all the time? No! ²⁵A farmer prepares the ground, and then he plants the seed. A farmer plants different kinds of seeds different ways. A farmer scatters dill seeds. A farmer throws cummin seeds on the ground. And a farmer plants wheat in rows. A farmer plants barley in its special place, and he plants spelt* seeds at the edge of his field.

²⁶Our God is using this to teach you a lesson. [This example] shows us that God is fair when he punishes his people. ²⁷Does a farmer use large boards with sharp teeth to crush dill seeds? No! Does a farmer use a wagon to crush cummin seeds? No! A farmer uses a small stick to break the hulls from these seeds of grain.

²⁸When a woman makes bread, she works and presses the dough with her hands, but she does not do this forever. The Lord punishes his people in the same way. He will scare them with the wagon wheel, but he will not crush them completely. He will not allow many horses* to trample (*walk on*) them. ²⁹This lesson comes from the Lord All-Powerful. The Lord gives wonderful advice. God is truly wise.

God's Love for Jerusalem

29 [God says,] “Look at Ariel!* Ariel, the city where David camped. Her holidays have continued year after year. ²I have punished Ariel. That city has been filled with sadness and crying. But she has always been my Ariel. ³“I have put armies all around you, Ariel. I raised war towers against you. ⁴You were [defeated and] pulled to the ground. Now, I hear your voice rising from the ground like the voice of a ghost. Your words come like a quiet voice from the dirt.”

⁵There are many strangers there— like very small pieces of dust. There are many cruel people—like chaff* blowing in the wind. ⁶The

spelt A type of grain.

horses This word also means “horse soldiers.”

Ariel A name for the altar at the temple in Jerusalem. This name means “hearth” or “fireplace.”

chaff The seed coverings and stems separated from the seeds of plants like wheat or barley. Farmers saved the seeds and let the wind blow the useless chaff away.

Lord All-Powerful punished you with earthquakes, thunder, and loud noises. There were storms, strong winds, and fire that burned and destroyed. ⁷Many, many nations fought against Ariel.* It has been like a terrible dream in the night. Armies have surrounded Ariel and punished her. ⁸But it will also be like a dream to those armies. They will not get what they want. It will be like a hungry man dreaming about food. When the man wakes up, he is still hungry. It will be like a thirsty man dreaming about water. When the man wakes up, he is still thirsty.

The same thing is true about
all the nations

fighting against Zion.*

Those nations will not get the things
that they want.

⁹ Be surprised and amazed!

You will become drunk—
but not from wine.

Look and be amazed!

You will stumble and fall—
but not from beer.

¹⁰ The Lord will make you sleepy.

The Lord will close your eyes.

(The prophets are your eyes.)

The Lord will cover your heads.

(The prophets are your heads.)

¹¹[I tell you these things will happen, but you don't understand me. My words] are like the words in a book that is closed and sealed.* You can give the book to a person that can read, and tell that person to read the book. But that person will say, “I can't read the book. It is closed and I can't open it.” ¹²Or you can give the book to a person that can't read, and tell that person to read the book. That person will say, “I can't read the book because I don't know how to read.”

¹³My Master says, “These people say they love me. They show honor to me with words from their mouths. But their hearts are far from me. The honor they show me is nothing

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

sealed A piece of clay or wax was put on the closed book to show the book should not be opened.

but human rules they have memorized. ¹⁴So I will continue to amaze these people by doing powerful and amazing things. Their wise men will lose their wisdom. Their wise men will not be able to understand.”

¹⁵Those people try to hide things from the Lord. They think the Lord will not understand. Those people do their evil things in darkness. Those people tell themselves. “No person can see us. No person will know who we are.”

¹⁶You are confused. You think the clay is equal to the potter.* You think that something made can tell the person that made it, “You did not make me!” This is like a pot telling its maker, “You don’t understand.”

A Better Time Is Coming

¹⁷This is the truth: After a short time, Lebanon will have rich soil like Mount Carmel.* And Mount Carmel will be like a thick forest. ¹⁸The deaf will hear the words in the book. The blind will see through the darkness and fog. ¹⁹The Lord will make the poor people happy. The poor people will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

²⁰This will happen when the mean and cruel people are finished. It will happen when those people that enjoy doing bad things are gone. ²¹(Those people lie about good people. They try to trap people in court. They try to destroy innocent people.)

²²So the Lord speaks to Jacob’s family. (This is the Lord that made Abraham free.) The Lord says, “Now Jacob (*the people of Israel*) will not be embarrassed and ashamed. ²³He will see all his children, and he will say my name is holy. I made these children with my hands. And these children will say that the Holy One (*God*) of Jacob is very special. These children will respect the God of Israel. ²⁴Many of these people did not understand, so they did wrong things. These people did not understand, but they will learn their lesson.”

potter A worker that makes things from clay.

Mount Carmel A hill in north Israel very good for growing plants. This name means “God’s vineyard.”

Israel Should Trust God, Not Egypt

30The Lord said, “Look at these children. They don’t obey me. They make plans, but they don’t ask me to help them. They make agreements with other nations, but my Spirit does not want those agreements. These people are adding more and more sins to themselves. ²These children are going down to Egypt for help, but they did not ask me if that was the right thing to do. They hope they will be saved by the Pharaoh.* They want Egypt to protect them.

³“But I tell you, hiding in Egypt will not help you. Egypt will not be able to protect you. ⁴Your leaders have gone to Zoan* and your ambassadors have gone to Hanes.* ⁵But they will be disappointed. They are depending on a nation that can’t help them. Egypt is useless—Egypt will give no help. Egypt will cause only shame and embarrassment.”

God’s Message to Judah

⁶The sad message about the animals in the Negev:*

The Negev is a dangerous place. This land is full of lions, and adders,* and fast snakes.* [But some people are traveling through the Negev—they are going to Egypt.] Those people have put their wealth on the backs of donkeys. Those people have put their treasure on the backs of camels. [This means that] the people are depending on a nation that cannot help. ⁷That useless nation is Egypt. Egypt’s help will be worth nothing. So I call Egypt the “Do-Nothing Dragon.”

⁸Now write this on a sign so all people can see it. And write this in a book. Write these things for the last days. This will be far, far in the future:

⁹These people are like children that refuse to obey [their parents]. They lie and refuse to listen to the Lord’s teachings. ¹⁰They tell the prophets,

Pharaoh A title for the kings of Egypt.

Zoan A city in the country Egypt.

Hanes A city in the country Egypt.

Negev The desert area south of Judah.

adders Very poisonous snakes.

fast snakes Literally, “flying snakes.”

“Don’t see dreams* about things we should do! Don’t tell us the truth! Say nice things to us and make us feel good! See only good things for us! ¹¹Stop seeing things that will really happen! Get out of our way! Stop telling us about the Holy One of Israel.”

Judah’s Help Comes Only from God

¹²The Holy One (*God*) of Israel says, “You people have refused to accept this message from the Lord. You people want to depend on fighting and lies to help you. ¹³You are guilty of these things so you are like a tall wall with cracks in it. That wall will fall and break into small pieces. ¹⁴You will be like a large clay jar that breaks and becomes many, many small pieces. Those pieces are useless. You can’t use those pieces to get a hot coal from the fire or to get water from a pool in the ground.”

¹⁵The Lord my Master, the Holy One of Israel, says, “If you come back to me you will be saved. The only strength you have will come if you trust me. But you must be calm.”

But you don’t want to do that! ¹⁶You say, “No, we need horses to run away on!” That is true—you will run away on horses. But the enemy will chase you. And the enemy will be faster than your horses. ¹⁷One enemy will make threats and a thousand of your men will run away. Five enemies will make threats and all of you will run from them. The only thing that will be left of your army will be a flagpole on a hill.

¹⁸The Lord wants to show his mercy to you. The Lord is waiting. The Lord wants to rise and comfort you. The Lord God is fair, and every person that waits for the Lord’s help will be blessed (*happy*).

¹⁹The Lord’s people will live in Jerusalem on Mount Zion.* You people will not continue crying. The Lord will hear your crying and he will comfort you. The Lord will hear you, and he will help you.

dreams Or “visions.” Special kinds of dreams God used to speak to his prophets.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

God Will Help His People

²⁰In the past,¹ my Master (*God*) gave you sorrow and hurt—it was like the bread and water you ate every day. But God is your teacher, and he will not continue to hide from you. You will see your teacher with your own eyes. ²¹Then, if you do wrong and go (*live*) the wrong way (*to the right or to the left*), you will hear a voice behind you saying, “This is the right way. You should go this way!”

²²You have statues covered with silver and gold. Those false gods have made you dirty (*sinful*). But you will stop serving those false gods. You will throw away those gods like waste and dirty rags.*

²³At that time, the Lord will send rain for you. You will plant seeds in the ground, and the ground will grow food for you. You will have a very large harvest. You will have plenty of food in the fields for your animals. There will be large fields for your sheep. ²⁴Your cattle and donkeys will have all the food they need. There will be very much food. You will have to use shovels and pitchforks* to spread all the food* for your animals to eat. ²⁵Every mountain and hill will have streams filled with water. These things will happen after many people are killed and the towers are pulled down.

²⁶At that time, the light from the moon will be bright like the sun. The light from the sun will be seven times brighter than now. The light from the sun in one day will be like a full week. These things will happen when the Lord bandages his broken people and heals the hurts from their beatings.

²⁷Look! The Lord’s Name is coming from far away. His anger is like a fire with thick clouds of smoke. The Lord’s mouth is filled with anger, and his tongue is like a burning fire. ²⁸The Lord’s breath (*Spirit*) is like a great river—rising until it reaches the throat. The Lord will judge the nations. It will be like he

You will throw away ... dirty rags This also means “You will throw away those gods like menstrual clothes. You will say, ‘Go away!’”

pitchforks Tools for throwing or spreading hay.

food This was special food that had been allowed to ferment. This made the meat of the animal tender and good.

shakes them through the ‘Strainer of Destruction.’ The Lord will control them. It will be like a bit* that controls an animal is in the mouths of the people.

²⁹At that time, you will sing happy songs. That time_J will be like the nights when you begin a holiday. You are very happy while walking to the Lord’s mountain. You are happy while listening to the flute on the way to worship _Jthe Lord,_J the Rock* of Israel.

³⁰The Lord will cause all people to hear his great voice. The Lord will cause all people to see his powerful arm come down with anger. That arm will be like a great fire that burns everything. The Lord’s power will be like a great storm with much rain and hail. ³¹Assyria* will be afraid when he hears the Lord’s voice. The Lord will beat Assyria with a stick. ³²The Lord will beat Assyria, and it will be like playing music on drums and harps.* The Lord will defeat Assyria with his great arm (*power*).

³³Topheth* has been made ready for a long time. It is ready for the king.* It was made very deep and wide. There is a very big pile of wood and fire there. And the Lord’s breath (*Spirit*) will come like a stream of burning sulfur and burn it.

Israel Should Depend on God’s Power

31 Look at the people going down to Egypt for help. The people ask for horses. They think horses will save them. The people hope the chariots* and horse soldiers from Egypt will protect them. The people think they are safe because that army is very big. The people don’t trust the Holy One of Israel (*God*). The people don’t ask the Lord for help.

²But, it is the Lord who is wise. And it is the Lord who will bring trouble against them.

bit A piece of metal in a horse’s mouth used to make the horse go the right way.

Rock A name for God. It shows he is like a strong place of safety.

Assyria This was a powerful nation northeast of Israel.

harps Musical instruments with several strings.

Topheth Gehenna; the Valley of Hinnom. In this valley people killed their children to honor the false god, “Molech.”

king This is like the name of the false god, “Molech.”

chariots Small wagons used for war.

The people will not be able to change the Lord’s command. The Lord will rise and fight against the evil people (*Judah*). And the Lord will fight against the people (*Egypt*) that try to help them.

³The people of Egypt are only human—not God. The horses from Egypt are only animals—not spirit. The Lord will stretch out his arm and the helper (*Egypt*) will be defeated. And the people that wanted help (*Judah*) will fall. All those people will be destroyed together.

⁴The Lord told me: “When a lion or a lion’s cub catches an animal to eat, the lion stands over the dead animal and roars. At that time nothing can scare that great lion. If men come and yell at the lion, the lion will not be afraid. The men can make much noise, but the lion will not run away.”

In the same way, the Lord All-Powerful will come down to Mount Zion.* The Lord will fight on that hill. ⁵The Lord All-Powerful will defend* Jerusalem—like birds flying over their nests. The Lord will save her. The Lord will “pass over” and save Jerusalem.

⁶You children of Israel turned against God. You should come back to God. ⁷Then people would stop worshiping the gold and silver idols you made. You truly sinned when you made those idols.

⁸It is true that Assyria* will be defeated with a sword. But that sword will not be a man’s sword. Assyria will be destroyed. But that destruction will not come from a man’s sword. Assyria will run away from God’s sword. But the young men will be caught and made slaves. ⁹Their place of safety will be destroyed. Their leaders will be defeated and leave their flag.

The Lord said all those things. The Lord’s fireplace (*altar*) is on Zion.* The Lord’s oven (*altar*) is in Jerusalem.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

defend Literally, “fight on” or “fight against.”

Leaders Should Be Good and Fair

32 Listen to the things I say! A king should rule in a way that brings goodness. Leaders should make fair decisions when they lead the people. ² If this would happen, then the king* would be like a place to hide from the wind and rain. It would be like having streams of water in a dry land. It would be like a cool shadow from a large rock in a hot land. ³ People would turn to the king for help, and people would truly listen to the things he says. ⁴ People that are now confused would be able to understand. People that can't speak clearly now would be able to speak clearly and quickly. ⁵ Foolish people would not be called great men. People would not respect men that make secret plans.

⁶ A foolish person* says foolish things, and in his heart (*mind*), plans evil things to do. A foolish person wants to do things that are wrong. A foolish person says bad things about the Lord. A foolish person does not let hungry people eat food. A foolish person does not let thirsty people drink water. ⁷ That foolish person uses evil like a tool. He plans ways to take everything from poor people. That foolish person tells lies about the poor people. And his lies keep the poor people from being judged fairly.

⁸ But a good leader plans good things to do. And those good things make him a good leader.

Hard Times Are Coming

⁹ Some of you women are calm now. You feel safe. But you should stand and listen to the words I say. ¹⁰ You women feel safe now, but after one year you will be troubled. [Why?] Because you will not gather grapes next year—there will be no grapes to gather.

¹¹ Women, you are calm now, but you should be afraid! Women, you feel safe now, but you should be worried! Take off your nice clothes and put on your clothes of sadness. Wrap those clothes around your waist. ¹² Put

those clothes of sadness over your sorrow-filled breasts.

Cry because your fields are empty. Your vineyards* once gave grapes—but now they are empty. ¹³ Cry for the land of my people. Cry because only thorns and weeds will grow there. Cry for the city and for all the houses that were once filled with joy.

¹⁴ People will leave the capital city. The palace and towers will be left empty. People will not live in houses—they will live in caves. Wild donkeys and sheep will live in the city—animals will go there to eat grass.

^{15–16} This will continue until God gives us his Spirit from above. Now there is no goodness in the land—it is like a desert. [But in the future,] that desert will be like the land of Carmel*—fair judgment will live there. And Carmel will be like a green forest—goodness will live there. ¹⁷ That goodness will bring peace and safety forever. ¹⁸ My people will live in the beautiful field of peace. My people will live in tents of safety. They will live in calm and peaceful places.

¹⁹ But before these things happen, the forest must fall. That city must be defeated. ²⁰ Some of you people plant seeds near every stream of water. You let your cattle and donkeys walk around and eat freely. You people will be very happy.

Evil Causes Only More Evil

33 Look, you people make war and steal things from people, and those people never stole anything from you. You turn against people, and those people never turned against you. So when you stop stealing, other people will begin stealing from you. When you stop turning against people, other people will start turning against you.

[Then the people will say,]

² “Lord, be kind to us.

We have waited for your help.

Lord, give us strength every morning.

Save us when we are in trouble.

king Literally, “man.”

foolish person A person that does not follow God and his wise teachings.

vineyards Gardens for growing grapes.

Carmel A hill in north Israel very good for growing plants. This name means, “God’s vineyard.”

³ Your powerful voice scares people,
and they run away from you.
Your greatness causes the nations
to run away.”

⁴You people stole things in war. Those things will be taken from you. Many, many people will come and take your wealth. It will be like the times when locusts* come and eat all your crops.

⁵The Lord is very great. He lives in a very high place. The Lord fills Zion* with fairness and goodness.

⁶Jerusalem, you are rich—you are rich with wisdom and knowledge of God. You are rich with salvation. You respect the Lord and that makes you rich. So you can know that you will continue.

⁷But listen! The messengers* are crying outside. The messengers that bring peace are crying very hard. ⁸The roads are destroyed. No one is walking in the streets. People have broken the agreements they made. People refuse to believe the proof from witnesses.* No one respects other people. ⁹The land is sick and dying. Lebanon* is dying and Sharon Valley* is dry and empty. Bashan* and Carmel* once grew beautiful plants—but now those plants have stopped growing.

¹⁰The Lord says, “Now, I will stand and show my greatness. Now, I will become important to the people. ¹¹You people have done useless things. Those things are like hay and straw. They are worth nothing! Your spirit* will be like a fire and burn you. ¹²People will be burned until their bones

become lime.* The people will burn quickly like thorns and dry bushes.

¹³“You people in faraway lands, hear about the things I have done. You people that are near me, learn about my power.”

¹⁴The sinners in Zion* are afraid. The people that do wrong things shake with fear. They say, “Can any of us live through this fire that destroys? Who can live near this fire that burns forever?”*

¹⁵Good, honest people that refuse to hurt others for money—[they will live through that fire]. Those people refuse to take bribes. They refuse to listen to plans to murder other people. They refuse to look at plans for doing bad things. ¹⁶Those people will live safely in high places. They will be protected in high rock fortresses. Those people will always have food and water.

¹⁷Your eyes will see the King (*God*) in his beauty. You will see the great land. ^{18–19}You will think about the troubles you had in the past. You will think, “Where are those people from other countries? Those people spoke languages we could not understand. Where are those officials and tax collectors from other lands? Where are the spies that counted our defense towers? [They are all gone!]”

God Will Protect Jerusalem

²⁰Look at Zion*, the city of our religious holidays. Look at Jerusalem—that beautiful place of rest. Jerusalem is like a tent that will never be moved. The pegs that hold her in place will never be pulled up. Her ropes will never be broken. ^{21–23}Why? Because the Powerful Lord is there. That land is a place with streams and wide rivers. But there will be no enemy boats or powerful ships on those rivers. You men that work on those boats can quit your work with the ropes. You can’t make the mast* strong enough. You will not be able to open your sails. [Why?] Because

lime A white powder that is often used to make mortar or cement. It can be made by burning bones, shells, or limestone.

fire that ... burns forever This might mean God, the Fire (Light) of Israel.

mast The pole that holds the sail on a sailboat.

locusts Insects like grasshoppers. Locusts can destroy a large crop very quickly.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

messengers This word also means “angels.”

witnesses Literally, “cities.” The Hebrew word is like the word meaning “witnesses.”

Lebanon A country north of Israel. It was famous for its great cedar and pine trees.

Sharon Valley The low land along the coast of Palestine.

Bashan An area northeast of Israel.

Carmel A hill in north Israel very good for growing plants. This name means “God’s vineyard.”

spirit Or, “Spirit.”

the Lord is our judge.* The Lord makes our laws. The Lord is our king. He saves us. So the Lord will give us much wealth. Even crippled people will win great wealth in war. ²⁴No person living there will say, “I am sick.” The people living there are people whose sins are forgiven.

God Will Punish His Enemies

34 All you nations, come near and listen! All you people should listen closely. The earth and all the people on the earth should listen to these things. ²The Lord is angry at all the nations and their armies. The Lord will destroy them all. He will cause them all to be killed. ³Their bodies will be thrown outside. The stink will rise from the bodies, and the blood will flow down the mountains. ⁴The skies will be rolled shut like a scroll.* And the stars will die and fall like leaves from a vine or a fig tree. All the stars* in the sky will melt away. ⁵The Lord says, “This will happen when my sword in the sky is covered with blood.”

Look! The Lord’s sword will cut through Edom.* The Lord judged those people guilty, and they must die.* ⁶Why? Because the Lord decided there should be a time for killing in Bozrah* and in Edom. ⁷So the rams, the cattle, and the strong bulls will be killed. The land will be filled with their blood. The dirt will be covered with their fat.

⁸Those things will happen because the Lord has chosen a time for punishment. The Lord has chosen a year when people must pay for the wrong things they did to Zion.* ⁹Edom’s rivers will be like hot tar.* Edom’s

ground will be like burning sulfur.* ¹⁰The fires will burn day and night—no person will stop the fire. The smoke will rise from Edom forever. That land will be destroyed forever and ever. No people will ever travel through that land again. ¹¹Birds and small animals will own that land. Owls and ravens will live there. That land will be called “Empty Desert.”* ¹²The freemen* and leaders will all be gone. And there will be nothing left for them to rule.

¹³Thorns and wild bushes will grow in all the beautiful homes there. Wild dogs and owls will live in those homes. Wild animals will make their homes there. Big birds will live in the grasses that grow there. ¹⁴Wild cats will live there with hyenas.* And wild goats* will call to their friends. Night animals* will look there and find a place to rest. ¹⁵Snakes will make their homes there. Snakes will lay their eggs there. The eggs will open, and small snakes will crawl from those dark places. Birds that eat dead things will gather like women visiting their friends.

¹⁶Look at the Lord’s scroll.* Read what is written there. Nothing is missing. It is written in that scroll that those animals will be together. God said he will gather them together. So God’s Spirit will gather them together. ¹⁷God decided what he should do with them. Then God chose a place for them. God drew a line and showed them their land. So the animals will own that land forever. They will live there year after year.

sulfur A yellow chemical that looks like rock or dirt. Sulfur burns with a hot flame, and it gives a bad odor when it burns.

Empty Desert Literally, “They will measure this city with the measuring string called ‘emptiness’ and stone weights called ‘nothingness.’” These words described the empty earth in Genesis 1:2.

freemen Important citizens of a town or country. These people came from ‘good families’ and had never been slaves.

hyenas A kind of wild dog that often eats the meat of dead animals that other animals killed.

wild goats This Hebrew word means “goat, or goat-demon.”

Night animals Or, “Lilith, the night demon.” This name is like the Hebrew word for night.

scroll A long roll of leather or papyrus (*paper*) used for writing books, letters, and legal documents.

judge In Israel judges were leaders that judged, led, and protected the people.

rolled shut like a scroll This is like a person closing a book when he has finished reading it.

stars Literally, “the armies of the skies.”

Edom A country east of Judah.

guilty, and they must die The Hebrew means the people belonged completely to God, and if he does not get them, they must die.

Bozrah A city in Edom.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

tar A very thick oil that must be heated to become liquid.

God Will Comfort His People

35 The dry desert will become very happy. The desert will be glad and will grow like a flower. ²The desert will be full of growing flowers and will begin to show its happiness. It will seem like the desert is dancing with joy. The desert will be beautiful like the forest of Lebanon,* the hill of Carmel,* and Sharon Valley.* This will happen because all people will see the Glory of the Lord.* People will see the beauty of our God.

³Make the weak arms strong again. Make the weak knees strong. ⁴People are afraid and confused. Say to those people, “Be strong! Don’t be afraid!” Look, your God will come and punish your enemies. He will come and give you your reward. The Lord will save you. ⁵Then the blind people will be able to see again. Their eyes will be opened. Then the deaf people will be able to hear. Their ears will be opened. ⁶Crippled people will dance like deer. And the people that can’t talk now will use their voices to sing happy songs. This will happen when springs of water begin flowing in the desert. Springs will flow in the dry land. ⁷Now people see mirages* [that look like water]. But at that time there will be real pools of water. There will be wells in the dry land. Water will flow from the ground. Tall water plants will grow where wild animals once ruled.

⁸At that time, there will be a road there. This highway will be called “The Holy Road.” Evil people will not be allowed to walk on that road. No fools* will go to that road. Only good people will walk on that road. ⁹There will be no dangers on that road. There will be no lions on that road to hurt people. There will be no

Lebanon A country north of Israel. It was famous for its great cedar and pine trees.

Carmel A hill in north Israel very good for growing plants. This name means “God’s vineyard.”

Sharon Valley The low land along the coast of Palestine.

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light. See Ex. 40:34–36.

mirages In the desert, heat rising from the ground looks like water from far away. This is a mirage.

fools Here this means people that do not follow God and his wise teachings.

dangerous animals on that road. That road will be for the people God saves.

¹⁰God will make his people free! And those people will come back to him. The people will be happy when they come into Zion.* The people will be happy forever. Their happiness will be like a crown on their heads. Their gladness and joy will fill them completely. Sorrow and sadness will be gone far, far away.

The Assyrians Invade Judah

36 During Hezekiah’s* 14th year as king, Sennacherib* king of Assyria went to fight against all the strong cities of Judah. Sennacherib defeated those cities. ²Sennacherib sent his commander with a large army to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem. The commander and his army left Lachish and went to Jerusalem. They stopped near the aqueduct* by the Upper Pool. (The Upper Pool is on the road to Laundryman’s Field.)

³Three men from Jerusalem went out to talk with the commander. These men were Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, Joah son of Asaph, and Shebna. Eliakim was the palace manager. Joah was the record keeper. And Shebna was the royal secretary.

⁴The commander told them, “Tell Hezekiah this is what the great king, the king of Assyria says:

What are you trusting in to help you? ⁵I tell you if you are trusting in power and smart plans for battle—then that is useless. Those are nothing but empty words. Now I ask you, who do you trust so much that you are willing to rebel against me? ⁶Are you depending on Egypt to help you? Egypt is like a broken stick. If you lean on it for support, it will only hurt you and make a hole in your hand. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, can’t be trusted by any of the people that depend on him for help.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

Hezekiah A king of Judah. He ruled about 727–687 B.C.

Sennacherib A king of Assyria. He was king about 706–681 B.C.

aqueduct A ditch or pipe that carries water from one place to another.

⁷But maybe you will say, “We are trusting in the Lord our God to help us.” But I know that Hezekiah destroyed the altars* and high places* where people worshiped the Lord. And Hezekiah told the people of Judah and Jerusalem, “You must worship only at this one altar here in Jerusalem.”

⁸If you still want to fight, my master, the king of Assyria will make this agreement with you. I promise that I will give you 2,000 horses if you can find enough men to ride those horses into battle. ⁹But even then you will not be able to defeat even one of my master’s lowest ranking officers! So why do you continue to depend on Egypt’s chariots* and horse soldiers!

¹⁰Now, do you think I came to this country to destroy it without the Lord’s help! No! The Lord said to me, “Go up against this country and destroy it!”

¹¹Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah, said to the commander, “Please, speak to us in the Aramaic. We understand that language. Don’t speak to us in the language of Judah. If you use our language, the people on the city walls will understand you.”

¹²But the commander said, “My master did not send me to speak only to you and your master. My master sent me to also speak to the people that are sitting on the wall! Those people will not have enough food or water either; they too will eat their own waste and drink their own urine just like you.*”

¹³Then the commander shouted loudly in the Jewish language, ¹⁴“Hear this message from the great king, the king of Assyria:

altars Stone tables used for burning sacrifices as gifts to God.

high places Places for worshiping God or false gods. These places were usually on the hills and mountains.

chariot(s) A small wagon used in war.

Those people ... like you The Assyrian army planned to surround Jerusalem and not let people bring any food or water into the city. He thought the people would become hungry enough to eat their own waste.

Don’t let Hezekiah fool you! He can’t save you from my power! ¹⁵Don’t believe Hezekiah when he says, ‘Trust in the Lord! The Lord will save us. The Lord will not let the king of Assyria defeat the city.’

¹⁶Don’t listen to those words from Hezekiah. Listen to the king of Assyria. The king of Assyria says, “We should make an agreement. You people should come out of the city to me. Then every person will be free to go home. Every person will be free to eat grapes from his own vine. And every person will be free to eat the figs from his own fig tree. Every person will be free to drink water from his own well. ¹⁷You can do this until I come and take each of you to a country like your own. In that new country you will have good grain and new wine, bread and fields of grapes.”

¹⁸Don’t let Hezekiah make trouble for you. He says, “The Lord will save us.” But I ask you, did any of the gods of other nations save their country from the king of Assyria? No! ¹⁹Where are the gods of Hamath* and Arpad?* [They are defeated!] Where are the gods of Sepharvaim?* [They are defeated!] Did they save Samaria* from my power? No! ²⁰Did any of the gods in the other countries save their land from me? No! Can the Lord save Jerusalem from me? No!”

²¹But the people in Jerusalem were very quiet. They did not say a word to the commander because King Hezekiah had given them a command. He said, “Don’t say anything to him.”

²²Then the palace manager (Eliakim son of Hilkiah), the royal secretary (Shebna), and the record keeper* (Joah son of Asaph) went to Hezekiah. Their clothes were torn [to show

Hamath A city in the country of Aram (Syria).

Arpad A city in the country of Aram (Syria).

Sepharvaim A city in the country of Aram (Syria).

Samaria The capital city of north Israel.

record keeper A person that wrote about the things the king did.

they were upset. They told Hezekiah all the things that the Assyrian commander had said.

Hezekiah Asks God to Help

37 King Hezekiah listened to those things. Then Hezekiah tore his clothes [to show he was upset]. Then Hezekiah put on the special clothes of sadness and went to the Lord's temple.* ²Hezekiah sent Eliakim the palace manager, Shebna the royal secretary, and the elders (*leaders*) of the priests* to the prophet, Isaiah son of Amoz. They wore the special clothes [that showed they were sad and upset].

³These men said to Isaiah, "King Hezekiah has commanded that today will be a special day for sorrow and sadness. It will be a very sad day. It will be like a day when a child should be born, but is not strong enough to come from its mother's body. ⁴The commander's master, the king of Assyria, has sent him to say bad things about the living God. Maybe the Lord your God will hear all those things. Maybe the Lord will prove the enemy is wrong! So pray for the people that are still left alive."

⁵⁻⁶King Hezekiah's officers went to Isaiah. Isaiah said to them, "Give this message to your master, Hezekiah: The Lord says, 'Don't be afraid of the things you heard from the commanders! Don't believe the evil things those "boys" from the king of Assyria said about me. ⁷Look, I will send a spirit against Assyria. [The king of] Assyria will get a report warning him about a danger to his country. So, he will go back to his country. At that time, I will kill him with a sword in his own country.'"

The Assyrian Army Leaves Jerusalem

⁸⁻⁹The king of Assyria got a report. The report said, "Tirhakah,* the king of Ethiopia,*

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

priests Special religious leaders that made sacrifices for the people.

Tirhakah This is probably Taharqa, the pharaoh of Egypt about 690–664 B.C.

Ethiopia Literally, "Cush," a country in Africa by the Red Sea.

is coming to fight you." So, the king of Assyria left Lachish and went to Libnah. The commander heard this, and he went to the city Libnah, where the king of Assyria was fighting. He sent messengers to Hezekiah. He said, ¹⁰"You should tell these things to Hezekiah, the king of Judah:

Don't be fooled by the god you trust. Don't say, "God will not let Jerusalem be defeated by the king of Assyria."

¹¹You have heard what the kings of Assyria did to all the other countries! They destroyed them completely! Will you be saved? No! ¹²Did the gods of those people save them? No! My ancestors* destroyed them all. They destroyed Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden* living in Tel Assar. ¹³Where is the king of Hamath? The king of Arpad? The king of the city of Sepharvaim? The kings of Hena and Ivvah? [They are all finished! They were all destroyed!]

Hezekiah Prays to God

¹⁴Hezekiah took the letters from the messengers and read them. Then Hezekiah went to the Lord's temple.* Hezekiah opened the letters and laid them out in front the Lord. ¹⁵Hezekiah began praying to the Lord and said:

¹⁶Lord All-Powerful, God of Israel, you sit as King on the Cherub angels.* You, and only you, are the God that rules all the kingdoms on earth. You made the heavens and the earth! ¹⁷Lord, please listen to me. Lord, open your eyes and look at this message. Hear the words that Sennacherib sent to insult you, the living God!

¹⁸It is true, Lord. The kings of Assyria did destroy all those nations! ¹⁹The kings of Assyria have burned the gods of those nations. But those were not real gods.

ancestors Literally, "fathers." This means a person's parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

Eden Beth Eden, an area in the country of Aram (Syria).

Cherub angels Special angels God used as messengers. Statues of these angels were on the top of the Box of the Agreement.

They were only wood and stone—statues that men made. That is why the kings of Assyria could destroy them. ²⁰But you are the Lord our God. So please save us from the king of Assyria. Then all the other nations will know that you are the Lord, and you are the only [God].

God's Answer to Hezekiah

²¹Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah. Isaiah said, “The Lord, the God of Israel says, ‘You prayed to me about the message that came from Sennacherib king of Assyria. I have heard you.’

²²“This is the Lord’s message about Sennacherib:

[King of Assyria,
The Virgin Daughter of Zion
(Jerusalem)
doesn’t think you are important.
She laughs at you.
The Daughter of Jerusalem
makes fun of you.

²³ But who did you insult and make fun of?
Who did you speak against?
You were against the Holy One of Israel!
You acted like you were better than him!

²⁴ You sent your officers
to insult the Lord my Master.
You said,

‘I am very powerful!
I have many, many chariots.*
[With my power I defeated Lebanon.]
I climbed the highest mountains
of Lebanon.*
I cut down all the great trees (*armies*)
of Lebanon.
I have been to the highest mountain
and into the deepest part
of that forest.

²⁵ I dug wells, and drank water
[from new places].
I dried up the rivers of Egypt
and walked on that country.’

²⁶ That is what you said.
But haven’t you heard [what I said]?
‘I (*God*) planned it long ago,
from ancient times I planned it.
And now, I made it happen.
I let you tear down the strong cities
and change them into piles of rocks.
²⁷ The people in the cities had no power.
Those people were scared
and confused.

They were about to be cut down
like grass and plants in the field.
They were like grass growing
on the housetops,
dying before it grows tall.

²⁸ [I know all about your battles.]
I know when you rested.
I know when you went out to war.
I know when you came home from war.
I also know when you were upset at me.
²⁹ Yes, you were upset at me.
I heard your proud insults.
So I will put my hook in your nose.
And I will put my bit* in your mouth.
Then I will turn you around
and lead you back the way you came.”

The Lord's Message for Hezekiah

³⁰[Then the Lord said to Hezekiah.] “I will give you a sign to show you that these words are true. [You were not be able to plant seeds.] So this year you will eat grain that grew wild from last year’s crop. But in three years, you will eat grain that you planted. You will harvest those crops and you will have plenty to eat. You will plant grapevines and eat their fruit.

³¹“The people from the family of Judah that have escaped and are left [alive] will again begin to grow. [These people will be like plants that] send their roots deep into the ground and produce fruit above the ground.
³²Why? Because a few people will remain alive. They will go out from Jerusalem. There will be survivors coming from Mount Zion.*”

chariot(s) Small wagons used in war.

Lebanon A country north of Israel. It was famous for its great cedar and pine trees.

bit A piece of metal people put in a horse’s mouth to control the horse.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

The strong love* of the Lord All-Powerful will do this.

³³So the Lord says this about the king of Assyria:

- “He will not come into this city.
- He will not shoot an arrow at this city.
- He will not bring his shields to this city.
- He will not build up a hill of dirt to attack the walls of this city.
- ³⁴ He will go back the same way he came.
- He will not come into this city.
- The Lord says this!
- ³⁵ I will protect this city and save it.
- I will do this for myself and for my servant David.”

³⁶[That night,] the angel of the Lord went out and killed 185,000 people in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up in the morning, they saw the dead bodies all around them.

³⁷So Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, went back to Nineveh and stayed there.

³⁸One day, Sennacherib was in the temple of his god, Nisroch, worshiping him. At that time his two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, killed him with a sword. Then the sons ran away to Ararat.* So Sennacherib’s son Esarhaddon became the new king of Assyria.

Hezekiah’s Illness

38 At that time, Hezekiah became sick and almost died. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to see him.

Isaiah told the king, “The Lord told me to tell you these things: ‘You will die soon. So you should tell your family what they should do when you die. You will not become well again.’”

²Hezekiah turned toward the wall [that faced the temple,] and began praying. He said: ³“Lord, remember that I have truly served you with all my heart. I have done the things that you say are good.” Then Hezekiah cried very hard.

⁴Isaiah received this message from the Lord: ⁵“Go to Hezekiah and tell him that the

strong love This Hebrew word means strong feelings like love, hate, anger, zeal, or jealousy.

Ararat The ancient country of Urartu, an area in Eastern Turkey.

Lord, the God of your ancestor* David says, ‘I heard your prayer, and I saw your tears. I will add 15 years to your life. ⁶I will save you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will protect this city.’”

^{22*} But Hezekiah asked Isaiah, “What is the sign from the Lord that proves [I will become well? What is the sign that proves] I will be able to go to the Lord’s temple?*

⁷This is the sign from the Lord to show you that he will do the things he says: ⁸“Look, I am causing the shadow that is on the steps of Ahaz* to move back ten steps. The sun’s shadow will go back up the ten steps that it has already been on.”

^{21*} Then Isaiah told Hezekiah, “You should crush figs together and put them on your sore, then you will become well.”

⁹This is the letter from Hezekiah when he became well from the sickness:

- ¹⁰ I told myself I would live to be old.
- But then it was my time to go through the gates of Sheol.*
- Now I will spend all of my time there.
- ¹¹ So I said,
- “I will not see the Lord Yah* in the land of the living again.
- I will not see the people living on earth.
- ¹² My home, my shepherd’s tent, is being pulled down and taken from me.
- I am finished
- like the cloth a man rolls up and cuts from the loom.*
- You finished my life in such a short time!

ancestor Literally, “father.” This means a person that people are descended from.

Verse 22 This verse is at the end of the chapter in the printed Hebrew text.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

steps of Ahaz The steps of a special building that Hezekiah used like a clock. When the sun shone on the steps, the shadows showed what time of the day it was.

Verse 21 This verse is at the end of the chapter in the printed Hebrew text.

Sheol This is the place where all people go when they die. Usually this means the grave, but it can mean the place where our spirits go.

Lord Yah Or, “YAH YAHWEH,” a Hebrew name for God.

loom A machine used for making cloth.

- 13 All night I cried loud like a lion.
 But my hopes were crushed
 like a lion eating bones.
 You finished my life in such a short time!
- 14 I cried like a dove.
 I cried like a bird.
 My eyes became tired,
 but I continued looking to the heavens.
 My Master, I am so depressed.
 Promise to help me.”
- 15 What can I say?
 My Master told me what will happen.
 And my Master will cause that
 to happen.
 I have had these troubles in my soul.
 So now I will be humble all my life.
- 16 My Master, use this hard time to make
 my spirit live again.
 Help my spirit become strong
 and healthy.
 Help me become well!
 Help me live again!
- 17 Look! My troubles are gone!
 I now have peace.
 You love me very much.
 You did not let me rot in the grave.
 [You forgave all my sins.]
 You threw my sins far away.
- 18 Dead people don’t sing praises to you.
 People in Sheol* don’t praise you.
 Dead people don’t trust you to help them.
 They go into a hole in the ground,
 [and never speak again].
- 19 People that are alive—
 like me today—
 are the people that praise you.
 A father should tell his children
 that you can be trusted.
- 20 [So I say:]
 “The Lord saved me.
 So we will sing and play songs
 in the Lord’s temple all our lives.”

Sheol This is the place where all people go when they die. Usually this means the grave, but it can mean the place where our spirits go.

Messengers from Babylon

39 At that time, Merodach Baladan son of Baladan was king of Babylon. Merodach sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah. Merodach did this because he heard that Hezekiah had been sick. ²These things made Hezekiah very happy. So Hezekiah showed the men all the valuable things in his storehouses. Hezekiah showed them the silver, the gold, the spices, and the expensive perfumes. Hezekiah showed them the swords and shields used for war. Hezekiah showed them everything he had saved. Hezekiah showed them everything in his house and in his kingdom.

³Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked him, “What did these men say? Where did they come from?”

Hezekiah said, “These men came from a faraway country to see me! They came from Babylon.”

⁴So Isaiah asked him, “What did they see in your house?”

Hezekiah said, “They saw everything in my palace.* I showed them all my wealth.”

⁵Then Isaiah said this to Hezekiah: “Listen to the words from the Lord All-Powerful. ⁶The time is coming when all the things in your house and all the things your ancestors* have saved until today will be carried away to Babylon. Nothing will be left! The Lord All-Powerful said this. ⁷The Babylonians will take your own sons. And your sons will become officers* in the palace* of the king of Babylon.”

⁸Hezekiah told Isaiah, “This message from the Lord is good.” (Hezekiah said this because he thought, “There will be real peace and security while I am king.”)

palace A large house for the king and his family.

ancestors Literally, “fathers.” This means a person’s parents, grandparents, and all the people they are descended from.

officers Literally, “eunuchs.” Usually this means men whose male sex organs were removed so they could not have children. These men often served in important positions.

Israel's Punishment Will End

- 40 Your God says,
 “Comfort, comfort my people!
 2 Speak kindly to Jerusalem!
 Tell Jerusalem,
 ‘Your time of service is finished.
 You have paid the price for your sins.’”
 The Lord punished Jerusalem—
 twice for every sin she did.
- 3 Listen, there is a person shouting!
 “Prepare a way in the desert for the Lord!
 Make the road in the desert level
 for our God!
- 4 Fill every valley.
 Make every mountain and hill flat.
 Make the crooked roads straight.
 Make the rough ground smooth.
- 5 Then, the Glory of the Lord*
 will be revealed (*shown*).
 And together, all people
 will see the Lord’s Glory.
 Yes, the Lord himself said these things!”
- 6 A voice said,
 “Speak!”
 So the man said,
 “What should I say?”
 The voice said,
 “People don’t live forever;
 they are all like grass.
 Their goodness is like a wildflower.
- 7 A powerful wind from the Lord
 blows on the grass,
 and the grass dies
 and the wildflower falls.”
- Yes, all people are like grass.
- 8 Grass dies and wildflowers fall.
 But the word of our God
 continues forever.”

Salvation: God’s Good News

- 9 Zion,* you have good news to tell.
 Go up on a high mountain
 and shout the good news!

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light. See Ex. 40:34–36.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

- Jerusalem, you have good news to tell.
 Don’t be afraid, speak loudly!
- Tell this news to all of the cities of Judah:
 “Look, here is your God!
- 10 The Lord my Master
 is coming with power.
 He will use his power to rule
 all the people.
 The Lord will bring rewards
 for his people.
 He will have their payment with him.
- 11 The Lord will lead his people
 like a shepherd leads sheep.
 The Lord will use his arm (*power*)
 and gather his sheep together.
 The Lord will pick up the little sheep
 and hold them in his arms.
 Their mothers will walk beside him.

God Made the World; He Rules It

- 12 Who measured the oceans
 in the palm of his hand?
 Who used his hand to measure the sky?
 Who used a bowl to measure all the dust
 of the earth?
 Who used measuring scales to measure
 the mountains and hills?
 [It was the Lord!]
- 13 No person told the Lord’s Spirit
 what he should do.
 No person told the Lord
 how to do the things he did.
- 14 Did the Lord ask for any person’s help?
 Did any person teach the Lord to be fair?
 Did any person teach the Lord knowledge?
 Did any person teach the Lord to be wise?
 [No! The Lord already knew these things.]
- 15 Look, all the nations in the world are like
 one small drop in the bucket.
 If the Lord took all the faraway nations,
 and put them on his weighing scales,
 they would be like small pieces
 of dust.
- 16 [All the trees in] Lebanon are not enough
 to burn for the Lord.
 And all the animals in Lebanon
 are not enough to kill [for a sacrifice].

- 17 Compared to God,
all the nations of the world are nothing.
Compared to God,
all the nations are worth nothing at all.

People Can't Imagine What God Is Like

- 18 Can you compare God to anything? No!
Can you make a picture of God? No!
- 19 But some people make statues
from rock or wood,
and they call them gods.
One worker makes a statue.
Then another worker covers it with gold
and makes silver chains for it.
- 20 And for the base,
he chooses a special kind of wood,
a kind of wood that will not rot.
Then he finds a good wood worker.
And the worker makes a “god”
that won't fall over.
- 21 Surely you know the truth, don't you?
Surely you have heard!
Surely someone told you long ago!
Surely you understand who made
the earth!
- 22 [The Lord is the true God,]
He sits above the circle of the earth,
[and compared to him]
people are like grasshoppers.
He rolled open the skies
like a piece of cloth.
He stretched the skies
like a tent to sit under.
- 23 He makes rulers not important.
He makes the judges of this world
completely worthless.
- 24 [Those rulers are like plants,]
they are planted in the ground,
but before they can send their roots
into the ground,
God blows on the “plants,”
and they become dead and dry,
and the wind blows them away
like straw.
- 25 The Holy One (*God*) says:
“Can you compare me to anyone? No!
No one is equal to me.
- 26 Look up to the skies.
Who created all those stars?
Who created all those ‘armies’
[in the sky]?

Who knows every star by name?
[The true God] is very strong and
powerful,
so none of these stars is lost.”

- 27 People of Jacob, this is true!
Israel, you should believe this!
So why do you say:
“The Lord can't see the way I live.
God will not find me and punish me.”
- 28 Surely you have heard and know
that the Lord God is very wise.
People can't learn everything he knows.
The Lord does not become tired
and need to rest.
The Lord made all the faraway places
on earth.
The Lord lives forever.
- 29 The Lord helps weak people to be strong.
He causes the people without power to
become powerful.
- 30 Young men become tired and need to rest.
Even young boys stumble and fall.
- 31 But people that trust the Lord
become strong again
like eagles that grow new feathers.
These people run without becoming weak.
These people walk without becoming tired.

The Lord Is the Eternal Creator

- 41 The Lord says,
“Faraway countries, be quiet
and come to me!
Nations be brave.*
Come to me and speak.
We will meet together,
and we will decide who is right.
- 2 [Tell me the answers to these questions;]
Who woke the man [that is coming]
from the east?
Goodness walks with him.
He uses his sword [and defeats nations]—
they become like dust.
He uses his bow and conquers kings—
they run away like straw blown
by the wind.

be brave Or, “be strong again,” as in Isa. 40:31.

- 3 He chases armies and is never hurt.
He goes places he has never been before.
- 4 Who caused these things to happen?
Who did this?
Who called all people from the beginning?
I, the Lord, did these things!
I, the Lord, am the first.
I was here before the beginning.
And I will be here when all things
are finished.
- 5 All you faraway places,
look, and be afraid!
All you places far away on the earth,
shake with fear!
Come here and listen to me!
And they came.

6“Workers help each other. They encourage each other to be strong. 7One worker cuts wood to make a statue. That person encourages the man that works with gold. Another worker uses a hammer and makes the metal smooth. Then that worker encourages the man at the anvil.* This last worker says, ‘This work is good; the metal will not come off.’ Then he nails the statue to a base so it won’t fall over. And it never moves!”

Only The Lord Can Save Us

- 8The Lord says:
- “You, Israel, are my servant.
Jacob, I chose you.
You are from Abraham’s family.
And I loved Abraham.
- 9 You were in a far away country,
but I reached out to you.
I called you from that faraway place.
I said, ‘You are my servant.’
I chose you.
And I have not rejected you.
- 10 Don’t worry, I am with you.
Don’t be afraid, I am your God.
I will make you strong.
I will help you.
I will support you with my good
right hand.

- 11 Look, some people are angry with you.
But they will be shamed.
Your enemies will be lost and disappear.
- 12 You will look for the people
that were against you,
but you will not be able to find them.
The people that fought against you
will disappear completely.
- 13 I am the Lord your God.
I am holding your right hand.
And I tell you:
Don’t be afraid!
I will help you.
- 14 Precious Judah, don’t be afraid!
My dear* people of Israel, don’t be scared!
I really will help you.”

The Lord himself said those things.

The Holy One (*God*) of Israel,
the One who saves you,
said these things:

- 15 “Look, I have made you like
a new threshing board.
That tool has many sharp teeth,
Farmers use it to crush the hulls
so they will separate from the grain.
You will trample (*walk on*) mountains
and crush them.
You will make the hills like those hulls.
- 16 You will throw them into the air,
and the wind will blow them away
and scatter them.
Then you will be happy in the Lord.
You will be very proud of the Holy One
(*God*) of Israel.”
- 17 “The poor and needy people look for water,
but they can’t find any.
They are thirsty.
Their tongues are very dry.
I will answer their prayers.
I will not leave them and let them die.
- 18 I will make rivers flow on dry hills.
I will make springs of water flow
through the valleys.

anvil A heavy metal block. A worker puts hot metal on an anvil and beats the hot metal to change its shape.

Precious Judah ... dear Literally, “worm ... men.” These are like Aramaic words meaning “scarlet ... silk,” very expensive pieces of cloth.”

- I will change the desert into a lake
filled with water.
There will be springs of water
in that dry land.
- 19 Trees will grow in the desert.
There will be cedar trees, acacia trees,
olive trees, cypress trees, fir trees,
and pine trees.
- 20 People will see these things,
and they will know
that the Lord's power did this.
The people will see these things,
and they will begin to understand.
that the Holy One (*God*) of Israel
did these things."

The Lord Challenges the False Gods

²¹The Lord, the king of Jacob, says,
"Come, tell me your arguments. Show me
your proof, and we will decide the things that
are right. ²²Your statues (false gods) should
come and tell us what is happening.

"What happened in the beginning? What
will happen in the future? Tell us! We will
listen closely. Then we will know what will
happen next. ²³Tell us the things we should
look for to know what will happen. Then we
will believe that you really are gods. Do
something! Do anything, good or bad! Then
we will see that you are alive. And we will
follow you.

²⁴"Look, you false gods are less than
nothing! You can't do anything! Only a
worthless person would want to worship you!"

The Lord Proves He Is the Only God

- 25 "I woke a person in the north.*
He is coming from the east
where the sun rises.
He worships my name.
A man that makes pots walks on wet clay.
In the same way, this special man will
trample (*walk on*) kings."
- 26 Who told us about this before it happened?
We should call him God.*

- Did one of your statues
tell us these things?
No! None of those statues
told us anything.
Those statues did not say a word—
and those false gods can't hear
the words that you say.
- 27 I, the Lord, was the first person to tell
Zion* about these things.
I sent a messenger to Jerusalem
with this message:
"Look, your people are coming back!"
- 28 I looked at those false gods.
None of them were wise enough
to say anything.
I asked them questions,
and they did not say a word!
- 29 All of those gods are less than nothing!
They can't do anything!
Those statues are absolutely worthless!

The Lord's Special Servant

- 42 "Look at my Servant!
I support him.
He is the one I chose.
And I am very pleased with him.
I put my Spirit in him.
He will judge the nations fairly.
- 2 He will not speak loudly in the streets.
He will not cry out or yell.
- 3 He will be gentle.
He will not break even a crushed reed.*
He will not put out even a weak flame.
He will judge fairly and find the truth.
- 4 He will not become weak
or be crushed until he brings
justice to the world.
And people in faraway places
will trust his teachings."

The Lord Is Ruler and Maker of the World

⁵The Lord, the true God, said these things.
(The Lord made the skies. The Lord spread
the skies over the earth. He also made
everything on the earth. The Lord breathes

person in the north This probably means Cyrus, a king of
Persia. He ruled about 550–530 B.C.

God Literally, "the Good One."

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on.
Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

reed A plant that grows near water.

life into all people on earth. The Lord gives a spirit to every person that walks on the earth.)

- 6 “I, the Lord, called you to do right.
I will hold your hand.
And I will protect you.
You will be the sign that shows
I have an Agreement with the people.
You will be a light to shine for all people.
- 7 You will open the eyes of the blind people,
and they will be able to see.
Many people are in prison;
you will free those people.
Many people live in darkness;
you will lead them out of that prison.
- 8 “I am the Lord.
My name is YAHWEH.
I will not give my glory to another.
I will not let statues (*false gods*)
take the praise that should be mine.
- 9 In the beginning,
I said some things would happen,
and those things happened!
And now, before it happens,
I am telling you about some things
that will happen in the future.”

A Song of Praise to God

- 10 Sing a new song to the Lord,
all you people in faraway countries,
all you people that sail on the seas,
all you animals in the oceans,
all you people in faraway places,
praise the Lord!
- 11 Deserts and cities, villages of Kedar,*
praise the Lord!
People living in Sela, sing for joy!
Sing from the top of your mountain.
- 12 Give glory to the Lord.
Praise him all you people
in faraway lands!
- 13 The Lord will go out like a strong soldier.
He will be like a man ready to fight
a war.
He will become very excited.
He will cry out and shout loudly,
and he will defeat his enemies.

God Is Very Patient

- 14 “For a long time I have said nothing.
I controlled myself
and didn’t say anything.
But now I will cry out
like a woman giving birth to a child.
I will breath very hard and loud.
- 15 I will destroy the hills and mountains.
I will dry up all the plants that
grow there.
I will change rivers to dry land.
I will dry up pools of water.
- 16 Then I will lead the blind people
in a way they never knew.
I will lead the blind people
to places they have never been before.
I will change darkness into light for them.
And I will make the rough ground smooth.
I will do the things I promised!
And I will not leave my people.
- 17 But some of the people
stopped following me.
Those people have statues
that are covered with gold.
They tell those statues,
‘You are my gods.’
Those people trust their false gods.
But those people will be disappointed!

Israel Refused to Listen to God

- 18 “You deaf people should hear me!
You blind people should look and see me!
- 19 In all the world, my servant*
is the most blind!
The messenger I send [to the world]
is the most deaf.
The one I made the Agreement with
—the servant of the Lord—
is the most blind.
- 20 My servant sees what he should do,
but he does not obey me.
He can hear with his ears,
but he refuses to listen to me.”
- 21 The Lord wants his servant to be good.
The Lord wants him to honor
his wonderful teachings.*

my servant Here this probably means the people of Israel.

Verse 21 Or, “The Lord will make his teachings very wonderful. He will do this because he is good.”

Kedar A country east of Israel.

22 But look at the people.
 Other people have defeated them
 and have stolen things from them.
 All the young men are afraid.
 They are locked in the prisons.
 People have taken their money from them.
 And there is no person to save them.
 Other people took their money.
 And there was no person to say,
 “Give it back!”

23 Did any of you people listen to [God’s] words? No! But you should listen very closely to his words [and think about what happened].
 24 Who let people take the wealth from Jacob and Israel? The Lord allowed them to do this! We sinned against the Lord. So the Lord allowed people to take away our wealth. The people of Israel did not want to live the way the Lord wanted. The people of Israel did not listen to his teaching. 25 So the Lord became angry at them. The Lord caused powerful wars against them. It was like the people of Israel had fire all around them. But they did not know what was happening. It was like they were burning. But they did not try to understand the things that were happening.

God Is Always with His People

43 Jacob, the Lord made you! Israel, the Lord made you! And now the Lord says, “Don’t be afraid! I saved you. I named you. You are mine. 2 When you have troubles, I am with you. When you cross rivers, you will not be hurt. When you walk through fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not hurt you. 3 Why? Because I, the Lord, am your God. I, the Holy One of Israel, am your Savior. I gave Egypt to pay for you. I gave Ethiopia and Seba to make you mine. 4 You are very important to me, so I will honor you. I love you, and I will give all people and nations so you can live.”

God Will Bring His Children Home

5 “So don’t be afraid! I am with you. I will gather your children and bring them to you. I will gather them from the east and from the west. 6 I will tell the north: Give my people to me! I will tell the south: Don’t keep my

people in prison! Bring my sons and daughters to me from the faraway places! 7 Bring to me all the people that are mine—the people that have my name. I made those people for myself. I made those people, and they are mine.”

Israel Is God’s Witness to the World

8 [God says,] “Bring out the people that have eyes but are blind. Bring out the people that have ears but are deaf.* 9 All people and all nations should also be gathered together. Maybe [one of their false gods] wants to tell about what happened in the beginning. They should bring their witnesses. The witnesses should speak the truth. This will show they are right.”

10 The Lord says, “You people are my witnesses. You are the servant that I chose. I chose you so you would help people to believe me. I chose you so you would understand that ‘I Am He’—[I am the true God]. There was no God before me, and there will be no God after me. 11 I myself am the Lord. And there is no other Savior—[I am the only One]. 12 I am the One who spoke to you. I saved you. I told you those things. It was not some stranger that was with you. You are my witnesses, and I am God.” (The Lord himself said these things.) 13 “I have always been God. When I do something, no person can change what I have done. And no person can save people from my power.”

14 The Lord, the Holy One of Israel, saves you. And the Lord says, “I will send armies to Babylon for you. Many people will be captured. Those people, the Chaldeans, will be taken away in their own boats. (The Chaldeans are very proud of those boats.) 15 I am the Lord your Holy One. I made Israel. I am your king.”

God Will Save His People Again

16 The Lord will make roads through the sea. Even through rough waters he will make a path for his people. And the Lord says, 17 “The people that fight against me with their

blind ... deaf This probably means the people of Israel that would not believe God. See Isaiah 6:9–10.

chariots,* horses, and armies will be defeated. They will never rise again. They will be destroyed. They will be stopped like the flame of a candle* is stopped. ¹⁸So don't remember the things that happened in the beginning. Don't think about the things that happened a long time ago. ¹⁹Why? Because I will do new things! Now you will grow like a new plant. Surely you know this is true. I really will make a road in the desert. I really will make rivers in the dry land. ²⁰Even the wild animals will be thankful to me. The large animals and birds will honor me. They will honor me when I put water in the desert. They will honor me when I make rivers in the dry land. I will do this to give water to my people—the people I chose. ²¹These are the people I made. And these people will sing songs to praise me.

²²“Jacob, you did not pray to me. Why? Because you, Israel, have become tired of me. ²³You have not brought your sheep as sacrifices* to me. You have not honored me. You have not given sacrifices to me. I did not force you to give sacrifices to me. I did not force you to burn incense* until you became tired. ²⁴So you did not use your money to buy things to honor me. But you did force me to be like your slave. You sinned until the bad things you did made me very tired.

²⁵“I, I am the One who wipes away all your sins. I do this to please myself. I will not remember your sins. ²⁶But you should remember me. We should meet together and decide what is right. You should tell the things you have done, and show you are right. ²⁷Your first father sinned. And your lawyers have done things against me. ²⁸I will make your holy rulers not holy. I will cause Jacob to be completely mine.* Bad things will happen to Israel.”

chariots Small wagons used for war.

candle Literally, “lamp.” These were small clay bowls filled with oil. A string or strip of cloth was placed in the bowl and lit to produce light.

sacrifices Gifts to God. Sometimes these were special kinds of animals that were killed and burned on an altar.

incense A kind of spice that smells good when it is burned. It was burned as a gift to God.

cause Jacob to be completely mine This means that only God can have this special thing. He gets it, or it must die so no one else will.

The Lord Is the Only God

44 “Jacob, you are my servant. Listen to me! Israel, I chose you. Hear the things I say! ²I am the Lord, and I made you. I am the One who made you to be what you are. I have helped you since the time you were in your mother's body. Jacob, my servant, don't be afraid. Jeshurun,* I chose you.

³“I will pour water for thirsty people. I will make streams flow on dry land. I will pour my Spirit on your children—it will be like a stream of water flowing over your family. ⁴They will grow among the people in the world. They will be like trees growing beside streams of water.

⁵“One person will say, ‘I belong to the Lord.’ Another person will use the name ‘Jacob.’ Another person will sign his name ‘I am the Lord's.’ And another person will use the name ‘Israel.’”

⁶The Lord is the king of Israel. The Lord All-Powerful saves Israel. The Lord says, “I am the only God. There are no other gods. I am the Beginning and the End. ⁷There is no other God like me. If there is, then that god should speak now. That god should come and show proof that he is like me. That god should tell me what has happened since the time I made these ancient people. That god should give signs to show that he knows what will happen in the future. ⁸Don't be afraid! Don't worry! I have always told you what will happen. You are my witnesses. There is no other God—I am the only One. There is no other ‘Rock*’—I know I am the only One.”

False Gods Are Useless

⁹Some people make statues (*false gods*)—but they are worthless. People love those statues—but the statues are useless. Those people are the witnesses of the statues—but they can't see. They know nothing—they don't know enough to be ashamed [of the things they do].

¹⁰Who made these false gods? Who made these useless statues? ¹¹Workers made those

Jeshurun Another name for Israel. It means “good” or “honest.”

Rock A name for God. It shows he is a strong place of safety.

gods! And all those workers are people—[not gods]. If all of those people would come together [and discuss these things], then they would all be ashamed and afraid.

¹²One worker uses his tools to heat iron over hot coals. This man uses his hammer to beat the metal, and the metal becomes a statue. This man uses his own powerful arms. But when the man becomes hungry, he loses his power. If the man does not drink water, he becomes weak.

¹³Another worker uses his stringline* and compass* to draw lines on the wood. [This shows where he should cut]. Then the man uses his chisels* and cuts a statue from the wood. He uses his calipers* to measure the statue. This way, the worker makes the wood look exactly like a man. And this statue of a man does nothing but sit in its house.

¹⁴A man cuts down cedar, cypress, or maybe oak trees. (That man did not make the trees grow—those trees grew by their own power in the forest. If a man plants a pine tree, the rain makes the tree grow.) ¹⁵Then that man uses the tree to burn in his fire. The man cuts the tree into small pieces of wood. And he uses the wood to cook and keep him warm. The man starts a fire with some of the wood and bakes his bread. But the man still uses part of that wood to make a god—and the man worships that god! That god is a statue that the man made—but the man bows down before the statue! ¹⁶The man burns half of the wood in the fire. The man uses the fire to cook his meat and eats the meat until he is full. The man burns the wood to keep himself warm. The man says, “Good! Now I am warm, and I can see because there is light from the fire.” ¹⁷But a little wood is left, so the man makes a statue from that wood and calls it his god. He bows down before this god and worships it. The man prays to the god and says, “You are my god, save me!”

stringline In ancient times, this was a piece of string with wet paint on it. This was used to make straight lines on wood or stone.

compass A tool used to draw circles and copy measurements.

chisels Sharp tools used to carve wood or stone.

calipers A special measuring tool, like a compass.

¹⁸Those people don’t know what they are doing. They don’t understand! It is like their eyes are covered so they can’t see. Their hearts (*minds*) don’t try to understand. ¹⁹Those people have not thought about these things. The people don’t understand, so they have never thought to themselves, “I burned half of the wood in the fire. I used the hot coals to bake my bread and cook my meat. Then I ate the meat. And I used the wood that was left to make this terrible thing. I am worshipping a block of wood!”

²⁰That man does not know what he is doing. He is confused, so his heart leads him the wrong way. That man can’t save himself. And he can’t see that he is doing wrong. That man will not say, “This statue I am holding is a false god.”

The Lord, the True God, Helps Israel

- ²¹ “Jacob, remember these things!
Israel, remember,
you are my servant.
I made you.
You are my servant.
So Israel, don’t forget me.
- ²² Your sins were like a big cloud.
But I wiped away those sins.
Your sins are gone,
like a cloud that disappeared
into thin air.
I rescued and protected you,
so come back to me!”
- ²³ The skies are happy because the Lord did
great things.
The earth is happy, even deep down
under the earth!
The mountains sing with thanks to God.
All the trees in the forest are happy!
Why? Because the Lord saved Jacob.
The Lord did great things for Israel.
- ²⁴ The Lord made you what you are.
The Lord did this while you
were still in your mother’s body.
The Lord says,
“I, the Lord, made everything!
I put the skies there myself!
I spread the earth before me.”

²⁵False prophets* tell lies, but the Lord shows their lies are false. The Lord makes foolish people of the men that do magic. The Lord confuses even wise men. They think they know much, but the Lord makes them look foolish. ²⁶The Lord sends his servants to tell messages to the people. And the Lord makes those messages true. The Lord sends messengers to tell the people the things they should do. And the Lord shows their advice is good.

God Chooses Cyrus to Rebuild Judah

The Lord says to Jerusalem,
 “People will live in you again!”
 The Lord says to the cities of Judah,
 “You will be built again!”
 The Lord says to the cities
 that were destroyed,
 “I will make you cities again!”
²⁷ The Lord tells the deep waters,
 “Become dry!
 I will make your streams dry too!”
²⁸ The Lord says to Cyrus,*
 “You are my shepherd.
 You will do the things I want.
 You will say to Jerusalem,
 ‘You will be built again!’
 You will tell the temple,*
 ‘Your foundations will be built again!’”

God Chooses Cyrus to Make Israel Free

45 These are the things the Lord says about Cyrus,* his chosen king:*

“I will hold Cyrus’s right hand.
 I will help him take power away
 from kings.
 City gates will not stop Cyrus.
 I will open the city gates,
 and Cyrus will go in.”
² “[Cyrus, your armies will march,]
 and I will go in front of you.

False prophets People that lie, saying they received a special message from God.

Cyrus A king of Persia. He ruled about 550–530 B.C.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

chosen king Literally, “messiah, the anointed one.”

I will make the mountains flat.
 I will break the city gates of bronze.
 I will cut the iron bars on the gates.
³ I will give you the wealth
 that is saved in darkness.
 I will give you those hidden riches.
 I will do this so that you will know
 that I am the Lord.
 I am the God of Israel,
 and I am calling you by name!
⁴ I do these things for my servant, Jacob.
 I do these things for my chosen people,
 Israel.
 [Cyrus,] I am calling you by name.
 You don’t know me,
 but I am calling you by name.
⁵ I am the Lord!
 I am the only God.
 There is no other God.
 I put your clothes on you,*
 but still you don’t know me.
⁶ I do these things so all people will know
 that I am the only God.
 From the east to the west
 people will know that I am the Lord,
 and there is no other God.
⁷ I made the light,
 and I made darkness.
 I make peace,
 and I make troubles.
 I am the Lord—
 and I do all these things.
⁸ “May the clouds in the skies above
 drop goodness on the earth like rain!
 May the earth open
 and let salvation grow!
 And may goodness grow with it!
 I, the Lord, made him.*

God Controls His Creation

⁹“Look at these people! They are arguing with the One who made them. Look at them argue with me! They are like pieces of clay from a broken pot. A man uses soft, wet clay to make a pot. And the clay does not ask,

I put ... you This also means “I made you strong.”

him This probably means Cyrus. Cyrus was a king of Persia. Cyrus lived about 150 years after Isaiah died.

‘Man, what are you doing?’ Things that are made don’t have the power to question the one who makes them. People are like this clay. 10A father gives life to his children. And the children can’t ask, ‘Why are you giving me life?’ The children can’t question their mother and ask, ‘Why are you giving birth to me?’”

11The Lord God is the Holy One of Israel. He made Israel. And the Lord says,

“My sons, you asked me to show you a sign.
You told me to show you
the things I have done.*

12 So, look!
I made the earth.
And I made all the people living on it.
I used my own hands
and made the skies.
And I command all the armies in the sky.*

13 I gave Cyrus his power
so he would do good things.*
And I will make his work easy.
Cyrus will build my city again.
And he will make my people free.
Cyrus will not sell my people to me.
I will not have to pay him
to do these things.
The people will be freed,
and the cost to me will be nothing.”
The Lord, All-Powerful, said these things.

14 The Lord says,
“Egypt and Ethiopia are rich,
but Israel, you will get those riches.
The tall people from Seba will be yours.
They will walk behind you
with chains around their necks.
They will bow down before you.
And they will pray to you.”
Israel, God is with you.
And there is no other God.

15 God, you are the God people can’t see.
You are the Savior of Israel.

My sons ... I have done Or possibly, “Those who are coming asked me for my children. They commanded me to give them those people that I made with my own hands.”

armies in the sky Sometimes this means the angels, and sometimes it means the stars.

I gave ... things This might also mean “I did what was right when I woke him.”

16 Many people make false gods.
But those people will be disappointed.
All of those people will go away ashamed.

17 But Israel will be saved by the Lord.
That salvation will continue forever.
Never, never again will Israel be shamed.

18 The Lord is God.
He made the skies and the earth.
The Lord put the earth in its place.

The Lord did not want the earth
to be empty when he made it.

He created it to be lived on!
“I am the Lord.

There is no other God.

19 I did not speak in secret.
I have spoken freely.

I did not hide my words
in a dark place of the world.

I did not tell the people of Jacob
to look for me in empty places.

I am the Lord, and I speak the truth.
I say things that are true.”

The Lord Proves He Is the Only God

20“*You people have escaped from other nations. So gather together and come before me. (These people carry statues of false gods. These people pray to those useless gods. But the people don’t know what they are doing.* 21*Tell these people to come to me. Let them present their case and discuss these things.)*

“Who told you about the things that happened a long time ago? Who has continued to tell you these things since long, long ago? I, the Lord, am the One who said these things. I am the only God. Is there another God like me? Is there another good God? Is there another God who saves his people? No! There is no other God! 22All you people in faraway places should stop following those false gods. You should follow me and be saved. I am God. There is no other God. I am the only God.

23“*I make this promise by my own power. And when I make a promise, that promise is true. The thing I promise will happen! And I promise that every person will bow before me (God). And every person will promise to follow me.* 24*People will say, ‘Goodness and power come only from the Lord.’”*

Some people are angry at the Lord. But the Lord’s witnesses will come and tell about the things the Lord has done. So those angry people will be ashamed. ²⁵The Lord will help the people of Israel do good, and the people will be very proud of their God.

False Gods Are Useless

46 Bel* and Nebo,* will bow down before me. [Those false gods are only statues.] Men put those statues on the backs of animals—those statues are only heavy burdens that must be carried. The false gods do nothing but make people tired. ²Those false gods will all bow down—they will all fall. Those false gods can’t escape—they will all be carried away like prisoners.

³“Family of Jacob, listen to me! All you people from Israel that are still alive, listen! I have been carrying you. I have carried you since the time you were in your mother’s body. ⁴I carried you when you were born, and I will carry you when you become old. Your hair will become gray, and I will still carry you, because I made you. I will continue to carry you and I will save you.

⁵“Can you compare me to anyone? No! No person is equal to me. You can’t understand everything about me. There is nothing like me. ⁶Some people are rich with gold and silver. Gold falls from their purses, and they weigh their silver on scales. Those people pay an artist to make a false god from wood. Then those people bow down and worship that false god. ⁷Those people put their false god on their shoulders and carry it. That false god is useless—people have to carry it! People set the statue on the ground; and that false god can’t move. That false god never walks away from its place. People can yell at it, but it will not answer. That false god is only a statue—it can’t save people from their troubles.

⁸“You people have sinned. You should think about these things again. Remember these things and be strong. ⁹Remember the things that happened long ago. Remember that

I am God. There is no other God. Those false gods are not like me.

¹⁰“In the beginning, I told you about the things that will happen in the end. A long time ago, I told you things that had not yet happened. When I plan something—that thing happens. I do the things I want to do. ¹¹And I am calling a man from the east. That man will be like an eagle. He will come from a faraway country, and he will do the things I decide to do. I am telling you that I will do this, and I will do it. I made him, and I will bring him!

¹²“Some of you think that you have great power—but you don’t do good things. Listen to me! ¹³I will do good things! Soon, I will save [my people]. I will bring salvation to Zion and to my wonderful Israel.”

God’s Message to Babylon

47 “Fall down in the dirt and sit there!
 Virgin daughter of the Chaldeans,*
 sit on the ground!
 You are not the ruler now!
 People will not think that you are
 a tender, delicate young lady anymore.
² [Now you must work very hard.]
 You must get the mill stones
 and grind the grain to make flour.
 Remove your veil and
 take off your fancy dresses.
 [You must leave your country.]
 Lift your skirts until
 men can see your legs,
 and cross the rivers.*
³ Men will see your private parts
 and use you for sex.
 I will make you pay
 for the bad things you did.
 And no man will come to help you.
⁴ “[My people say,]
 ‘God saves us.
 His name is:
 The Lord All-Powerful,
 The Holy One of Israel.’”

daughter of the Chaldeans This is another name for the city Babylon.

rivers The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Babylon was between these two rivers.

Bel A false god of Babylon.

Nebo A false god of Babylon.

- 5 “So Babylon, sit there and be quiet.
Daughter of the Chaldeans,*
go into the darkness.
Why? Because you will no longer be
‘The Queen of the Kingdoms.’
- 6 “I was angry at my people.
Those people belong to me,
but I was angry,
so I made them not important.
I gave them to you,
and you punished them.
But you showed no mercy to them.
You made even the old people
work hard.
- 7 You said,
‘I will live forever.
I will always be The Queen.’
You didn’t even notice the bad things
you did to those people.
You didn’t think about what would happen.
- 8 So now, ‘nice lady’ listen to me!
You feel safe and you tell yourself,
‘I am the only important person.
No one else is important like me.
I will never be a widow.
I will always have children.’
- 9 These two things will happen to you:
First, you will lose your children.
And then you will lose your husband.
Yes, these things will really happen to you.
And all of your magic
and all of your powerful tricks
will not save you.
- 10 You do bad things, but still you feel safe.
You think to yourself,
‘No one sees the wrong things I do.’
You think that your wisdom and knowledge
will save you.
You think to yourself,
‘I am the only one.
No one is important like me.’
- 11 “But troubles will come to you.
You don’t know when it will happen,
but disaster is coming.
- You will not be able to do anything
to stop those troubles.
You will be destroyed so quickly
that you won’t know what happened!
- 12 You worked hard all your life
learning tricks and magic.
So, start using your tricks and magic!
Maybe those tricks will help you.
Maybe you will be able to scare
someone.
- 13 You have many, many advisers.
Are you tired of the advice they give?
Then send out your men that read
the stars.
They are able to tell when the month starts.
So maybe they can tell you
when your troubles will come.
- 14 “But those men will not even be able
to save themselves.
They will burn like straw.
They will burn so fast that
there will be no coals left
to cook bread with.
There will be no fire left to sit by.
- 15 That will happen to everything
that you worked so hard for.
The people you did business with
all your life will leave you.
Every person will go his own way.
And there will be no one left
to save you.”

God Rules His World

- 48 The Lord says,
“Family of Jacob, listen to me!
You people call yourself ‘Israel.’
You are from Judah’s family.
You use the Lord’s name to make promises.
You praise the God of Israel.
But you are not honest and sincere
when you do these things.”
- 2 Yes, they are citizens of the Holy City*.
They depend on the God of Israel.
The Lord All-Powerful is his Name.

daughter of the Chaldeans This is another name for the city
Babylon.

Holy City That is, Jerusalem.

3 “Long ago I told you about the things
that would happen.
I told you about those things.
And then suddenly,
I made them happen.
4 I did that because I knew
you were stubborn.
You refused to believe anything I said.
You were very stubborn—
like iron [that does not bend]
and as hard as bronze.
5 So, a long time ago I told you
what would happen.
I told you about those things
a long time before they happened.
I did this so that you could not say,
‘The gods we made did.’
I did this so that you could not say,
‘Our idols, our statues,
made these things happen.’”

God Punishes Israel to Make Them Pure

6 “You saw and heard what happened.
So you should tell the news to
other people.
Now I will tell you about new things—
things that you don’t know yet.
7 These are not things that happened
long ago.
These are things that are happening now.
You haven’t heard about these things
before today.
So you can’t say,
‘We already knew that.’
8 “But even then,
you didn’t listen to me!
You didn’t learn anything!
You refused to listen to anything
I told you.
I have known since the beginning
that you would be against me.
You have rebelled against me
from the time you were born.
9 But, I will be patient.
I will do this for myself.
People will praise me for not getting
angry and destroying you.
You will praise me for waiting.

10 “Look, I will make you pure.
People use a hot fire to make silver pure.
But I will make you pure
by giving you troubles.
11 I will do this for myself—for me!
You will not treat me
like I am not important!
I will not let some false god
take my glory and praise!
12 “Jacob, listen to me!
Israel, I called you to be my people.
So listen to me!
I am the Beginning!
And I am the End!
13 I made the earth with my own hands.
My right hand made the sky.
And if I call them,
they will come together before me.
14 “All of you, come here
and listen to me!
Did any of the false gods
say these things would happen?
No!”
The person that the Lord chose*
will do whatever he wants
to Babylon and the Chaldeans.
15 [The Lord says,]
“I told you I would call him.*
And I will bring him!
I will make him succeed!
16 Come here and listen to me!
I was there when Babylon began
as a nation.
And from the beginning, I spoke clearly,
so that people could know what I said.”

[Then Isaiah said,] “Now, the Lord my
Master sends me and his Spirit [to tell you
these things].¹⁷The Lord, the Savior, the Holy
One of Israel, says,

“I am the Lord your God.
I teach you to do things that are helpful.
I lead you in the way you should go.

chose Or, “loves.”

him This is probably talking about Cyrus. Cyrus was a king of
Persia that lived about 150 years after Isaiah died.

- 18 If you had obeyed me,
 then peace would have come to you
 like a full flowing river.
 Good things would have come to you
 again and again,
 like the waves of the sea.
- 19 If you had obeyed me,
 then you would have had many children.
 They would have been
 like the many grains of sand.
 If you had obeyed me,
 then you would not have been destroyed.
 You would have continued with me.”
- 20 My people, leave Babylon!
 My people, run from the Chaldeans!
 Tell this news with joy to the people!
 Spread this news to the faraway places
 on earth!
 Tell the people,
 “The Lord rescued his servant Jacob!
- 21 The Lord led his people through
 the desert,
 and they never became thirsty!
 Why? Because he made water
 flow from a rock for his people!
 He split the rock,
 and water flowed out!”
- 22 But the Lord also said,
 “There is no peace for evil people!”

God Calls His Special Servant

- 49 All you people in faraway places,
 listen to me!
 Listen all of you people living on earth!
 The Lord called me to serve him
 before I was born .
 The Lord called my name
 while I was still in my mother’s body.
- 2 [The Lord uses me to speak for him.]
 He uses me like a sharp sword,
 [But he also protects me.]
 hiding me in his hand.
 The Lord uses me like a sharp arrow,
 but he also hides me in his arrow bag.
- 3 [The Lord] told me,
 “Israel, you are my servant.
 I will do wonderful things with you.”

- 4 I said,
 “I worked hard for nothing.
 I wore myself out,
 but I did nothing useful.
 I used all my power,
 but I did not really do anything.
 So, the Lord must decide
 what to do with me.
 God must decide my reward.
- 5 The Lord made me in my mother’s body
 so I could be his servant,
 and lead Jacob and Israel back to him.
 The Lord will honor me.
 I will get my strength from my God.”
- The Lord told me,
 6 “You are a very important servant to me.
 The people of Israel are prisoners,
 but they will be brought back to me.
 Jacob’s family groups will come back
 to me.
 But, you have another job;
 it is even more important than this!
 I will make you a light for all nations.
 You will be my way to save
 all the people on earth.”
- 7 The Lord, the Holy One of Israel,
 the Protector of Israel says,
 “My Servant is humble.
 He serves rulers.
 But people hate him.
 But, kings will see him,
 and stand [to honor him].
 Great leaders will bow down to him.”

This will happen because the Lord,
 the Holy One of Israel, wants it.
 And the Lord can be trusted.
 He is the One who chose you.

The Day of Salvation

- 8 The Lord says,
 “There will be a special time
 when I show my kindness.
 At that time I will answer your prayers.
 There will be a special day
 when I save you.
 At that time I will help you.
 I will protect you.
 And you will be the proof that I have
 an Agreement with the people.

The country is destroyed now,
 but you will give that land back
 to the people who own it.
 9 You will tell the prisoners,
 ‘Come out of your prison!’
 You will tell the people that are in darkness,
 ‘Come out of the dark!’
 The people will eat while traveling.
 They will have food even on empty hills.
 10 The people will not be hungry.
 They will not be thirsty.
 The hot sun and wind will not hurt them.
 Why? Because God comforts them
 and God will lead them.
 He will lead them near springs of water.

11 “I will make a road for my people.
 The mountains will be made flat,
 and the low roads will be raised.
 12 “Look! People are coming to me
 from faraway places.
 People are coming to me
 from the north and from the west.
 People are coming to me
 from Aswan in Egypt.”
 13 Heavens and Earth, be happy!
 Mountains, shout with joy!
 Why? Because the Lord comforts
 his people.
 The Lord is good to his poor people.

Zion, The Abandoned Woman

14 But now Zion* says,
 “The Lord left me.
 My Master forgot me.”
 15 ^LBut I say,
 “Can a woman forget her baby? No!
 Can a woman forget the child
 that came from her body?
 No! A woman can’t forget her children.
 And I (*the Lord*) can’t forget you.
 16 Look, I have carved your name
 into my hand.
 I think about you all the time!*

17 Your children will come back to you.
 People defeated you,
 but those people will leave you alone.”

Israel’s People Return

18 Look up! Look all around you!
 All of your children are gathering
 together and coming to you.
 The Lord says,
 “On my life, I promise you this:
 Your children will be like jewels
 that you tie around your neck.
 Your children will be like the necklace
 that a bride wears.
 19 You are destroyed and defeated now.
 Your land is useless.
 But after a short time, you will have
 many people in your land.
 And the people that destroyed you
 will be far, far away.
 20 You were sad for the children you lost,
 but those children will tell you,
 ‘This place is too small!
 Give us a bigger place to live!’
 21 Then you will say to yourself,
 ‘Who gave me all these children?
 This is very good!
 I was sad and lonely.
 I was defeated and away from my people.
 So who gave me these children?
 Look, I was left alone.
 Where did all these children
 come from?’”
 22 The Lord my Master says,
 “Look, I will wave my hand to the nations.
 I will raise my flag for all people to see.
 Then they will bring your children to you.
 Those people will carry your children
 on their shoulders,
 and they will hold them in their arms.
 23 Kings will be teachers to your children.
 Kings’ daughters will care for them.
 Those kings and their daughters
 will bow down to you.
 They will kiss the dirt at your feet.
 Then you will know
 that I am the Lord.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on.
 Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.
I ... time Or, “I see your figure before me always.” This is a
 word play. The Hebrew word “figure” also means “walls”

Then you will know
that any person who trusts in me
will not be disappointed.”

- 24 When a strong soldier wins wealth in war,
you can't take that wealth from him.
When a powerful soldier guards
a prisoner,
that prisoner can't escape.
- 25 But the Lord says,
“The prisoners will escape.
Someone will take those prisoners
away from the strong soldier.
How will this happen?
I will fight your fights.
I will save your children.
- 26 “Those people hurt you.
But I will force those people
to eat their own bodies.
Their own blood will be
the wine that makes them drunk.
Then every person will know that
the Lord saved you.
All people will know that
the Powerful One of Jacob saved you.”

Israel Punished Because of Their Sin

- 50 The Lord says,
“People of Israel, you say that I divorced
your mother, Jerusalem.
But where is the legal paper
that proves I divorced her?
My children, did I owe money
to someone?
Did I sell you to pay a debt?
No! You were sold
because of the bad things you did.
Your mother (*Jerusalem*) was sent away
because of the bad things you did.
- 2 I came home and found no one there.
I called and called,
but no one answered.
Do you think I am not able to save you?
I have the power to save you
from all of your troubles.
Look, if I command the sea to dry up,
then it will become dry!
The fish will die without water,
and their bodies will rot.

- 3 I can make the skies dark.
I can cover the skies in darkness
as black as the clothes of sadness.”

God's Servant Truly Depends on God

4The Lord my Master gave me the ability
to teach. So now I teach these sad people.
Every morning he wakes me and teaches me
like a student. 5The Lord my Master helps me
learn, and I have not turned against him. I will
not stop following him. 6I will let those
people beat me. I will let them pull the hair
from my beard. I will not hide my face when
they say bad things to me and spit at me. 7The
Lord my Master will help me. So the bad
things they say will not hurt me. I will be
strong. I know I will not be disappointed.

8The Lord is with me. He shows I am
innocent. So no person will be able to show I
am guilty. If someone wants to try to prove I
am wrong, that person should come to me, and
we will have a trial. 9But look, the Lord my
Master helps me. So no person can show me to
be evil. All those people will become like
worthless old clothes. Moths will eat them.

10The people that respect the Lord also
listen to his servant. That servant lives
completely trusting in God without knowing
what will happen. He truly trusts in the Lord's
name, and that servant depends on his God.

11“Look, you people want to live your own
ways. You light your own fires and torches
(lights). So, live your own way. But, you
will be punished! You will fall into your fires
and torches and you will be burned. I will
make that happen.”

Israel Should Be Like Abraham

51 “Some of you people try hard to live
good lives. You go to the Lord for help.
Listen to me. You should look at Abraham
your father. He is the rock you were cut from.
2Abraham is your father, and you should look
at him. You should look at Sarah—the
woman that gave birth to you. Abraham was
alone when I called him. Then I blessed him,
and he began a great family. Many, many
people came from him.”

³ In the same way, the Lord will bless Zion.* The Lord will feel sorry for her and her people, and he will do a great thing for her. The Lord will change the desert. The desert will become a garden like the garden of Eden. That land was empty, but it will become like the Lord's Garden. People there will be very, very happy. People there will show their joy. They will sing songs about thanks and victory.

- 4 “My people, listen to me!
My decisions will be like lights
showing people how to live.
- 5 I will soon show I am fair.
I will soon save you.
I will use my power and judge all nations.
All the faraway places are waiting
for me.
They wait for my power to help them.
- 6 Look up to the heavens!
Look around you at the earth below!
The skies will disappear
like clouds of smoke.
The earth will become
like worthless old clothes.
The people on earth will die,
but my Salvation will continue forever.
My goodness will never end.
- 7 You people that understand goodness
should listen to me.
You people that follow my teachings
should hear the things I say.
Don't be afraid of evil people.
Don't be afraid of the bad things
that they say to you.
- 8 Why? Because they will be like
old clothes.
Moths will eat them.
They will be like wool.
Worms will eat them.
But my goodness will continue forever.
My salvation will continue
forever and ever.”

God's Own Power Will Save His People

- 9 Arm (*power*) of the Lord, wake up!
Wake up! Be strong!
Use your strength
like you did a long time ago,
like you have from ancient times.
You are the power that defeated Rahab.
You defeated the Dragon.*
- 10 You caused the sea to become dry!
You dried the waters of the great deep!
You made the deepest parts of the sea
into a road.
Your people crossed over that road
and were saved.
- 11 The Lord will save his people.
They will return to Zion* with joy.
They will be very, very happy.
Their happiness will be like
a crown on their heads forever.
They will be singing with joy.
All sadness will be gone far away.
- 12 The Lord says,
“I am the One who comforts you.
So why should you be afraid of people?
They are only people that live and die.
They are only humans—
they die the same as grass.”
- 13 The Lord made you.
With his power he made the earth!
And with his power he spread the skies
over the earth!
But you forget him and his power.
So you are always afraid of angry men
that hurt you.
Those men planned to destroy you.
But where are they now?
They are all gone!
- 14 People in prison will soon be made free.
Those people will not die and
rot in prison.
Those people will have enough food.
- 15 “I, the Lord, am your God.
I stir up the sea and make the waves.”
(The Lord All-Powerful is his name.)

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

Rahab ... Dragon This is Rahab the great sea monster. Some ancient stories tell about Rahab fighting with God.

¹⁶“My servant, I will give you the words I want you to say. And I will cover you with my hands and protect you. I will use you to make the new heaven and earth. I will use you to tell Israel, ‘You are my people.’”

God Punished Israel

- ¹⁷ Wake up! Wake up!
 Jerusalem, get up!
 The Lord was very angry at you.
 So you were punished.
 [This punishment was like] a cup of poison
 you had to drink.
 And you drank it.

¹⁸Jerusalem had many people, but none of those people became leaders for her. None of the children she raised became guides to lead her. ¹⁹Troubles came to Jerusalem in groups of two; stealing and rationing food, great hunger and fighting.

No person helped you when you were suffering. No person show mercy to you. ²⁰Your people became weak. They fell on the ground and lay there. Those people were lying on every street corner. They were like animals caught in a net. They were punished from the Lord’s anger until they could not accept any more punishment. When God said he would give them more punishment, they became very weak.

²¹Listen to me, poor Jerusalem. You are [weak like] a drunk person, but you are not drunk from wine. [You are weak from that “cup of poison.”]

²²Your God and Master, the Lord, will fight for his people. He says to you, “Look, I am taking this ‘cup of poison’ (*punishment*) away from you. I am taking my anger away from you. You will not be punished by my anger any more. ²³I will now use my anger to punish the people that hurt you. Those people tried to kill you. They told you, ‘Bow down before us, and we will walk on you!’ They forced you to bow down before them. And then they walked on your back like dirt. You were like a road for them to walk on.”

Israel Will Be Saved

- 52** Wake up! Wake up Zion! *
 Dress yourself!
 Put on your strength!
 Holy Jerusalem, stand up!
 People that have not agreed
 to follow God*
 will not enter you again.
 Those people are not pure and clean.
- ² Shake off the dust!
 Put on your wonderful clothes!
 Jerusalem, Daughter of Zion,*
 you were a prisoner.
 But now, free yourself from the chains
 that are around your neck!
- ³ The Lord says,
 “You were not sold for money.
 So I will not use money
 to make you free.”

⁴The Lord my Master says, “My people first went down to Egypt to stay—and then they became slaves. Later, Assyria made them slaves. ⁵Now look what has happened! Another nation has taken my people. That country did not pay to take my people. This nation rules my people and laughs at them. Those people always say bad things about me.”

⁶The Lord says, “[This has happened] so my people will learn about me. My people will know who I am. My people will know my name, and they will know that I Am He* is speaking to them.”

⁷It is a wonderful thing to see a messenger come over the hills with good news. It is wonderful to hear a messenger announce, “There is peace! We have been saved! Your God is king!”

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

have not agreed to follow God Literally, “People that are not circumcised and that are not pure.”

Daughter of Zion This means Jerusalem, the city built on Mount Zion.

I Am He This is like the Hebrew name for God. It shows God lives forever, and that he is always with his people. See Ex. 3:13–17.

- 8 The city guards* begin shouting.
They are all rejoicing together!
Why? Because every one of them
sees the Lord returning to Zion.*
- 9 Jerusalem, your destroyed buildings
will be happy again.
You will all rejoice together.
Why? Because the Lord will be kind
to Jerusalem.
The Lord will rescue his people.
- 10 The Lord will show his holy strength
to all the nations.
All the faraway countries will see
how God saves his people.
- 11 You people should leave Babylon!
Leave that place!
[Priests,] you carry the things
that are used in worship.
So make yourselves pure.
Don't touch anything that is not pure.
- 12 You will leave Babylon.
But they will not force you to leave
in a hurry.
You will not be forced to run away.
You will walk out,
[and the Lord will walk with you,]
The Lord will be in front of you,
and the God of Israel will be behind you.*

God's Suffering Servant

13“Look at my Servant. He will be very successful.* He will be very important. [In the future,] people will honor and respect him.

14“But many people were shocked when they saw my Servant. He was hurt so badly that they could hardly recognize him as a man.
15But even more people will be amazed. Kings will look at him, amazed, and not say a word.

guards Men that stand on the city walls and watch for messengers or trouble coming to the city. Here this probably means the prophets.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

The Lord ... behind you This shows God will protect the people. Compare Ex. 14:19,20.

He will be very successful Or, “He is very wise.” Or “He will teach people—making them wise.”

Those people did not hear the story about my Servant—they saw what happened. They did not hear that story, but they understood.”

53 Who really believed the things we announced? Who really accepted the Lord's punishment?

²He grew up like a small plant before the Lord. He was like a root growing in dry ground. He did not look special. He had no special glory. If we looked at him, we would see nothing special that would cause us to like him. ³People made fun of him, and his friends left him. He was a man that had much pain. He knew sickness very well. People did not even give him the honor of looking at him. We did not even notice him.

⁴But he took our troubles and made them his. He bore our pain, and we thought God was punishing him. We thought God beat him [for something he did]. ⁵But he was given pain to suffer for the wrong things we did. He was crushed for our guilt. A debt we owed—our punishment—was given to him. We were healed (*forgiven*) because of his pain. ⁶But [even after he did this,] all of us wandered away like sheep. We all went our own way. [We did this after,] the Lord [freed us from our guilt and,] put all our guilt on him.

⁷He was hurt and punished. But he never protested. He said nothing—like a sheep being taken to be killed. He was like a lamb that makes no sound when someone cuts off its wool. He never opened his mouth [to defend himself]. ⁸Men used force and took him—and they did not judge him fairly. No person can tell about his future family, because he was taken from the land of living people. He was punished to pay for the sins of my people.

⁹He died and was buried with the rich. He was buried with evil men. He did nothing wrong—he never spoke lies—but still these things happened to him.

¹⁰The Lord decided to crush him. The Lord decided that he must suffer, so the Servant gave himself to be the one to die. But he will live a new life for a long, long time. He will see his people. He will complete the things the Lord wants him to do.

¹¹He will suffer many things in his soul, but he will see the good things that happen. He will be satisfied with the things he learns. My Good Servant will make many people not guilty; he will carry away their guilt. ¹²For this reason, I will reward him among my people. He will have a share of all things with the people that are strong. [I will do this for him] because he gave his life for the people and died.

People said he was a criminal. But [the truth is that] he carried away the sins of many, many people. And now he speaks for people that have sinned.”

God Brings His People Home

54 Woman, be happy!
You have not had any children.
But you should be very happy!

The Lord says,
“The woman that is alone*
will have more children
than the woman with a husband.”

- 2 Make your tent bigger.
Open your doors wide.
Don't stop adding to your home.
Make your tent large and strong.
- 3 Why? Because you will grow very much.
Your children will get people
from many nations,
Your children will again live in the cities
that were destroyed.
- 4 Don't be afraid!
You will not be disappointed.
People will not say bad things against you.
You will not be embarrassed.
When you were young, you felt shame.
But you will forget that shame now.
You will not remember the shame that
you felt when you lost your husband.
- 5 Why? Because your husband*
is the One (*God*) who made you.

The woman ... alone This Hebrew word is like the word, “destroyed.” This probably means “Jerusalem, the city that is destroyed.”

husband In Hebrew this word is like the name Baal. This shows that the Lord is the true God, not the false god Baal.

His name is the Lord All-Powerful.
He is the Protector* of Israel.
He is the Holy One of Israel.
And he will be called
the God of all the earth!

- 6 You were like a woman
whose husband had left her.
You were very sad in your spirit,
but the Lord called you to be his.
You were like a woman that married
young, and her husband left her.
But God called you to be his.
- 7 God says,
“I left you,
but only for a short time.
I will gather you to me again.
And I will show you great kindness.
- 8 I became very angry
and hid from you for a short time.
But I will comfort you
with kindness forever.”
The Lord your Savior said this.

God Always Loves His People

- 9 God says,
“Remember, in Noah's time
I punished the world with the flood.
But I made a promise to Noah
that I would never again
destroy the world with a flood.
[In the same way,] I promise you
that I will never again get angry at you
and say bad things to you.”
- 10 The Lord says,
“The mountains may disappear,
and the hills may become dust.
But my kindness will never leave you.
I will make peace with you,
and it will never end.”
The Lord shows mercy to you.
And he is the One that said
these things.

Protector Or, “Redeemer.” Usually this meant a person that cared for and protected the family of a dead relative. Often this person bought back (redeemed) the poor relatives from slavery, making them free again.

- 11 “You poor city!
 Enemies came against you like storms.
 And no one comforted you.
 But I will build you again.
 I will use a beautiful mortar
 to lay the stones of your walls.
 I will use sapphire stones
 when I lay the foundation.
- 12 The stones on top of the wall
 will be made from rubies.
 I will use shiny jewels for the gates.
 I will use precious stones
 to build the walls around you.
- 13 Your children will follow God,
 and he will teach them.
 Your children will have real peace.
- 14 You will be built on goodness.
 So you will be safe
 from cruelty and fear.
 You will have nothing to fear.
 Nothing will come to hurt you.
- 15 None of my armies will fight against you.
 And if any army tries to attack you,
 you will defeat that army.

¹⁶“Look, I made the blacksmith.* He blows on fire to make it hotter. Then he takes the hot iron and makes the kind of tool he wants to make. In the same way, I made the ‘Destroyer’ that destroys things.

¹⁷“People will make weapons to fight against you, but those weapons will not defeat you. Some people will say things against you. But every person that speaks against you will be shown to be wrong.”

The Lord says, “What do the Lord’s servants get? They get the good things that come from me!”

God Gives “Food” That Really Satisfies

- 55** “All you thirsty people,
 Come drink water!
 Don’t worry if you do not have money.
 Come, eat and drink until you are full!
 You do not need money;
 eat and drink until you are full.
 The food and wine cost nothing!
- 2 Why waste your money on something
 that is not real food?

- Why should you work for something
 that does not really satisfy you?
 Listen very closely to me,
 and you will eat the good food.
 You will enjoy the food
 that satisfies your soul.
- 3 Listen closely to the things I say.
 Listen to me so your souls will live.
 Come to me and I will make an agreement
 with you that will continue forever.
 It will be like the agreement
 that I made with David.
 I promised David that I would love him
 and be loyal to him forever.
 And you can trust that agreement.
- 4 I made David a witness of my power
 for all nations.
 I promised David that he would become
 a ruler and a commander of
 many nations.”
- 5 There are nations in places you don’t know,
 but you will call for those nations.
 Those nations don’t know you,
 but they will run to you.
 This will happen because the Lord,
 your God, wants it.
 This will happen because the Holy One
 of Israel honors you.
- 6 So you should look for the Lord
 before it is too late.
 You should call to him now,
 while he is near.
- 7 Evil people should stop living evil lives.
 They should stop thinking bad thoughts.
 They should come to the Lord again.
 Then the Lord will comfort them.
 Those people should come to the Lord
 because our God forgives.

People Cannot Understand God

- 8 The Lord says,
 “Your thoughts are not like my thoughts.
 Your ways are not like my ways.
- 9 The heavens are higher than the earth.
 In the same way, my ways are higher
 than your ways.
 And my thoughts are higher than
 your thoughts.”
 The Lord himself said these things.

blacksmith A man that makes things from iron.

- 10 “Rain and snow fall from the sky.
 And they don’t go back to the sky
 until they touch the ground
 and make the ground wet.
 Then the ground makes plants sprout
 and grow.
 These plants make seeds for the farmer.
 And people use these seeds to make
 bread to eat.
- 11 In the same way, my words leave my mouth,
 and they don’t come back until they
 make things happen.
 My words make the things happen that I
 want to happen.
 My words succeed in doing the things I
 send them to do.
- 12 My words will go out with happiness,
 and they will bring peace.
 Mountains and hills will begin dancing
 with happiness.
 All the trees in the fields will clap
 their hands.
- 13 Large cypress trees will grow
 where there were bushes.
 Myrtle trees will grow
 where there were weeds.
 These things will make the Lord famous.
 These things will be proof
 [that the Lord is powerful].
 This proof will never be destroyed.”

All Nations Will Follow the Lord

56 The Lord said these things, “Be fair to all people. Do things that are right! Why? Because soon my salvation will come to you. My goodness will soon be shown to the whole world.”

²The person that obeys God’s law about the Sabbath* will be blessed. And the person that does no evil will be happy. ³Some people that are not Jews will join themselves to the Lord. Those people should not say, “The Lord will not accept me with his people.” A eunuch* should not say, “I am a dry piece of wood—I can’t make any children.”

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

eunuch(s) Special servants. Sometimes their male sex organs were removed so they could not have children.

⁴⁻⁵[These eunuchs* should not say those things] because the Lord says, “Some of those eunuchs obey the laws about the Sabbath.* And they choose to do the things I want. And they truly follow my Agreement.* So I will put a memorial stone in my temple for them. Their name will be remembered in my city! Yes, I will give those eunuchs something better than sons and daughters. I will give them a name that continues forever. They will not be cut off* from my people.”

⁶Some people that are not Jews will join themselves to the Lord. They will do this so they can serve him and love the Lord’s name. They will join themselves to the Lord to become his servants. They will keep the Sabbath* [as a special day of worship] and they will continue to closely follow my Agreement (*Law*).

⁷The Lord says, “I will bring those people to my holy mountain. I will make them happy in my house of prayer. The offerings and sacrifices they give me will please me. Why? Because my temple* will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” ⁸The Lord my Master said these things.

The people of Israel were forced to leave their country. But the Lord will gather them together again. The Lord says, “I will again gather these people together.”

God Invites All People to Serve Him

- 9 Wild animals in the forest, come and eat!
 10 The guards (*prophets*) are all blind.
 They don’t know what they are doing.
 They are like dogs that won’t bark.
 They lie on the ground and sleep.
 Oh, they love to sleep.

Agreement Usually, this means the agreement God made with Israel through Moses. Here it might mean the agreement of Isaiah 55:3.

cut off If a person was “cut off” from Israel, it meant that he died without children or that he was forced to leave his family and the people of Israel. This meant that another family would get his land and his family name would be removed from the list of the people of Israel.

temple A special building for worshipping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

- 11 They are like hungry dogs.
They are never satisfied.
The shepherds don't know
what they are doing.
They are like their sheep
that have all wandered away.
They are greedy.
All they want to do is satisfy
themselves.
- 12 They come and say,
“I will drink some wine.
I will drink some beer.
I will do the same thing tomorrow.
Only, I will drink even more.”

Israel Does Not Follow God

- 57** The good people are all gone,
and no one even noticed.
The good people have gathered together.
But they don't understand why.
They don't know that trouble is coming,
and that they have been gathered
together for protection.
- 2 But peace will come,
and the people will rest in their
own beds.
They will live the way God wants them to.
- 3 “Come here you children of witches.
Your father is guilty of sexual sins,
and your mother sells her body for sex.
Come here!
- 4 You are evil and lying children.
You make fun of me.
You make faces at me.
You stick your tongues out at me.
- 5 All you want is to worship false gods
under every green tree.
You kill children by every stream,
and sacrifice them in the rocky places.
- 6 You love to worship the smooth rocks
in the rivers.
You pour wine on them to worship them.
You give sacrifices* to them,
but those rocks are all you get.

sacrifices Gifts to God. Sometimes these were special kinds of animals that were killed and burned on an altar.

- Do you think this makes me happy?
No! It does not make me happy.
You make your bed on every hill
and high mountain.*
- 7 You go up to those places
and offer sacrifices.*
- 8 Then you get in those beds
and sin against me by loving
those gods.
You love those gods,
You enjoy looking at their naked bodies.
You were with me,
but you left me to be with them.
You hide the things that help you
remember me.
You hide those things
behind the doors and door posts.*
And then you go and make agreements
with those false gods.
- 9 You use your oils and perfumes
to look nice for Molech.*
You sent your messengers to faraway
lands.
And this will bring you down to Sheol,
the place of death.

Israel Should Trust God, Not Statues

- 10 “You have worked hard to do these things,
but you never became tired.
You found new strength,
because you enjoyed these things.
- 11 You did not remember me.
You did not even notice me!
So, who were you worrying about?
Who were you afraid of?
Why did you lie?
Look, I have been quiet for a long time—
and you did not honor me.
- 12 I could tell about your ‘good works’
and all the ‘religious’ things you do;
but those things are useless!

every hill and high mountain The people worship false gods in these places. The people thought these false gods would give them good crops and more children.

door posts The people of Israel were supposed to put special things on their door frames to help them remember God. See Deut. 6:9.

Molech A false god. This name is like the Hebrew word meaning “king.”

- 13 When you need help,
 you cry to those false gods
 that you have gathered around you.
 Let them help you!
 But I tell you,
 the wind will blow them all away.
 A puff of wind will blow them all away.
 But the person that depends on me
 will get the land [I promised].
 That person will have my holy mountain.*

The Lord Will Save His People

- 14 Clear the road! Clear the road!
 Make the way clear for my people!
- 15 God is high and lifted up.
 God lives forever.
 God's name is holy.
 God says:
 I live in a high and holy place,
 but also with people that are
 sad and humble.
 I will give new life to the people
 that are humble in spirit.
 I will give new life to the people
 that are sad in their hearts.
- 16 I will not continue fighting forever.
 I will not always be angry.
 If I continued to be angry,
 then man's spirit
 —the life I gave them—
 would die in front of me.
- 17 These people did evil things,
 and it made me angry.
 So, I punished Israel.
 I turned away from him
 because I was angry.
 And Israel left me.
 He went wherever he wanted.
- 18 I saw where Israel went.
 So, I will heal (*forgive*) him.
 I will comfort him
 and say words to make him feel better.
 Then he and his people will not feel sad.
- 19 I will teach them a new word:
 'Peace.'

holy mountain This is the mountain the temple in Jerusalem is built on."

I will give peace to the people near me
 and to the people that are far away.
 I will heal (*forgive*) those people!"
 The Lord himself said these things.

²⁰But evil people are like the angry ocean.
 They can't be quiet and peaceful. They are
 angry, and like the ocean, they stir up mud.
 My God says, ²¹"There is no peace for evil
 people."

People Must Be Told to Follow God

58 Shout as loud as you can!
 Don't stop yourself!
 Shout loud like a trumpet!
 Tell the people about the wrong things
 they have done!
 Tell Jacob's family about their sins!
² Then they will come every day
 to worship me.
 And they will want to learn my ways.
 They will become a nation that lives right.
 They will not quit following
 God's good commands.
 They will ask me to judge them fairly.
 They will want to go to God
 [for his fair decisions].

³Now those people say, "We stop eating
 food to show honor to you. Why don't you
 see us? We hurt our bodies to show honor to
 you. Why don't you notice us?"

But the Lord says, "You do things to please
 yourselves on those special days for not
 eating food. And you punish your servants—
 not your own bodies. ⁴You are hungry; but
 not for food. You are hungry for arguing and
 fighting, not bread. You are hungry to hit
 people with your evil hands. When you stop
 eating food, it is not for me. You don't want
 to use your voice to praise me. ⁵Do you think
 on those special days for not eating food that
 all I want is to see people punish their bodies?
 Do you think I want people to look sad? Do
 you think I want people to bow their heads
 like dead plants and wear clothes of sadness?
 Do you think I want people to sit in ashes to
 show their sadness? That is what you do on
 your special days for not eating food. Do you
 think that is what the Lord wants?"

⁶“I will tell you the kind of special day I want—a day to make people free. I want a day that you take the burdens off people. I want a day when you make the troubled people free. I want a day when you take the burdens from their shoulders. ⁷I want you to share your food with the hungry people. I want you to find poor people that don’t have homes, and I want you to bring them into your own homes. When you see a man that has no clothes—give him your clothes! Don’t hide [from helping those people]; they are just like you.”

⁸If you do these things, your light will begin shining like the light of dawn. Then your wounds will heal. Your “Goodness” (*God*) will walk in front of you, and the Glory of the Lord* will come following behind you. ⁹Then you will call to the Lord, and the Lord will answer you. You will shout to the Lord, and he will say, “Here I am.”

God’s People Must Do Right

You should stop making troubles and burdens for people. You should stop using bitter words and blaming people for things. ¹⁰You should feel sorry for hungry people and give them food. You should help the people that are troubled—satisfy their needs. Then your light will shine in the darkness. And you will have no sadness. You will be bright like sunshine at noon.

¹¹The Lord will always lead you. He will satisfy your soul in dry lands. The Lord will give strength to your bones. You will be like a garden that has much water. You will be like a spring that always has water.

¹²Your cities have been destroyed for many, many years. But new cities will be built, and the foundations of these cities will continue for many, many years. You will be called “The One Who Fixes Fences.” And you will be called, “The One Who Builds Roads and Houses.”

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light. See Ex. 40:34–36.

¹³That will happen when you stop sinning against God’s law about the Sabbath.* And that will happen when you stop doing things to please yourself on that special day. You should call the Sabbath a happy day. You should honor the Lord’s special day. You should honor that special day by not doing and saying those things you do every other day.

¹⁴ Then you can ask the Lord to be kind to you. And he will carry you to the High Places above the earth. And he will give you all the things that belonged to Jacob your father.

The Lord himself said these things!

Evil People Should Change Their Lives

59 Look, the Lord’s power is enough to save you. He can hear you when you ask him for help. ²But your sins separate you from your God. The Lord sees your sins, and he turns away from you.

³Your hands are dirty; they are covered with blood. Your fingers are covered with guilt. You tell lies with your mouth. Your tongue says evil things. ⁴No person tells the truth about other people. People sue each other in court, and they depend on false arguments to win their cases. They tell lies about each other. They are full of trouble, and they give birth to evil. ⁵They hatch [evil, like] eggs from poisonous snakes. If you eat one of those eggs you will die. And if you break one of those eggs, a poison snake will come out.

The lies people tell are like spider webs. ⁶These webs can’t be used for clothes. You can’t cover yourself with those webs.

Some people do evil things and use their hands to hurt other people. ⁷Those people use their feet to run to evil. They hurry to kill people that have done nothing wrong. They think evil thoughts. Rioting and stealing is their way of living.

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

⁸Those people don't know the way of peace.
Those people don't do what is right and fair.
They are very crooked. And people who live
like that will never have peace in their lives.

Israel's Sin Brings Trouble

- ⁹ All fairness and goodness is gone.
There is only darkness near us,
so we must wait for the light.
We hope for a bright light,
but all we have is darkness.
- ¹⁰ We are like people without eyes.
We walk into walls like blind people.
We stumble and fall like it is night.
Even in the daylight we can't see.
At noontime we fall like dead men.
- ¹¹ We are all ¹very sad,
making sad sounds like doves and bears.
We are waiting for a time
when people are fair.
But there is no fairness yet.
We are waiting to be saved,
but salvation is still far away.
- ¹² Why? Because we have done many, many
wrong things against our God.
Our sins show we are wrong.
We know we are guilty of doing
these things.
- ¹³ We sinned and turned against the Lord.
We turned away from him and left him.
We planned evil things.
We planned things that are against God.
We have thought of these things
and planned them in our hearts.
- ¹⁴ Justice has turned away from us.
Fairness stands far away.
Truth has fallen in the streets.
Goodness is not allowed to enter the city.
- ¹⁵ Truth is gone.
And people that try to do good
are robbed.

The Lord looked,
and he could not find any goodness.
The Lord did not like this.

- ¹⁶ The Lord looked and was surprised
that he could find no person
to stand and speak for the people.
So the Lord used his own power
and his own goodness,
and the Lord saved the people.

- ¹⁷ ¹The Lord prepared for battle,
The Lord put on
the armor of goodness,
the helmet of salvation,
the clothes of punishment,
the coat of strong love.*
- ¹⁸ The Lord is angry at his enemies.
So the Lord will give them
the punishment they deserve.
The Lord is angry with his enemies.
So the Lord will punish the people
in all the faraway places.
The Lord will give them
the punishment they deserve.
- ¹⁹ Then people in the west
will fear and respect the Lord's name.
People in the east
will fear and respect His Glory.*
The Lord will come quickly like
a fast flowing river blown by
a powerful wind from the Lord.
- ²⁰ Then a Savior will come to Zion.*
He will come to the people of Jacob
that sinned but came back to God.

²¹The Lord says, "I will make an
Agreement with those people. I promise, my
Spirit and my words that I put in your mouth
will never leave you. They will be with your
children and your children's children. They
will be with you for now and forever."

God Is Coming!

- 60** "Jerusalem, my light, get up!
Your Light (*God*) is coming!
The Glory of the Lord* will shine on you.
- ² Darkness now covers the earth
and the people are in darkness.
But the Lord will shine on you,
and his Glory will appear on you.

strong love This Hebrew word means strong feelings like love,
hate, anger, zeal, or jealousy.

His Glory The "Glory of the Lord," one of the forms God used
when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light.
See Ex. 40:34–36.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on.
Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

Glory of the Lord One of the forms God used when he
appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light. See
Ex. 40:34–36.

- 3 The nations will come to your Light (*God*).
Kings will come to your bright Light.
- 4 Look around you!
See, people are gathering around
and coming to you.
They are your sons coming from far away.
And your daughters are coming
with them.
- 5 [This will happen in the future.]
And at that time, you will see your people,
and your faces will shine
[with happiness].
[First,] you will be afraid,
but then, you will be excited!
All the riches from across the seas
will be set before you.
The riches of the nations
will come to you.
- 6 Herds of camels from Midian and Ephah
will cross your land.
Long lines of camels will come from Sheba.
They will bring gold and incense.
People will sing praises to the Lord.
- 7 People will collect all the sheep
from Kedar
and give them to you.
They will bring you rams from Nebaioth.
You will offer those animals on my altar.
And I will accept them.
I will make my wonderful temple*
even more beautiful.
- 8 Look at the people!
They are hurrying to you
like clouds quickly crossing the sky.
They are like doves flying to their nests.
- 9 The faraway lands are waiting for me.
The great cargo ships are ready to sail.
Those ships are ready to bring
your children from faraway lands.
They will bring silver and gold with them
to honor the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel.
The Lord does wonderful things for you.
- 10 Children from other lands
will build your walls again.
Their kings will serve you.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

- “When I was angry, I hurt you.
But now, I want to be kind to you.
So I will comfort you.
- 11 Your gates will always be open.
They will not be closed night or day.
Nations and kings will bring
their wealth to you.
- 12 Any nation or kingdom
that does not serve you
will be destroyed.
- 13 All the great things of Lebanon*
will be given to you.
People will bring pine trees, fir trees,
and cypress trees to you.
These trees will be used for lumber
to make my holy place* more beautiful.
This place is like a stool
in front of my throne,
And I will give it much honor.
- 14 In the past, people hurt you.
Those people will bow down before you.
In the past, people hated you.
Those people will bow down
at your feet.
Those people will call you
‘The Lord’s City.’
‘The Zion* of the Holy One of Israel.’”

The New Israel: Land of Peace

- 15 “You will never again be left alone.
You will never again be hated.
You will never again be empty.
I will make you great forever.
You will be happy forever and ever.
- 16 Nations [will give you everything
you need].
It will be like a child
drinking milk from its mother.
But you will ‘drink’ riches from kings.
Then you will know that it is I, the Lord,
who saves you.
You will know that the Great God
of Jacob protects you.

Lebanon A country north of Israel. It was famous for its great cedar and pine trees.

my holy place This probably means the temple in Jerusalem.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

- 17 “You now have copper,
I will bring you gold.
You now have iron,
I will bring you silver.
I will change your wood into copper.
I will change your rocks into iron.
I will change your punishment into peace.
People now hurt you,
but people will do good things for you.
- 18 “There will never again be news of violence
in your country.
People will never again attack your country
and steal from you.
You will name your walls,
‘Salvation.’
You will name your gates,
‘Praise.’
- 19 “The sun will no longer be your light
during the day.
The light from the moon will no longer
be your light _{at night}.
Because the Lord will be your light forever.
Your God will be your glory.
- 20 Your ‘sun’ will never go down again.
Your ‘moon’ will never be dark again.
Because the Lord will be your light forever.
And your time of sadness will end.
- 21 “All of your people will be good.
Those people will get the earth forever.
I made those people.
They are the wonderful plant
that I made with my own hands.
- 22 The smallest family will become
a large family group.
The smallest family will become
a powerful nation.
When the time is right,
I, the Lord, will come quickly.
I will make these things happen.”

The Lord’s Message of Freedom

61 _I The Lord’s servant says, _I “The Lord my Master put his Spirit in me. God chose me to tell good news to poor people and to comfort sad people. God sent me to tell the captives that they are free and to tell the prisoners that they have been set free. ²God

sent me to announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness. God sent me to announce the time when our God will punish evil people. God sent me to comfort sad people. ³God sent me to the sad people of Zion. _I I will get them ready for the celebration. _I I will take away the ashes on their head, and I will give them a crown. I will take away their sadness, and I will give them the oil of happiness. I will take away their sorrow, and I will give them celebration clothes. God sent me to name those people ‘Good Trees’ and ‘The Lord’s Wonderful Plant.’

⁴ “At that time, the old cities that were destroyed will be built again. Those cities will be made new like they were in the beginning. The cities that were destroyed for many, many years will be made like new.

⁵ “Then your enemies will come to you and care for your sheep. The children of your enemies will work in your fields and in your gardens. ⁶You will be called, ‘The Lord’s Priests,’ ‘The Servants of our God.’ You will have the riches that come from all the nations on earth. And you will be proud you have it.

⁷ “In the past other people shamed you and said bad things to you. You were shamed much more than any other people. So in your land you will get two times more than other people. You will get happiness that continues forever. ⁸_{Why will this happen?} Because I am the Lord and I love fairness. I hate stealing and everything that is wrong. So I will give the people the payment they should have. I will make an Agreement with my people forever. ⁹Everyone in all nations will know my people. Everyone will know the children from my nation. Any person that sees them will know that the Lord blesses them.”

God’s Servant Brings Salvation

- ¹⁰ “The Lord makes me very, very happy.
My whole self is happy in my God.
The Lord put the clothes of salvation on me.
These clothes are like the nice clothes
a man wears at his wedding.
The Lord put the coat of goodness on me.
This coat is like the beautiful clothes
a woman wears at her wedding.

11 The earth causes plants to grow.
 People plant seeds in the garden,
 and the garden makes them grow.
 In the same way, the Lord
 will make goodness grow.
 The Lord will make praise grow
 in all the nations.”

New Jerusalem: A City Full of Goodness

62 “I love Zion,
 so I will continue to speak for her.
 I love Jerusalem,
 so I will not stop speaking.
 I will speak until goodness shines
 like a bright light.
 I will speak until salvation burns bright
 like a flame.
 2 Then all nations will see your goodness.
 All kings will see your honor.
 Then you will have a new name.
 The Lord himself will give you
 that new name.
 3 The Lord will be very proud of you.
 You will be like a beautiful crown
 in the Lord’s hand.
 4 You will never again be called
 ‘The People that God had Left.’
 Your land will never again be called
 ‘The Land that God Destroyed.’
 You will be called
 ‘The People God Loves.’
 Your land will be called
 ‘God’s Bride.’
 Why? Because the Lord loves you.
 And your land will belong to him.
 5 When a young man loves a woman,
 he marries her,
 and she becomes his wife.
 In the same way, your land will belong
 to your children.
 A man is very happy with his new wife.
 In the same way, your God
 will be very happy with you.”

God Will Keep His Promises

6 “Jerusalem, I put guards (*prophets*)
 on your walls.
 Those guards will not be silent.
 They will keep praying day and night.”

Guards, you must keep praying to
 the Lord.
 You must make him remember
 his promise.
 Don’t ever stop praying.
 7 You must pray to the Lord
 until he makes Jerusalem a city
 that people on earth will praise.
 8 The Lord made a promise.
 The Lord used his own power as proof.
 And the Lord will use his power
 to keep that promise.
 The Lord said,
 “I promise that I will never again
 give your food to your enemies.
 I promise that your enemies
 will never again take the wine
 that you make.
 9 The person that gathers food will eat it,
 and that person will praise the Lord.
 The person that gathers the grapes,
 will drink the wine [from those grapes].
 All these things will happen
 in my holy land.”
 10 Come through the gates!
 Make the way clear for the people!
 Prepare the road!
 Move all the stones off the road!
 Raise the flag as a sign for the people!
 11 Listen, the Lord is speaking to all the
 faraway lands:
 “Tell the people of Zion:”
 Look, your Savior is coming.
 He is bringing your reward to you.
 He is bringing that reward with him.”
 12 His people will be called:
 “The Holy People,”
 “The Saved People of the Lord.”
 And Jerusalem will be called:
 “The City God Wants,”
 “The City God Is With.”

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on.
 Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

The Lord Judges His People

- 63 Who is this coming from Edom?*
- He comes from Bozrah.*
- And his clothes are stained bright red.
- He is glorious in his clothes.
- He is walking tall with his great power.
- He says,
- “I have the power to save you.
- And I speak the truth.”
- 2 “Why are your clothes bright red?
- They are like the clothes of a person
- that walks on grapes to make wine!”
- 3 [He answers,]
- “I walked in the winepress* by myself.
- No one helped me.
- I was angry and I walked on the grapes.
- The juice* splashed on my clothes.
- So now my clothes are dirty.
- 4 I chose a time to punish people.
- Now the time has come for me
- to save and protect my people.
- 5 I looked around, but I saw no person
- to help me.
- I was surprised that no one supported me.
- So I used my own power
- to save my people.
- My own anger supported me.
- 6 While I was angry, I walked on people.
- I punished them while I was mad.
- I poured their blood* on the ground.”

The Lord Has Been Kind to His People

- 7 I will remember that the Lord is kind.
- And I will remember to praise the Lord.
- The Lord gave many good things to the
- family of Israel.
- The Lord has been very kind to us.
- The Lord showed mercy to us.
- 8 The Lord said,
- “These are my people.
- These are my real children.”
- So the Lord saved those people.

Edom A country east of Judah.

Bozrah A city in Edom.

winepress A place where people walk on grapes to squeeze the juice from them. This juice then becomes wine.

juice Or, “strong drink” or “blood.”

blood Or, “strong drink” or “strength.”

- 9 The people had many troubles,
- but the Lord was not against them.
- The Lord loved the people
- and felt sorry for them.
- So the Lord saved them.
- He sent his special angel to save them.
- He picked them up and carried them,
- and [he will take care of them] forever.
- 10 But the people turned against the Lord.
- They made his Holy Spirit very sad.
- So the Lord became their enemy.
- The Lord fought against those people.
- 11 But the Lord still remembers
- what happened a long time ago.
- He remembers Moses and his people.
- The Lord is the One who brought
- the people through the sea.
- The Lord used his shepherds (*prophets*)
- to lead his flock (*people*).
- But where is the Lord now—
- the One who put his Spirit in Moses?
- 12 The Lord led Moses by the right hand.
- The Lord used his wonderful power
- to lead Moses.
- The Lord divided the water
- so that the people could walk
- through the sea.
- The Lord made his name famous
- by doing those great things.
- 13 The Lord led the people
- through the deep seas.
- The people walked without falling,
- like a horse walking through the desert.
- 14 A cow does not fall,
- just walking in the field.
- [In the same way, the people did not fall
- while going through the sea.]
- The Lord’s Spirit led the people
- to a resting place.
- The people were safe the whole time.
- Lord, that is the way
- you led your people.
- You led the people
- and you made your name wonderful.

A Prayer for God to Help His People

- 15 Lord, look down from the heavens.
- See the things that are happening now!

- Look down at us from your great and holy home in heaven.
Where is your strong love* for us?
Where are your powerful works that come from deep inside you?
Where is your mercy for me?
Why are you hiding your kind love from me?
- 16 Look! You are our father!
Abraham doesn't know us.
Israel (*Jacob*) does not recognize us.
Lord, you are our father!
You are the One who has always saved us!
- 17 Lord, why are you pushing us away from you?
Why are you making it hard for us to follow you?
Come back to us Lord!
We are your servants.
Come to us and help us!
Our families belong to you.
- 18 Your holy people lived in their land only a short time.
Then our enemies trampled (*walk on*) your holy temple.*
- 19 Some people don't follow you.
Those people don't wear your name.
And we were like those people.
- 64¹ If you would tear open the skies and come down to earth,
then everything would change.
The mountains would melt before you.
- 2 [The mountains] would burst into flames like burning bushes.
[The mountains would boil like] water on the fire.
Then your enemies would learn about you.
Then all nations would shake with fear when they see you.
- 3 But we don't really want you to do these things.
The mountains would melt before you.
- 4 Your people never really listened to you.
Your people never really heard the things you said.
No person has ever seen a God like you.
There is no other God—only you.
If people are patient and wait for you to help them, then you will do great things for them.
- 5 You are with people that enjoy doing good.
Those people remember you by living the way you want them to.
But in the past we sinned against you.
So you became angry at us.
Now, how will we be saved?
- 6 We are all dirty with sin.
Even our good works [are not pure].
They are like blood-stained rags.
We are all like dead leaves.
Our sins have carried us away like wind.
- 7 We don't worship you.
We don't trust in your name.
We aren't excited about following you.
So you have turned away from us.
We are helpless before you, because we are full of sin.
- 8 But Lord, you are our father.
We are like clay.
And you are the potter.*
Your hands made us all.
- 9 Lord, don't continue to be angry with us!
Don't remember our sins forever!
Please, look at us!
We are your people.
- 10 Your holy cities are empty.
Those cities are like deserts now.
Zion* is a desert!
Jerusalem is destroyed!
- 11 Our ancestors worshiped you in our holy temple.
Our temple was so wonderful, but now it has been burned in the fire!
All our precious possessions have been destroyed.

strong love This Hebrew word means strong feelings like love, hate, anger, zeal, or jealousy.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

potter A person that makes pots and other things from clay.

Zion The southeast part of the mountain Jerusalem is built on. Sometimes it means the people of God living in Jerusalem.

- 12 Will these things always keep you from
 showing your love to us?
 Will you continue to say nothing?
 Will you punish us forever?

All People Will Learn About God

65 The Lord says, “I helped people that had not come to me for advice. The people that found me were not looking for me. I spoke to a nation that does not wear my name. I said, ‘Here I am! Here I am!’

²“I stood ready to accept people that turned against me. I was waiting for those people to come to me. But they continued living a way that is not good. They did anything their hearts wanted to do. ³Those people are in front of me always making me angry. Those people offer sacrifices* and burn incense* in their special gardens.* ⁴Those people sit among the graves. They wait to get messages from dead people. They even live among dead bodies. They eat pig meat. Their forks and knives are dirty with rotten meat.

⁵“But those people tell other people, ‘Don’t come near me! Don’t touch me until I make you clean.’ Those people are like smoke in my eyes. And their fire burns all the time.”

Israel Must Be Punished

⁶“Look, here is a bill that must be paid. [This bill shows you are guilty for your sins.] I will not be quiet until I pay this bill, and I will pay the bill by punishing you.

⁷“Your sins and your fathers’ sins are all the same.” The Lord said this, “Your fathers did these sins when they burned incense* in the mountains. They shamed me on those hills. And I punished them first. I gave them the punishment they should have.”

God Will Not Completely Destroy Israel

⁸The Lord says, “When there is new wine in the grapes, people squeeze out the wine. But they don’t completely destroy the grapes.

sacrifices Gifts to God. Sometimes these were special kinds of animals that were killed and burned on an altar.

incense A kind of spice that smells good when it is burned. It was burned as a gift to God.

special gardens Gardens where people worshiped false gods.

They do this because the grapes can still be used. I will do the same thing to my servants. I will not completely destroy them. ⁹I will keep some of the people of Jacob (*Israel*). Some of the people of Judah will get my mountain. My servants will live there. I will choose the people that will live there. ¹⁰Then Sharon Valley* will be a field for sheep. The Valley of Achor* will be a place for cattle to rest. All these things will be for my people—the people that look for me.

¹¹“But you people left the Lord, so you will be punished. You people forgot about my holy mountain.* You began to worship Luck. You depend on the false god Fate.* ¹²[But I decide your future.] And I decided that you will be killed with a sword. You will all be killed. Why? Because I called to you, and you refused to answer me! I spoke to you, and you would not listen. You did the things that I say are evil. You decided to do the things that I don’t like.”

- 13 So the Lord my Master said these things.
 “My servants will eat,
 but you evil people will be hungry.
 My servants will drink,
 but you evil people will be thirsty.
 My servants will be happy,
 but you evil people will be shamed.
 14 My servants will be happy with joy,
 but you evil people will cry
 with sadness.*
 Your spirits will be broken,
 and you will be very sad.
 15 Your names will be like bad words
 to my servants.”

The Lord my Master will kill you.
 And he will call his servants
 by a new name.

- 16 People now ask blessings from the earth.
 [But in the future,] they will ask blessings
 from the faithful God.

Sharon Valley The low land along the coast of Palestine.

Valley of Achor A valley about ten miles north of Jerusalem.

my holy mountain Mount Zion, the mountain Jerusalem is built on.

Luck ... Fate Two false gods. The people thought these gods controlled their futures.

My servants ... sadness Literally, “My servants will rejoice with good hearts and you will scream with painful hearts.”

People now trust in the power of the earth
when they make a promise.

But in the future, they will trust
in the faithful God.

Why? Because the troubles in the past
will all be forgotten.

My people will never again
remember those troubles.

A New Time Is Coming

17 “I will make a new heaven and a new earth.
People will not remember the past.

They won’t remember any of those things.

18 My people will be happy.

They will rejoice forever and ever.

Why? Because of what I will make.

I will make a Jerusalem that is full of joy,
and I will make them a happy people.

19 “Then I will be happy with Jerusalem.

I will be happy with my people.

There will never again be crying
and sadness in that city.

20 There will never be a child from that city,
that is born and lives only a few days.

No person from that city will die
after only a short life.

Every child will live a long life,
and every older person will live
for a long, long time.

A person that lives 100 years
will be called young.

And people will think a person was cursed
if he does not live to be 100 years old.

21 “In that city, if a person builds a house,
that person will live there.

If a person plants a garden of grapes,
that person will eat the grapes
from that garden.

22 Never again will
one person build a house
and another person live there.

Never again will
one person plant a garden
and another person eat the fruit from it.

My people will live as long as the trees.

My chosen people will enjoy
the things they make.

23 Women will never again suffer childbirth
only to have the baby die.

Women will never again be afraid
of what might happen during childbirth.

All my people and their children
will be blessed by the Lord.

24 I will know what they need
before they ask.

And I will help them—
even before they finish asking.

25 Wolves and little lambs will eat together.

Lions will eat with cattle.

A snake on the ground will not scare
or hurt

any person on my holy mountain.”

The Lord said all those things.

God Will Judge All Nations

66 This is what the Lord says,
“The skies are my throne.

The earth is my footstool.

So do you think you can build
a house for me?

No! You can’t!

Can you give me a place to rest?

No! You can’t!

2 I myself made all things.

All things are here because I
made them.”

The Lord himself said these things.

“Tell me, what people do I care for?

I care for the poor people.

I care for the people that are very sad.

I care for people that obey my words.

3 Some people kill bulls [as a sacrifice],
but they also beat people.

Those people kill sheep as a sacrifice,
but they also break the necks of dogs!

Those people offer up grain offerings,
but they also offer the blood of pigs!*

Those people burn incense,*

but they also love their worthless idols.*

Those people choose their own ways.

And they also love their terrible idols.

dogs ... pigs God did not want his people to offer dogs and pigs
as sacrifices.

incense A kind of spice that smells good when it is burned. It
was burned as a gift to God.

idols Statues of false gods that people worshiped.

4 So I decided to use their own tricks!
 I mean that, I will punish them
 using the things they are most
 afraid of.

I called to those people,
 but they did not listen.

I spoke to them,
 but they did not hear me.

So I will do the same thing to them.

Those people did things I said are evil.

They chose to do things I did not like.”

5 You people that obey the Lord’s commands
 should listen to the things

the Lord says,

“Your brothers hated you.

They turned against you
 because you followed me.

Your brothers said,

‘We will come back to you
 when the Lord is honored.

Then we will be happy with you.’

Those bad people will be punished.

Punishment And A New Nation

⁶Listen! There is a loud noise coming from
 the city and the temple.* That noise is the
 Lord punishing his enemies. The Lord is
 giving them the punishment they should have.

^{7–8}“A woman does not give birth before
 she feels the pain. A woman must feel the
 pain of childbirth before she can see the boy
 she gives birth to. In the same way, no
 person ever saw a new world begin in one
 day. No person has ever heard of a new nation
 that began in one day. The land must first
 have pain like the pain of birth. After the birth
 pain then the land will give birth to her
 children—a new nation. ⁹In the same way, I
 will not cause pain without allowing
 something new to be born.”

The Lord says this. “I promise, if I cause
 you the pain of birth then I will not stop you
 from having your new nation.” Your God
 said this.

10 Jerusalem, be happy!
 All you people who love Jerusalem,
 be happy!

Sad things happened to Jerusalem,
 so some of you people are sad.

But now you people should be happy.

11 Why? Because you will receive mercy
 like milk coming from her breast.

That “milk” will truly satisfy you!

You people will drink the milk,
 and you will truly enjoy

the glory of Jerusalem.

12 The Lord says,

“Look, I will give you peace.

This peace will come flowing to you
 like a great river.

Wealth from all the nations on earth
 will come flowing to you.

That wealth will come like a flood.

You will be like little babies,

You will drink that ‘milk’ (*wealth*)

I will pick you up,

hold you in my arms,

and bounce you on my knees.

13 I will comfort you like a mother
 comforts her child.

And you will be in Jerusalem when
 I comfort you!”

14 You will see the things that you truly enjoy.

You will be free and grow like grass.

The Lord’s servants will see his power,
 but the Lord’s enemies will see
 his anger.

¹⁵Look, the Lord is coming with fire. The
 Lord’s armies are coming with clouds of dust.
 The Lord will punish those people with his
 anger. The Lord will use flames of fire to
 punish those people while he is angry. ¹⁶The
 Lord will judge the people. Then the Lord
 will destroy the people with fire and with his
 sword. The Lord will destroy many people.

¹⁷Those people wash themselves to make
 themselves pure for worshipping in their
 special gardens.* These people follow each
 other into their special gardens. Then they

temple A special building for worshipping God. God commanded
 the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

special gardens Gardens where people worshiped false gods.

worship their idols. But, the Lord will destroy all those people.

“Those people eat the meat from pigs, rats, and other dirty things. But, all of those people will be destroyed together.” (The Lord himself said these things.)

¹⁸“Those people have evil thoughts and do evil things. So I am coming to punish them. I will gather all nations and all people. All people will come together and see my power. ¹⁹I will put a mark on some of the people—I will save them. I will send some of these saved people to the nations Tarshish,* Libya,* Lud* (the land of archers*), Tubal,* Greece, and all the faraway lands. Those people have never heard my teachings. Those people have never seen my Glory.* So the saved people will tell the nations about my glory. ²⁰And they will bring all your brothers and sisters from all nations. They will bring your brothers and sisters to my holy mountain,* Jerusalem. Your brothers and sisters will come on horses,

donkeys, camels, and in chariots and wagons. Your brothers and sisters will be like the gifts that the people of Israel bring on clean plates to the Lord’s temple.* ²¹I will also choose some of these people to be priests and Levites.*” The Lord himself said these things.

The New Heavens and the New Earth

²²“I will make a new world—and the new heavens and the new earth will last forever. In the same way, your names and your children will always be with me. ²³All people will come to worship me on every worship day; they will come every Sabbath* and every first day of the month.*

²⁴“These people will be in my holy city. And if they go out of the city they will see the dead bodies of the people that sinned against me. There will be worms in those bodies—and the worms will never die. Fires will burn those bodies—and the fires will never stop.”

Tarshish A city far away from Israel, probably in Spain. Tarshish was famous for its large ships that sailed the Mediterranean Sea.

Libya A country in North Africa, west of Egypt.

Lud This country was probably in the country that is now western Turkey.

archers Soldiers that use bows and arrows in war.

Tubal This country was probably in the country that is now eastern Turkey.

my Glory The “Glory of the Lord,” one of the forms God used when he appeared to people. It was like a bright shining light. See Ex. 40:34–36.

my holy mountain This is probably Mount Zion, the mountain Jerusalem is built on.

temple A special building for worshiping God. God commanded the Jews to worship him at the temple in Jerusalem.

Levites People from the family group of Levi. Only Levites could help the priests in the temple.

Sabbath Saturday, a special day of rest and worship for Jews.

first day of the month Literally, “new moon,” the first day of the Jewish month and a special day of worship.