

# ISAIAH

## INTRODUCTION

Isaiah prophesied to the Jews in Judea concerning Judah and Jerusalem, during the reigns of:

1. Uzziah, 785-747 B.C.-10<sup>th</sup> king.
2. Jotham, 758-743 B.C.-11<sup>th</sup> king.
3. Ahaz, 742-725 B.C.-12<sup>th</sup> king.
4. Hezekiah, 725-697 B.C.-13<sup>th</sup> king.

Isaiah dates 740 to 680 B.C., and the historical setting is 2 Kings, chapter 15-21 and 2 Chronicles, chapter 26-30.

Purpose of the book of Isaiah is to preach to God's people (Judah and Jerusalem) the ideal kingdom for all people which would be established with the coming of the Messiah and that man going his own self-willed way was doomed to failure.

The theme of the book of Isaiah is "salvation through faith by grace."

Isaiah was a prophet, a spokesman for God and speaks for God.

Isaiah's message to Judah was one of stern rebuke:

1. Social injustice was rampant in the land, with rich landowners exploiting the poor.
2. Jerusalem was a seething cauldron of political factions, intrigue, and corruption.
3. Spiritual life was at low ebb with both priests and prophets flattering the wealthy in hope of gain.

### Prophecies relating to the nations:

1. The book opens with a series of denunciations against various nations of Isaiah's time. First Judah and Jerusalem are judged by the Lord. The whole nation is arraigned for its various sins.
2. A series of specific prophecies is given against Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Cush and Egypt, Babylon, Edom, Arabia, Jerusalem and Tyre.
3. Isaiah gives some very general prophecies about heaven's judgment of the whole earth in the Day of the Lord.
4. This section closes with woes against the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. Judah is warned to trust the Lord rather than an alliance with Egypt.

### The historical bridge of Isaiah:

1. Chapters 36 thru 39 serve to bridge the early part of the book which relates to the Assyrian period of dominance in the region with the latter section and its predictions about the Babylonian period and beyond.
2. When Sennacherib invaded Judah in 701 B.C. and threatened Jerusalem Hezekiah sent for Isaiah. The prophet promised deliverance in the name of the Lord, and an angel of God destroyed the Assyrian army. (185,000)
3. Hezekiah became ill and prayed to the Lord for deliverance. God heard his plea and extended his life 15 years. When messengers from Babylon came to congratulate the king on his recovery Hezekiah foolishly displayed the nation's treasure to them. The word of the Lord through Isaiah predicted that Babylon would one day plunder Judah's treasures.

### Isaiah's look into the future:

1. The book looks forward to the Lord's gracious deliverance.

2. In the power of the almighty God heaven would raise up deliverance for the Jews exiled in Babylon through King Cyrus.
3. Beyond restoration of their homeland through Cyrus, the prophet pointed forward to the ultimate deliverance which would come through the Suffering Servant.

The book closes both with pleas for immediate repentance on the part of Isaiah's contemporaries and with a realization that things will not be made fully right until the Messiah appears on the scene.

"The Salvation of God" is the theme of Isaiah.

Isaiah was bold, earnest, and unafraid. He lived under five different kings, only one of whom was religious and God-fearing.

Isaiah is deeply reverent and spiritual.

Tradition tells us, Isaiah died during the reign of Manasseh by being placed between two planks and sawn in two. (Hebrews 11:37)

Isaiah's task was to explain to the covenant people of God that had defaulted on their commission to be a light to lighten the world. They must be purged. Captivity will come.

A "faithful remnant" will return to Israel out of captivity and out of this remnant will come the "seed of woman" to bruise the serpent's head.

## **Chapter 1 THE IMPEACHING ACCUSATION**

### **Verses 1-9 GOD'S COMPLAINT**

These are the messages that came to Isaiah, son of Amoz, in the visions he saw during the reigns of King Uzziah, King Jotham, King Ahaz, and King Hezekiah—all Kings of Judah.

In these messages God showed him what was going to happen to Judah and Jerusalem in the days ahead.

Listen, O heaven and earth, to what the Lord is saying: the children I raised and cared for so long and tenderly have turned against Me. Even the animals—the donkey and the ox—know their owner and appreciate his care for them, but not My people Israel.

No matter what I do for them, they still don't care. Oh, what a sinful nation they are! They walk in reverse from the way I have asked them to walk. Their fathers before them were evil too.

Born to be bad, they have turned their backs upon the Lord, and have despised the Holy One of Israel. They have cut themselves off from My help. Oh, my people, haven't you had enough of punishment? Why will you force Me to whip you again and again? Must you forever rebel?

From head to foot you are sick and weak and faint, covered with bruises and welts and infected wounds, untreated; and unbound. Your country lies in ruins; your cities are burned; while you watch, foreigners are destroying and plundering everything they see.

You stand there helpless and abandoned like a watchman's shanty in the field when the harvest time is over—or when the crop is stripped and robbed.

If the Lord of Hosts had not stepped in to save a few of us; we would have been wiped out as Sodom and Gomorrah were.

#### **Verses 10-17 GOD'S CORRECTION**

An apt comparison, you leaders of Israel, you men of Sodom and Gomorrah, as I call you now. Listen to the Lord. Hear what He is telling you! I am sick of your sacrifices. Don't bring me any more of them. I don't want your fat rams, I don't want to see the blood from your offerings. Who wants your sacrifices when you have no sorrow for your sins?

The incense you bring Me is a stench in my nostrils. Your holy celebrations of the new moon and Sabbath, and your special days for fasting—even your most pious meetings—all are frauds! I want nothing more to do with them. I hate them all; I can't stand the sight of them.

From now on, when you pray with your hands stretched out to heaven, I won't look or listen. Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear, for your hands are those of murderers; they are covered with the blood of your innocent victims.

O, wash yourselves! Be clean! Let me no longer see you doing all those wicked things; quit your evil ways. Learn to do good, to be fair and to help the poor, the fatherless and widows.

### **Verses 18-20 GOD'S CALL**

Come! Think about this matter says the Lord; no matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you white as wool!

If you will only be willing to let Me help you, if you will only obey, then I will make you rich. But if you keep on turning your backs and refusing to listen to Me, you will be killed by your enemies; I, the Lord, have spoken.

### **Verses 21-23 REASON FOR JUDGMENT, THE CORRUPT CITY**

Jerusalem, once My faithful wife and now a prostitute running after other gods. You were once the city of fair play, but now a gang of murderers. Once like sterling silver; now mixed with worthless alloy! Once so pure, but now diluted like watered-down wine! Your leaders are rebels, companions of thieves; all of them take bribes and won't defend the widows and orphans.

### **Verses 24-31 THE RESULTS OF JUDGMENT, A CLEANSED CITY**

Therefore, the Lord of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, says: "I will pour out my anger on you, My enemies! I myself will melt you in a smelting pot, and skim off your slag. And afterwards I will give you good judges and wise counselors like those you used to have." Then your city shall again be called "The City of Justice," and "The Faithful Town." Those who return to the Lord, who are just and good, shall be redeemed.

(But all sinners shall utterly perish, for they refuse to come to Me.) Shame will cover you, and you will blush to think of all those times you sacrificed to

idols in your groves of “sacred” oaks. You will perish like a withered tree or a garden without water.

The strongest among you will disappear like burning straw; your evil deeds are the spark that sets the straw on fire, and no one will be able to put it out.

## **Chapter 2 VISION OF THE COMING MESSIANIC AGE**

### **Verses 1-4 THE LORD’S HOUSE ESTABLISHED**

And this is the message to Isaiah from the Lord concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In the closing days of the Old Testament era the faithful people of God’s remnant will grow into a great and spectacular kingdom into which people from all the nations and races on the earth will come for membership.

They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, into this universal kingdom, saying, "Let us join with this faithful remnant and learn the One True God of Israel; He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths." Out of this Heavenly Community will go forth the revealed will and word of God. And God, Himself, through His word will arbitrate between citizens of this new kingdom.

Its citizens shall be people of peace and love and they will not fight against one another anymore. All their activities and attributes will be directed toward fruitful and productive ends.

### **Verses 5-9 LIGHT UPON THE DARKNESS**

If the nations are going to seek to walk in His ways, O house of Jacob, then, come let us walk in the light of God also!

But, thou O God has withdrawn the mercy from the house of Jacob because they are filled with the superstition and idolatry of the eastern peoples and God’s sons have become like a nation of uncircumcised Philistines; they reject their own godly heritage to fraternize with foreign unbelievers and their pagan life.

They have become money mad and filled the land with the machinery of war.

More heinous than that, however, is their inordinate, insatiable hunger to practice idolatry—the land is filled with idols. The common men and the great men all bow down before things they have invented with their own hands. Do not forgive them, O Lord!

### **Verses 10-22 LOSS OF DIGNITY**

There is only one recourse left to you. Come, crawl into the depressions in the rocks or holes in the earth and try to hide from the terror and majesty of God's inexorable judgment.

For the day is coming, when your proud looks will be turned into looks of terror and shame and God alone will be exalted. On that day the Lord of Hosts will act against the proud and haughty and bring them down into the dust.

All the tall cedars of Lebanon and the mighty oaks of Bashan which you admire and feel secure about will bend low. All the high mountains and hills, and every military tower and fortified wall, and all the proud ocean ships which bring you commercial treasure and the trim pleasure craft which you enjoy so—all shall be crushed before the Lord that day.

All the glory of mankind will bow low; the pride of men will lie impotent in the dust, and the Lord alone shall be exalted.

Finally, idolatry shall be utterly abolished and destroyed. When the Lord stands up from His throne to shake the earth, His enemies will crawl with fear into the holes in the rocks and into the caves because of the glory of His majesty.

Then will be the time when they will at last abandon their gold and silver idols to the moles and bats, and crawl into the caverns to hide among the jagged rocks at the tops of the cliffs to try to get away from the terror of the Lord and the glory of His majesty when He rises to terrify the earth.

Quit placing your confidence for salvation in puny man! Man's life is extremely transitory! He is nothing compared to God!

## Chapter 3 THE VENGEANCE UPON DECADENCE

### Verses 1-15 THE WEALTHY

The Lord of Hosts is about to cut off Jerusalem's and Judah's food and water supplies. He is about to kill her leaders; He will destroy her armies, judges, prophets, elders, army officers, businessmen, lawyers, expert craftsmen and magicians. Israel's kings will be immature boys and they will rule like capricious children.

The worst sort of anarchy will prevail—everyone stepping on someone else, neighbors fighting neighbors, youths revolting against authority, criminals sneering at honorable men.

The days will be characterized by such widespread poverty, ruin and destitution, that when men find one of their brethren who seems to be prosperous they will try to force him to be their king, saying, you have extra clothing, so you be our king and take care of this mess we are all in.

He will reply, absolutely not! I do not want any part of leadership in such a state of affairs as these.

Judah's civil government will be in utter ruin because its people have spoken against all that God stands for and has acted in the same way. They have refused to worship Him; they have exhibited their brazen rebellion before the eyes of His glorious presence.

The evil thoughts of their hearts they brazenly manifest in their facial expressions. And they boast about their sins being as bad as those of Sodom—they show no shame about it at all. How utterly horrible! They have sealed their own doom!

Still, all will be well for the godly man. Tell him that he will be rewarded with goodness because he has done goodness. But say to the wicked, your doom is certain!

You too shall be rewarded according to what you have done—evil! O My people, can you see what fools your rulers are? They are as weak and vacillating as women.



They are foolish and capricious as little children, playing at being king. True leaders, no misleaders! They are leading you down the path of evil unto destruction.

Look! The Lord is standing up—He is preparing to act as Prosecutor and Judge—to convict and sentence.

First to feel the wrath of His judgment will be the elders and the princes, for they have defrauded the poor. They have grown prosperous with the properties they have extorted from the helpless poor. They have literally consumed the poor. How dare you grind My people by your greedy oppression into nothingness.

You press them and squeeze them until there is nothing left of them. This is the accusation of the Lord God of Hosts!

#### **Verses 3:16-4:1 THE WOMEN**

In addition to the foregoing judgments, God will judge the haughty women of Judah who walk along with their noses in the air, looking suggestively and seductively at men with their eyes; mincing and affecting their steps so that the tinkling bracelets on their ankles will direct attention to them.

Because of their unashamed haughtiness, the Lord will strike them with repugnant scabs and wounds to ornament their heads, and those who delight in immodest exposure the Lord will permit to be immodestly exposed at the hands of vile men.

No longer shall they call attention to themselves by tinkling as they walk. For the Lord will strip away their facade of beauty when He takes away their anklets, amulets, crescents, pendants, bracelets, veils, headdresses, armbands, sashes, perfume boxes, charms, ornate purses and combs, mirrors, lovely lingerie, beautiful dresses and veils.

Instead of smelling of perfume, they shall stink; for sashes they shall wear ropes like prisoners and slaves; their well-kept hair will begin to fall out; they will wear sackcloth instead of robes. Their beauty will be marred with the

branding iron of their captors. Their husbands shall die in battle; the women, alone and helpless, shall mourn.

The city herself shall be desolate and alone and have nothing left to do but sit and mourn.

At that time so few men will be left alive that seven women; all fearing childlessness, will fight over one man and say, let us all become your wives! We will furnish our own food and clothing—only give us a name and children.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Verses 2-6 THE VICTORY OF THE CLEANSED**

In those latter days when the glorious future of the mountain of the house of the Lord comes to pass, the Messiah, the Branch of the house of David, will bring God's people their true beauty and glory; this Branch in His humanity will be the offspring of Israel and will exhibit the true beauty and godliness which only God's saved ones recognize as the true glory of humanity.

All those who have escaped the wrath of God and have found salvation at Zion will be named holy.

These have their names written down in God's book of life. This will all be done for God's people when God has brought about a washing away of the filth of sin that which has contaminated the women of Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit of God will accomplish this through a judgment and purging. Then the Lord will create over the whole covenant people, wherever they may assemble, Divine guidance, Divine protection and Divine access.

Over all His saved people God will create a shelter which will afford them divine protection and refreshment sufficient to meet every danger and need.

## **Chapter 5 THE IMPRECATION OF ABANDONMENT**

### **Verses 1-7 THE WORDS OF ACCUSATION**

Now I shall sing indeed of my Beloved a song of my Beloved about His vineyard. My Beloved has a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He plowed it carefully and took out all the rocks and planted His vineyard with the choicest vines. He built a sturdy watchtower in the middle of it to aid in its protection and cut a permanent wine-press out of the solid rock. Then He patiently waited anticipating a bountiful harvest of sweet grapes. But the grapes that grew were wild and putrid.

*Now, men of Jerusalem and Judah, you have heard the case! You are the judges! What more could I have done?*

*Now I would indeed have you to know what I am about to do to My vineyard; I shall remove the fence of hedge and the vineyard shall be consumed by predators and I shall break down its wall of stone and it shall be trampled down by wild beasts.*

*I will not prune it or cultivate it anymore. I have been giving you the case of God's people. They are the vineyard I have been speaking about. Israel and Judah were His pleasant plantings. He expected justice, but they produced bloodshed instead. He expected righteousness, but the cries of deep oppression came to them.*

### **Verses 8-23 THE WOES OF APPLICATION**

*Woe to you who acquire property so others have no place to live.*

*Your homes are built on great estates so you can be alone in the midst of great expanses of land! But the Lord of Hosts has sworn your awful fate—with my own ears I heard Him say, many a beautiful home will be deserted, their owners killed or gone.*

*Ten acres of vineyard will produce less than ten gallons of wine, and ten bushels of seed will produce less than one bushel of grain.*

*Woe to you who get up very early in the morning to debauch and debate yourselves with endless carousing and drinking of strong drink. Your addiction*

is insatiable and you drink yourselves into a stupor. By the riotous merriment of your festivities accompanied by the loud pagan music, you have very affectively turned your attention away from the work of the Lord and have made yourself insensible to His ways.

Sin has so darkened your spiritual understanding you are as good as banished from the Lord's presence into captivity—there is no alternative left to Him but to punish the leaders and the people of this nation with the consequences of their rebellions.

There will be both spiritual and physical starvation. Death and the grave are waiting with mouths wide open to devour the multitudes that will die. Those who rebel in injustice and pompousness will be swallowed up in God's punishment. In that day the haughty shall be brought down to the dust; the proud shall be humbled; and the Lord of Hosts will be exalted above all, for He alone is holy, just and good.

The devastation of what was once the vineyard of the Lord will be so complete as to turn the glorious land into pastures for wandering flocks of sheep and goats.

Woe to those who are so enslaved to their sins that they drag them along with them everywhere they go like dumb oxen pulling carts. The ropes which bind them to their sins are the lying vanities with which they have deceived themselves. They are so brazen as to mock the Holy One of Israel and dare the Lord to punish them.

Hurry up and punish us, O Lord, they say. We want to see what You can do! Woe to them that turn all values upside down and say that what is right is wrong and wrong is right; that black is white and white is black; bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter.

Woe to those who are heroes when it comes to getting drunk, and boast about the wine they can hold. Woe to those who pervert justice by taking bribes, letting the guilty go free and putting innocent men in prison.

## **Verses 24-30 THE WRATH OF JUDGMENT**

Therefore, God will deal with them and burn them. They will disappear like straw on fire. Their roots will rot and their flowers wither, for they have thrown away the laws of God and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.

That is why the anger of the Lord is hot against His people. That is why He has reached out His hand to smash them. The hills will tremble and the rotting bodies of His people will be thrown as refuse in the streets. But even so, His anger is not ended; His hand is heavy on them still. He will send a signal to the nations far away, whistling to those at the ends of the earth, and they will race toward Jerusalem. They never weary, never stumble, never stop; their belts are tight, their bootstraps strong; they run without stopping for rest or for sleep. Their arrows are sharp; their bows are bent; sparks fly from their horses' hoofs and the wheels of their chariots spin like the wind.

They roar like lions and pounce upon the prey. They seize My people and carry them off into captivity with none to rescue them.

They growl over the victims like the roaring of the sea. Over all Israel lies a pall of darkness and sorrow and the heavens are black.

## **Chapter 6 ILLUMINATION FROM THE ALMIGHTY**

### **Verses 1-4 THE GLORY**

The year King Uzziah died I saw the Lord! He was sitting on a lofty throne and the Temple was filled with His glory. Hovering about Him were mighty, six-winged seraphs. With two of their wings they covered their faces; with two others they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

In a great antiphonal chorus they sang, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is filled with His glory." Such singing it was! It shook the Temple to its foundations and suddenly the entire sanctuary was filled with smoke.

## **Verses 5-7 THE GRACE**

Then I said, “My doom is sealed for I am a foul-mouthed sinner a member of a foul-mouthed, sinful nation, and I have looked upon the Holy King.

Then one of the seraphs flew over to the altar and with a pair of tongs picked out a burning coal. He touched my lips with it and said, “Now you are pronounced ‘Not guilty’ because this coal has touched your lips. Your sins are all forgiven.”

## **Verses 8-10 THE COMMISSION**

Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom shall I send as a messenger to My people? Who will go? And I said, “**Lord, I’ll go! Send me.**” And He said, “Yes, go. But tell My people, ‘Though you hear My words repeatedly, you won’t understand them. Though you watch and watch as I perform My miracles, still you won’t know what they mean.’ Dull their understanding, close their ears and shut their eyes.”

I don’t want them to see or to hear or to understand, or to turn to Me to heal them.”

## **Verses 11-13 THE CONSEQUENCES**

Then I said, “Lord, how long will it be before they are ready to listen?” And He replied, “Not until their cities are destroyed...and without a person left...and the whole country is an utter wasteland. And they are all taken away, and all the land of Israel lies deserted! Yet a tenth...a remnant...will survive; and though Israel is invaded again and again and destroyed, yet Israel will be like a tree cut down, whose stump still lives to grow again.”

## **Chapter 7 A PROMISE OF IMMANUEL**

### **Verses 1-9 THE CRISIS**

During the reign of Ahaz (the son of Jotham, grandson of Uzziah), Jerusalem was attacked by King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel (the son of Remaliah). But it was not taken; the city stood. However, when the news came to the royal court, Syria is allied with Israel against us! The hearts of the king and his people trembled with fear as the trees of a forest shake in a storm.

Then the Lord said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet King Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub, your son. You will find him at the end of the aqueduct which leads from

Gihon Spring to the upper reservoir, near the road that leads down to the bleaching field. Tell him to quit worrying," the Lord said. "Tell him he needn't be frightened by the fierce anger of those two has-beens, Rezin and Pekah."

"Yes, the Kings of Syria and Israel are coming against you. They say, we will invade Judah and throw her people into panic, then we'll fight our way into Jerusalem and install the son of Tabeel as their King." But the Lord God says, "This plan will not succeed, for Damascus will remain the capital of Syria alone, and King Rezin's kingdom will not increase its boundaries. And within sixty-five years Ephraim, too, will be crushed and broken."

Samaria is the capital of Ephraim alone and King Pekah's power will not increase. You don't believe Me? If you want Me to protect you, you must learn to believe what I say!

#### **Verses 10-16 THE CHRIST**

Not long after this, the Lord sent this further message to King Ahaz: "Ask Me for a sign, Ahaz, to prove that I will indeed crush your enemies as I have said. Ask anything you like, in heaven or on earth." But the king refused. No, he said, "I'll not bother the Lord with anything like that." Then Isaiah said, "O house of David, you aren't satisfied to exhaust my patience; you exhaust the Lord's as well! All right then, the Lord Himself will choose the sign—a child shall be born to a virgin! And she shall call Him Immanuel (meaning, 'God is with us.')."

By the time it would take for the child to be weaned and come to know right from wrong, the two kings you fear so much—the kings of Israel and Syria—will be dead.

#### **Verses 17-25 CALAMITY**

But later on, the Lord will bring a terrible curse on you and on your nation and your family. There will be terror, such as has not been known since the division of Solomon's empire into Israel and Judah...the almighty king of Assyria will come with his great army! At that time the Lord will whistle for the army of Upper Egypt, and of Assyria too, to swarm down upon you like flies and destroy you, like bees to sting and to kill. They will come in vast hordes, spreading across the whole land, even into the desolate valleys and caves and thorny parts, as well as to all your fertile acres.

In that day the Lord will take this “razor”...these Assyrians you have hired to save you...and use it on you to shave off everything you have: your land, your crops, and your people. When they finally stop plundering, the whole nation will be a pastureland; whole flocks and herds will be destroyed, and a farmer will be fortunate to have a cow and two sheep left.

But the abundant pastureland will yield plenty of milk, and, everyone left will live on curds and wild honey. At that time the lush vineyards will become patches of briars. All the land will be one vast thorn field, a hunting ground overrun by wildlife.

No one will go to the fertile hillsides where once the gardens grew, for thorns will cover them; cattle, sheep, and goats will graze there.

## **Chapter 8 PREVISION OF IMMANUEL**

### **Verses 1-8 THE PROPHECY**

The Lord sent me a message: "Make a large signboard and write on it the birth announcement of the son I am going to give you. Use capital letters! His name will be *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* which means, your enemies will soon be destroyed!" I asked Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, both known as honest men, to watch me as I wrote so they could testify that I had written it (before the child was even on the way).

Then my wife conceived and bore me a son, and the Lord said, call him *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*. This name prophesies that within a couple of years, before this child is even old enough to say Daddy and Mommy, the king of Assyria will invade Damascus and Samaria and carry away their riches.

Then the Lord spoke to me again and said: "Since the people of Jerusalem are planning to refuse My gentle care and are enthusiastic about asking King Rezin and King Pekah to come and aid them. I will overwhelm My people with Euphrates' mighty flood; the king of Assyria and all his mighty armies will rage against them. This flood will overflow all its channels and sweep into your land of Judah, O Immanuel, submerging it from end to end."

### **Verses 9-15 THE PROMISE**

Do your worst, O Syria and Israel, our enemies, but you will not succeed...you will be shattered. Listen to me, all you enemies of ours: prepare for war against



us...and perish! Yes! Perish! Call your councils of war, develop your strategies, prepare your plans of attacking us, and perish!

For God is with us. The Lord has said in strongest terms: "Do not under any circumstances, go along with the plans of Judah to make an alliance with Assyria. Don't let people call you a traitor for staying true to God. Don't panic as so many of your neighbors are doing when they think of Syria and Israel attacking you.

Don't fear anything except the Lord of the armies of heaven! If you fear Him, you need fear nothing else. He will be your safety; but Israel and Judah have refused His care and thereby stumbled against the Rock of their salvation and lie fallen and crushed beneath it: God's presence among them has endangered them."

#### **Verses 16-22 THE PEDAGOGY**

"Complete the written testimony which I have given you, authenticate and corroborate it among My faithful remnant," said the Lord to me. But I trust the Lord, who is presently withdrawing from this rebellious nation, but my hope is in Him because He has promised to be with us again.

Behold, I and the children God has given me are signs that He keeps His word and fulfills His promises. Now when the unbelieving people shall advise you to try to find out the future by consulting mediums and witches, do not listen to their superstitions and jargon. Should not the people seek the truth from the God of all truth? How can they ever expect to find out about living from the dead?

Seek for truth in the law and testimony of God! Check these so-called revelations of the witches and mediums and if they are different than God's testimony then you know they do not speak for Him; there is not even the slightest dawning of light in them. My people are going to be led away captive, stumbling, weary and hungry.

And because they are hungry, those who do not trust Me will rave and shake their fists at heaven and curse their king and their God.

Wherever they look there will be trouble and anguish and dark despair. And they will be thrust out into the darkness of captivity.

## **Chapter 9 PEACE BY IMMANUEL**

### **Verses 1-7 HIS PERSONALITY**

But that time of darkness and despair will not be forever upon God's covenant people. In fact, while the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali is being held in contempt by God because of the paganism of its people, in the day the Messiah comes He will make that territory glorious by His work there—that is the territory that will then be Gentile territory, Galilee and beyond the Jordan.

Those who walk in the darkness of ignorance and sin will see a Great Light. This light will illuminate the way for those who live in the realms of deep darkness. You, God, will multiply your covenant people, you will increase their joy; your multiplying people will be filled with joy like that of reapers when the harvest time has come, and like that of men dividing up the treasures they have captured.

When the Light comes God will break the bondage of oppression upon His people by a great miraculous Divine act of victory over their enemy. At that time God shall utterly destroy the weapons of those who oppress His people and give His people complete peace.

For unto God's people a child will be born; God will give His people a Son. And the government of God will be administered by this Son. These will be the royal titles indicating His nature and character: Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. His government will be one of continued growth and peace and it will never end. He will occupy the throne of His progenitor David and will rule in perfect justice and righteousness His kingdom forever. God's zeal to vindicate His faithfulness and His zeal for His people will accomplish all this.

### **Verses 8-17 ISRAEL'S PRESUMPTION**

The Lord has penetrated into Jacob with His Word of warning—His word found its mark through the prophets. Soon all the people of Israel will experience what He has promised, because in the pride and haughtiness of their hearts they have said, "Let the judgment come, if the bricks of our houses and walls fall, we will just build houses and walls of hewn stone; if the sycamore trees are cut down, we will put cedars in their place."

The Lord's reply to your bragging is to bring Rezin's enemies against you—the Syrians on the east and the Philistines on the west. With bared fangs they will devour Israel.

But even then, the Lord's righteous anger against you will not be satisfied—His hand will still be poised to smash you. For after all this chastening, you will not repent and turn to seek God of Hosts.

Therefore, the Lord, in one day, will cut off from Israel the high and low; the elder and the honorable man is the high, and the prophet that teaches lies is the low.

These false leaders and teachers have led the people in error, and the people have been willing to be led in error—both shall be destroyed.

That is why the Lord has no joy in their young men, and no mercy upon even the widows and orphans; for they are all filthy-mouthed, wicked liars, foolish speakers. But even then, the Lord's righteous anger against you will not be satisfied—His hand will still be poised to smash you.

#### **Verses 18-21 ISRAEL'S PERVERSITY**

The consequences of your wickedness will consume you like a fire that burns up all vegetation. God's graciousness will be replaced by God's all-consuming wrath. He will devour everything in His anger.

The people will be as fuel for the fires of his righteous indignation. They will fight against one another to steal one another's food, but they will never have enough. They will even eat the flesh of their own people.

Manassah against Ephraim and Ephraim against Manassah in civil war and then both Manassah and Ephraim in a truce long enough to unite against Judah. Yet even after all of this, God's anger is not yet satisfied. His hand is still heavy upon them, to punish them.

### **Chapter 10 PRESERVATION IN IMMANUEL**

#### **Verses 1-4 SOCIAL INJUSTICE**

Woe to the rulers that decree unjust decrees and woe to those who administrate them unjustly. These have taken away justice from the poor man. They have so perverted the law they are even robbing the fatherless and the widow.

Now, what will you do in the day that the Lord of Justice visits you and sends desolation upon you from a distant land? To whom will you turn then for your help? Where will you hide for safekeeping all the things you glory in then?

This people will be brought down. The haughty ones will fall among the slain. Even for all this God's anger is not turned away, but his hand is still stretched forth in judgment.

### **Verses 5-11 SCOURGE OF GOD**

Assyria is the whip of My anger; his military strength is My weapon to bring punishment upon this godless nation, says the Lord. He will enslave them and plunder their treasures and trample them like dirt beneath his feet.

But the King of Assyria will not have My divine will as his purpose when he comes against Israel. His purpose will be to attack My people as part of his plan to conquer the world. He is persuaded that all his princes will soon be ruling as kings over the various nations he plans to conquer.

He says, "I shall destroy Calno just as I did Carchemish and Hamath will go down before us as Arpad did; and we will destroy Israel just as we did Damascus.

Indeed, we have finished off many a kingdom whose idols were far greater and more glorious than those in Jerusalem and Samaria. When we have defeated Samaria and her idols we will destroy Jerusalem with hers."

### **Verses 12-19 SMITING OF THE SCOURGE**

After the Lord has used the King of Assyria to accomplish His purpose of chastening the covenant people, then He will turn upon the Assyrians and punish them too—for they are proud and haughty. They boast, we in our own power and wisdom have won these wars. We are great and wise.

By our own strength we broke down the walls and destroyed the people and carried off their treasures. In our greatness we have robbed their nests of riches and gathered up kingdoms as a farmer gathers eggs; and no one moved a finger or opened his mouth to peep against us.

But the Lord says, "Shall the axe boast of greater power than the man who uses it? Is the saw greater than the man who saws? Can a rod strike unless a hand is moving it? Can a cane walk by itself?"

Because of all your evil boasting, O King of Assyria, the Lord of Hosts will send a plague among your proud troops, and strike them down. God, the Light

and Holy One of Israel, will be the fire and flame that will destroy them. In a single night He will burn those thorns and briars, the Assyrians who destroyed the land of Israel.

Assyria's vast army is like a glorious forest, yet it will be destroyed. The Lord will destroy them, soul and body, as when a sick man wastes away. Only a few from all that mighty army will be left; so few a child could count them!

#### **Verses 20-27 SALVATION OF THE REMNANT**

Then at last, those left in Israel and in Judah will trust the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, instead of fearing the Assyrians. A remnant of them will return to the mighty God. But though Israel be now as many as the sands along the shore, yet only a few of them will be left to return at that time; God has rightly decided to destroy His people; yes, it has already been decided by the Lord God of Hosts to consume them.

Therefore, the Lord God of Hosts says, "O My people in Jerusalem, don't be afraid of the Assyrians when they oppress you just as the Egyptians did long ago. It will not last very long; in a little while My anger against you will end and then it will rise against them to destroy them."

The Lord of Hosts will send His angel to slay them in a mighty slaughter like the time when Gideon triumphed over Midian at the rock of Oreb or the time God drowned the Egyptian armies in the sea.

On that day God will end the bondage of His people. He will break the slave-yoke of their necks and destroy it as decreed.

#### **Verses 28-34 SHAME OF ASSYRIA**

Look, the mighty armies of Assyria are coming! Now they are at Aiath, now at Migron; they are storing some of their equipment at Michmash and crossing over the pass; they are staying overnight at Geba; fear strikes the city of Ramah; all the people of Gibeah—the city of Saul—are running for their lives.

Well may you scream in terror, O people of Gallim. Shout a warning to Laish, for the mighty army comes. O poor Anathoth, what a fate is yours! There go the people of Madmenah, all fleeing, and the citizens of Gebim are preparing to run. But the enemy stops at Nob for the remainder of that day.

He shakes His fist at Jerusalem on Mount Zion. Then, look, look! The Lord, the Lord of the armies of heaven, is chopping down the mighty tree! He is

destroying all of that vast army, great and small alike, both officers and men. He, the Mighty One, will cut down the enemy as a woodman's axe cuts down the forest trees in Lebanon.

## **Chapter 11 PROGRAM OF IMMANUEL**

### **Verses 1-9 DIVINE DIRECTION**

Although the "tree" of David will be cut down with the captivity, from the stump of the house of Jesse will grow a Shoot—yes, a new Branch from the roots of the stump. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom, Understanding, Counsel and Might; the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. His delight will be obedience to the Lord. He will not judge by appearance, false evidence, or hearsay, but will defend the poor and exploited. He will rule against the wicked who oppress them. For He will be clothed with fairness and with truth.

In that day the wolf and the lamb will lie down together, and the leopard and goats will be at peace. Calves and fat cattle will be safe among bears, cubs and calves will lie down together, and lions will eat grass like the cows.

Babies will play safely among the snakes, and a little child who puts his hand in a nest of deadly adders will pull it out unharmed. Nothing will hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain; for as the waters fill the sea, so shall all the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord.

### **Verses 10-16 DRAMATIC DELIVERANCE**

In that day He who fulfilled the royal dynasty of David will be a banner of salvation to the world. The nations will rally to Him, for His dwelling place will be glory! In that day the Lord will again deliver a remnant of His people remaining in Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath and the islands of the sea.

He will raise a standard among the nations for them to rally to and He will gather the covenant people from all over the earth.

The enmity between all peoples will disappear especially the jealousy between Israel and Judah will end.

All together God's people will assault the enemies of God, conquer them and bring them under God's rule. God will destroy every obstacle that stands in the

way to deliverance. He will provide a Divine Way upon which they may travel to deliverance from their bondage.

## **Chapter 12**

### **Verses 1-6 PRAISE FOR IMMANUEL**

On that day you of the remnant will say, "Thanks unto You, O God, for You were angry with me but now Your anger is turned away and You comfort me." "See," you will say, "God is my salvation and no one else. I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord is my strength and of Him I sing. He is my salvation!"

With unbounded joy you, O Remnant, will draw and drink from the Water of Life. In that day you will proclaim, give thanks to God and call upon Him! Tell the whole world about His mighty works and glorify His name among all peoples.

Sing in thanksgiving and praise of God's name for His works excel everything and sing His praises unto all the world. Cry aloud, you who are the true inhabitants of Zion, for the Great and Mighty and Holy One of Israel lives among you.

## **Chapter 13 BABYLON**

### **Verses 1-8 PREDICTION OF JUDGMENT**

This is the vision God showed Isaiah (son of Amoz), concerning Babylon's doom. See the flags waving as their enemy attacks. Shout to them, O Israel, and wave them on as they march against Babylon to destroy the palaces of the rich and mighty.

I, the Lord, have set apart these armies for this task; I have called those rejoicing in their strength to do this work, to satisfy my anger.

Hear the tumult on the mountains! Listen as the armies march! It is the tumult and the shout of many nations: the Lord of hosts has brought them here, from countries far away.

They are His weapons against you, O Babylon. They carry His anger with them and will destroy your whole land. Scream in terror, for the Lord's time has come, the time for the Almighty to crush you.

Your arms lie paralyzed with fear; the strongest hearts melt, and are afraid. Fear grips you with terrible pangs, like those of a woman in labor. You look at one another, helpless, as the flames of the burning city reflect upon your pallid faces.

### **Verses 9-16 PURPOSE OF JUDGMENT**

Behold! The judgment day of God upon Babylon is coming. It will be a day of terrifying cruelty when God's wrath and anger is poured out.

The land of the Babylonians will be made wasteland and its sinful people will be destroyed. The suddenness and completeness of the downfall of this world encompassing empire will be as if the whole universe of planets were destroyed and obliterated.

The slaughter of men will be so great there would not be enough rare gold anywhere to buy a man.

The downfall of Babylon will be so great it will shake the very foundations of society all over the earth. Long established structures will crumble and fall. The chaotic and helpless condition of the Babylonians will be as pathetic as the hunted deer and scattered sheep without a shepherd. People will flee Babylon like rats leaving a sinking ship. When their enemies pounce upon them they will slaughter every Babylonian they can find.

Their enemies will perform atrocities upon their babies, dashing them to death before their eyes, ransacking their homes and raping their wives.

### **Verses 17-22 PROLONGATION OF JUDGMENT**

For I will stir up the Medes against Babylon, and no amount of silver or gold will buy them off. The attacking armies will have no mercy on the young people of Babylon or the babies of the children.

Babylon, the most glorious of kingdoms, the flower of Chaldean culture, will be utterly destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrah were when God sent fire from heaven; Babylon will never rise again.

Generation after generation will come and go, but the land will never again be lived in. The nomads will not even camp there. The shepherds won't let their sheep stay overnight.

The wild animals of the desert will make it their home. The houses will be haunted by howling creatures. Ostriches will live there, and the demons will



come there to dance. Hyenas and jackals will den within the palaces. Babylon's days are numbered; her time of doom will soon be here.

## **Chapter 14**

### **Verses 1-11 BABYLON DESPISED**

And God will have mercy upon His covenant people; He will yet fulfill all His covenant promises to them.

Their blessings will one day be so glorious that those now outside the covenant of Israel will be joined to God's covenant people and become a part of them. God will cause those who once took His covenant people captive to return them to their land and eventually His people will make some of these heathen a possession of God's kingdom and servants of the Most High God.

Yes, even people from those nations which once took the covenant people captive will one day be taken "captive" by them. Those who once ruled over God's people will one day come under the rule of God.

When that day comes to pass God will have delivered His covenant people from sorrow, trouble and servitude, and His people will proclaim concerning their great enemy.

At last our enemy has been defeated and his kingdom destroyed. God has broken the power of the enemy that ruled over us so long in unrestrained terribleness.

The whole earth and all of nature rejoices at the rest it receives from the defeat of God's enemy. All the citizens of Hades crowd to meet him as he enters the same place where they dwell.

World leaders and earth's mightiest rulers, long dead, are there to greet him. With one voice they all cry out, are you as weak as we are? Have you become like us here? All this enemy's grandeur and power has been stripped from him and all his reveling is over. His covering now is not silk and satin, but worms and maggots.

### **Verses 12-20 DEPOSED**

O how you have fallen from the highest place, you brilliant Star, how you are cut down to the ground, you who overpowered nations! However, you said: "I will climb as high as the heavens; above the stars of God I will place my throne.

I will enthrone myself at the top of the mountain of the gods which is far away in the north." You said: "I will climb above the clouds and make myself equal to the Most High."

In truth, however you will be thrust down to the abode of the dead, Sheol, the uttermost abyss. Everyone there will stare at you and ask, can this be the Star who shook the earth and the kingdoms of the world? Can this be the one who devastated the earth and made it into a desolation and demolished its greatest cities and had no mercy on his enemies?

All the kings of the nations lie in stately glory in their graves, but your body is thrown out like a broken stick; it lies in an open grave, covered with the dead bodies of those slain in war; it lies as a carcass in the road, trampled, and mangled by horse's hoofs.

You will not be entombed with the other kings in stately glory for you have destroyed your nation and slain your people. Your offspring will be known as evil because of you.

### **Verses 21-27 DESTROYED**

Let the world prepare for the slaughter of the descendants of this wicked king and his empire.

Let them be destroyed lest they rise up in rebellion against God's intentions for man's redemption and try to possess the earth and man for the kingdom of darkness.

I, God, will rise against Babylon and destroy his posterity and prevent them from ever taking over the whole human race. I will make the land of the Babylonians to be taken over and possessed by wild animals and I will make it become a territory of swamps and marshes.

I will sweep the nation from the face of the earth with my broom of destruction. God has taken an oath to do all this! It is His immutable purpose to do it!

When He purposes to do it, it is good as done. He says, "I will break the Assyrian army when it is in My land and I will crush them utterly; I will take the Assyrian's yoke of servitude off My people.

This is My plan for mankind—to break the yoke of paganism and conquer the worldly powers so that man will no longer be a slave of darkness."

The Lord God of hosts has declared this as His plan and who can thwart His plan? He has begun to extend His hand to accomplish His purpose and who will stop it?

### **Verses 28-32 DOMINATED**

At the time of the death of king Ahaz this message concerning Philistia was revealed to me to be proclaimed. Don't begin rejoicing, Philistines, that the oppression upon your nation has been temporarily broken and lifted.

This momentary relief does not mean you are going to prosper. In fact, a successive worsening of oppression and destruction is going to overcome your nation. It will be like a succession of snakes getting worse with each; from the snake will come the adder and from the adder a fiery flying serpent will come to destroy you.

I will protect and provide for My people Israel; even the lowliest of the low shall not lack food in Israel, and the poor shall enjoy safety. But as for you, O Philistia, I will wipe you out with famine and what is not killed by famine I will kill with war.

Weep and wail, O cities of Philistia, because you are destined to go up in the smoke of an invader's destruction. An army from the north will invade your land and will destroy you with methodical diligence.

What shall be told all who inquire about these events? They shall be told that God has established Zion. His covenant people, on a sure and safe foundation and all those afflicted by God's enemies will find refuge in Zion.

## **Chapter 15 IMPUDENT EASTERNERS—MOAB**

### **Verses 1-9 INVASION**

God's message to Moab: In a night your cities of Ar and Kir will be destroyed. Your people go mourning to Bayith and Dibon, their pagan temples and altars, to weep for the fate of Nebo and Medeba; they shave their heads and cut off their beards in public display for their grief. They wear sackcloth through the streets, and from every home comes the sound of weeping.

The weeping and wailing from the cities of Heshbon and Elealeh are heard very far away, even to Jahaz. The bravest warriors of Moab cry out in utter

terror. There are no heroes in Moab now! My heart weeps for Moab! His people flee as refugees to Zoar and Eglath.

Weeping they climb the upward road to Luhith, and their moaning will be heard all along the road to Horonaim. Nimrim River is desolate! The grassy banks are dried up and the tender plants are gone. The grassy banks are dried up and the tender plants are gone.

The desperate refugees take all their possessions they can carry, and flee across the Brook of Willows. The whole land of Moab is a land of weeping, from one end to the other. The waters of Dimon will run red with blood. But I am not through with Dimon yet! For the refugees of Moab, I have appointed a lion (probably the Babylonians and Persians to come) to hunt them done.

## **Chapter 16**

### **Verses 1-5 MOAB'S INVITATION**

I counsel you Moab to send to Judah, the daughter of Zion, for help. Send a token of submission, a tribute of lambs, to the ruler of Judah. Unless you get help from Judah your panic and confusion will increase until you are absolutely helpless.

You must say to Judah, give counsel; grant that justice shall be done for us; give us such protection that it will be like a night-shade in the midst of the noonday; hide our outcasts and do not betray our fugitives.

You must say, let my neglected ones sojourn among you. Be a hiding place for them from before the face of the destroyer.

The oppressor and extortioner of Judah has been vanquished out of Judah's land and there is peace there now. And a throne will be established in steadfast love; and a man shall sit on it in truth and faithfulness from the family of David, ruling and judging in justice and eager to do righteousness.

### **Verses 6-12 INSOLENT**

The pride of Moab is well known. Moab is very proud, even to the point of arrogance and cruelty. Moab's boastful talk is not right. Moab will wail and mourn his own calamity—the whole nation shall wail bitterly because of this arrogance.

Moab will be utterly stricken down from its self-exaltation—its famous raisin-cakes and vineyards will be disregarded by everyone.

As a matter of fact, the armies of its enemies will tear down and march over these huge, famous vineyards and completely devastate the land.

So I will wail and weep for Jazer and the vineyards of Sibmah. My tears flow for Heshbon and Elealeh, for destruction has come upon their summer fruits and harvests with the battle shout.

Gone will be the gladness, gone the joy of harvest. The happy singing in the vineyards will be heard no more; the treading out of the grapes in the wine presses will cease forever and the customary shout of heydad at the reaping of the vintage will be caused to cease.

Mourning for Moab and its people sweeps over my soul like the funeral music that mournfully sweeps across harp. No last minute appeal to Moab's gods will avert the inevitable judgment of God upon his arrogance.

Even though the whole nation presents itself and cries with much repetition he shall not prevail.

### **Verses 13-14 INEXORABLE**

God has spoken many times and long in the past the doom of Moab. And now it is about to be fulfilled. Precisely within three years (as precisely as the hired laborer keeps track of his contract) the glory of Moab will be turned into contempt.

The once proud Moabites will be a spectacle of defeat and shame. Only a very small and insignificant remnant will be spared.

## **Chapter 17 DAMASCUS**

### **Verses 1-6 COALITION**

This is God's pronouncement concerning Damascus, capital of Syria: Behold, Damascus is no longer a city. It is destined to become a heap of ruins! Even the cities of Aroer, lying between Israel and Syria, are destined for desolation.

They will be so completely deserted that sheep will pasture in their ruins lying quiet and unafraid with no people to chase them away. The combined power of the Israel-Damascus coalition will end. The supposed glory of this godless coalition will fade like that of Israel when she rejected God. Israel's one-time

glory will be a thing of the past, even as a wasting disease may cut down the fatness of a healthy man until he has withered away to skin and bones.

Nothing will be left of those two nations. They will be so thoroughly consumed by God's judgment they will be like a wheat field where the reaper is followed by the gleaners picking up every scrap left behind. They will be like the olive tree that is shaken and has its branches beaten with sticks to gather every berry.

### **Verses 7-8 CRISIS**

When God's judgment begins to fall, men will turn and look for their Maker, and they will suddenly learn to fear the Holy One of Israel. They will no longer seek help from their idols and pagan altars which they made with their own hands. They will renounce their Asherim and sun-images.

### **Verses 9-11 COLLAPSE**

In that day the well-fortified cities where they might think to find refuge from disaster will be useless ruins. Their cities will be like the old, ruined fortresses left behind by the Canaanites when Israel occupied the land.

The reason for the collapse of your security is that you have forsaken the true God of your salvation and have not given attention to the Rock upon whom alone it is safe to stand.

Although you plant your gardens to your pagan images and tender them with the most meticulous care and protection, and although they produce blossoms of loveliness, they will not bring you deliverance.

What little satisfaction you may have will disappear suddenly and absolutely in the desperate days of judgment to come.

### **Verses 12-14 CHAOS**

Ah, permit me to pause and tell you of the defeat of the enemies of God's elect. I see multitudes and multitudes of people rushing upon God's elect to consume them. They roar with a deafening ferocity, like the roar of the pounding sea.

But God will rebuke them and silence their roaring. He will defeat them and they will flee, scattered like chaff by the wind, like whirling dust is blown by a storm.

The fear of God's elect as they stand before their enemies will be over in a very short time. Almost overnight they will know deliverance, and their enemies defeated. This is the destiny of those who plunder and destroy the people of God.

## **Chapter 18 INCESSANT EGYPTIANS**

### **Verses 1-7 ETHIOPIA**

Ah, yes, O distant and enchanting land of Ethiopia, land beyond the upper reaches of the Nile where winged sailboats glide, which sends its ambassadors in fast boats! Go, you swift messengers from Ethiopia. Return to your homeland, a land of supple, bronze-skinned warriors, feared far and wide, a conquering, destroying nation whose land the upper Nile divides.

Go with this message: God has said, "Let all the world look and listen when God begins to raise up the sign of His mighty work in the earth."

God has decreed, "Let my enemies now advance against my land, I will watch quietly and serenely from my place, as unperturbed as one does on a pleasant summer day or a lovely autumn morning watching the grain field mature unto harvest. I have everything under control," says God. "My enemies are like a field ripening unto harvest.

But before they have begun the attack, and while their plans are ripening like grapes, I will cut them off as though with pruning shears. I will snip the spreading tendrils.

Their armies will be left dead on the field for the mountain birds and wild animals to eat; the vultures will tear bodies all summer, and the wild animals will gnaw bones all winter."

But the time will come when that strong and mighty nation, a terror to all both far and near, that conquering, destroying nation whose land the rivers divide, will bring gifts to the Lord of Hosts in Zion, where He has placed His name.

## Chapter 19 INCESSANT EGYPTIANS

### Verses 1-15 EGYPT

This is the destiny of Egypt. Behold, the Omnipotent God descends from heaven surely and swiftly upon Egypt. Egypt's gods and her religion will be impotent to help her. Her whole populace will be gripped with paralyzing fear and confusion. I, God, will cause them to fight against each other—brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor, city against city, and province against province.

The national spirit of Egypt will be broken. I will cause all her plans to be frustrated. They will run in utter helplessness and confusion to their stone and wooden gods, to their magicians and soothsayers and to their sorcerers.

But it will be useless for I will give them over to be ruled by a cruel despot. A fierce king will rule them.

Furthermore, the waters of the Nile shall fail to inundate the fields and will practically waste away. The irrigation channels will become foul and useless; they will dry up and the reeds and rushes will wither away. The pasture-land along the Nile and all the grain fields will dry up and their soil will be blown away and they will not be cultivated any more.

Fishermen will weep for lack of fish to catch. Those who fish with hooks and those who fish with nets will all be unemployed.

Weavers of cloth will find their industry in a state of collapse for the crops of flax and cotton will disappear.

The rich and influential and the wage earners will be frustrated and dismayed. What fools the princes of Zoan will be shown to be when this happens. The wisest counselors of Pharaoh will be shown to be as dumb as animals.

Will all those wise men then dare to tell Pharaoh about the long line of wise men they have come from? Where are the wise men of Egypt? If they are so wise, let them predict what is going to be the destiny of Egypt. The leadership of the country in Zoan, are acting foolishly.

The Lord has caused a spirit of arrogant perverseness and warped judgment to pervade the land of Egypt. This has brought confusion and failure in every attempt of Egypt to perpetuate her world supremacy. She staggers stupidly and



mindlessly as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. No plan or program Egypt can devise will save her. No person, neither high nor low will be able to save her.

### **Verses 16-25 EGYPT**

When God culminates His judgment upon Egypt she will be humbled. Her great and powerful men will be as timid as women and be afraid at the evident hand of the Lord in her judgment. Just the mention of the name Judah will remind Egypt of Judah's God and cause Egypt to remember that Judah's God keeps His word.

In the day that Egypt is brought to such a humble relationship to the God of Judah, great portions of the people of Egypt will speak the language of faith and allegiance to God.

Some portions of the people however, will remain in rebellion against God and thus destined for destruction.

In that day God shall be worshiped in Egypt's midst and a sign of His presence there will be manifested. He will make witness to His presence there as He defends and delivers those oppressed Egyptians which have become His through a savior He will send them. God will make Himself known to the Egyptians and they shall know Him in that day.

Indeed, they will worship God in truth and they will do so willingly and freely. They will make commitments to God and keep them. God will alternately chasten these Egyptian worshipers of His and heal them.

In that day there will be a peaceful unity accomplished between peoples formerly at enmity with one another. Believers from Egypt and Assyria shall worship together as one people.

And even believers in Israel, a major bone of contention between Egypt and Assyria, will be joined with believers of Egypt and Assyria and this united people will be a blessing in the minds of the earth because God has united them as one people—His people.

## **Chapter 20 INCESSANT EGYPTIANS**

### **Verses 1-6 EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA**

In the year when Sargon, king of Assyria, sent his commander-in-chief of the army against the city of Ashdod and captured it, the Lord told Isaiah, son of Amoz, to take off his outer clothing, including his shoes, and to walk around barefoot clad only in his under-tunic. And Isaiah did so.

And the Lord said, my servant Isaiah has walked barefoot and stripped shamefully to his underclothing for three years symbolizing the awesome troubles I will bring upon Egypt and Ethiopia.

Just so, the king of Assyria will take away the Egyptians and Ethiopians, young and old, as prisoners, defeated, stripped of their possessions and shamed in their wretched condition.

And the inhabitants of this Palestinian “coastland” will be depressed and confused because they had expected to get help from Egypt and Ethiopia. So the people of Palestine will say in that day, "Look! If this is what the king of Assyria does to Egypt and Ethiopia, what hope do we have to escape from him?"

## **Chapter 21 IRREVERENT ENEMIES**

### **Verses 1-10 BABYLON**

This is the message of God concerning Babylon, that city sitting in a wilderness of waters.

A storm of devastation is roaring down upon her from the territory of terror, like the cyclone sweeps out of the southern deserts of the Negev.

I see a vision that makes me grieve. Babylon has deceived and exploited many peoples. I command the Elamites and Medes to besiege her and bring her oppressions to an end. This will give peace and healing to those she has oppressed.

When I see what God has planned for Babylon I am overcome with horror and feeling for them. My stomach cramps and churns with sharp pain like that of a woman giving birth to a child.

The awesomeness of it consumes all my senses so that I do not hear or see anything else around me. My mind reels; my heart palpitates; I am overwhelmed with the terror of it.

The night (affording me relaxation and rest and pleasure) has now become long hours of restless trembling. Look! They are engrossed in banqueting and watching their enemy approach.

They are oblivious to their danger because they are reveling with eating and drinking. Suddenly, their enemy is upon them before they know it, they will be crying, "Quick, quick, grab your shields and anoint them for battle!

We are being attacked!" And the Lord told me, put a watchman there to observe. Let this watchman tell what he sees. When this watchman sees soldiers, cavalymen in pairs, troops of donkeys, troops of camels, tell him to pay attention to everything he sees and hears.

I put the watchman to watch and eventually he cried, "O sovereign Lord, I have been standing continually in my place of watching day after day and night after night, and suddenly troops of soldiers come, including troops of cavalymen."

And the watchman reported what he had beheld. Fallen, fallen is Babylon and all her false gods lie broken on the ground.

O my oppressed people, that which I, Isaiah, have heard from God, the God of Israel, I declare to you to comfort you and strengthen your faith.

### **Verses 11-17 EDOM AND ARABIA**

The message of God for the land of deadly silence, Edom. Someone from among you keeps calling, calling to me, "Prophet-Watchman, what part of the night is it? Prophet-Watchman, what part of the night is it? Will the morning of relief never come?"

The Prophet-Watchman replies, "Yes, there will be a morning of relief to those who take refuge in the Lord, but the night of death and destruction also comes to those who do not see Him."

If you wish to know the meaning of God's message to you, His command to you is turn from your rebellion and come to Him.

The message of God is for the land of Arabia. Your land will be occupied by your enemies and be so dangerous that caravans from Dedan will have to hide for their lives.

Travelers will have to be secretly given food and water by the people of Tema. The people of the land of Arabia will be fugitives in their own land from the

swords and bows of war. An exact time has been fixed for the destruction of Arabia—like employers fix a definite time of hiring laborers.

One year and the fame of Kedar shall disappear, and her once mighty fighting men will be reduced to only a handful of nomadic tribesmen. This will surely come to pass because God, the God of Israel, has said it.

## **Chapter 22 IRREVERENT ATTITUDES**

### **Verses 1-14 JUDAH**

This is God's message concerning Jerusalem, the place where God's word goes forth. What is the matter with you? Why are you all running up to the house-tops? You are all consumed with the madness of revelry and irresponsibility.

There is nothing to celebrate in your dead for they have not died honorably on the field of battle. Your leaders tried to desert you, but they were captured and taken prisoner. Everyone who tried to escape was either slain or captured.

Some of you tried to console me, but I said, "Do not try to console me, this is not a time for consoling but a time for weeping. I cannot be consoled when I see my people bring upon themselves inevitable destruction. No, these are days of confusion and affliction are from the Lord, God of Hosts."

In the place where God's word is supposed to reside, an enemy is breaking down Jerusalem's walls and the enemy's cries of success echo among the mountains.

The expert warriors of Elam, came in wagonloads and warriors from as far away as Kir took up arms against you.

Your finest and most strategic lands were filled with wagon-loads of these warriors. The enemy had you completely besieged occupying even the city gates. The enemy exposed your decadence and your foolishness. And where do you look for help? To man-made weapons you run for deliverance. You thought you could deliver yourself.

You saw the walls of your city in disrepair. You saw that you would need water for time of siege. You calculated what you thought it would take to fix all your defenses and torn down houses and to repair your wall; and you made a

reservoir between the two walls for an increased water supply; but not once did you ask for help from Him who lets this come upon you.

He is the One who planned it long ago and you do not know it. When this was happening to you it was the Lord calling you to repent. His call to you is to weep, to mourn, to shave your heads in contrition, and to put on the sackcloth of penitence.

But instead, you sing and dance and play, and feast and drink. You fatalists! You say, let us eat and drink—what's the difference, for tomorrow we shall die.

The Lord of Hosts has revealed to me that this sin will never be forgiven you, not even when you die.

### **Verses 15-25 INSOLENT AGENT**

The Lord, God of Heaven's armies, said to me, "Go, find this insolent Shebna, the king's chief administrator," and say to him, "Who do you think you are and what do you think you are doing by building this magnificent monument to remembrance? Who told you to perpetuate your memory in such a high-handed fashion as to have a burying place hewn out for yourself up among the kings?"

Look! God, the Strong One, will hurl you away with great force. Indeed God will wind you up like threads are wound into a ball and throw you into a country of vast proportions. In this far off place you will die, you who have brought shame to your king, and all the power you gloried in shall become shame.

God says, I will thrust you out of your office and pull you down from your high position. And then I will call My servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, to replace you. I will give him your robes and I will turn your office over to him. He will humble himself before Me and be a real authority in the king's government.

Whatever he says will be done. He shall be second to none save the king himself. He will become a strong and steady support upon which much of the responsibility of government shall hang.

There will be this danger for him. Many, especially all his family and relatives, will seek patronage, position and power from him.

If he uses his office for nepotism or other forms of partiality, his office will crash down upon his head to the ruin of all those that sought to attach themselves to him, as well as to his own ruin. God has spoken!

## **Chapter 23 TYRE**

### **Verses 1-7 SPLENDOR**

This is God's message to Tyre: weep, O merchant-ships of Tyre, returning home from distant lands! Weep for your harbor, for it is gone! The news you heard in the islands of the Aegean are all true! A shocked silence is everywhere! Stillness reigns where once your bustling port was full of ships from Phoenicia, bringing merchandise from far across the great sea, grain from the fertile Nile delta.

You were the market place of the world. So, hang your head in shame, Phoenicia, for formerly Phoenician traders and merchants were children of the great sea and were strewn all over the Mediterranean, but now they are so few, the sea claims she never had any such children.

There will be great distress in Egypt, also, when the news of Tyre's downfall reaches there. You may flee as refugees to one of your choices such as Tarshish, but you will find the whole world of coastal trade wailing Tyre's demise. Is this silent ruin all that is left of your once proud, wealthy and historical city? Think of all the great colonies your merchantmen have founded!

### **Verses 8-14 SHAKEN**

Who has the power to plan such a thing against Tyre, the founder of so many colonies and crowner of so many kings, whose merchants were equal in influence to princes, and whose traders were honored throughout the world.

The Lord God has planned it to desecrate the most magnificent pride and show His contempt for all the haughty greatness of proud men everywhere. Now, O people of Tarshish, you may flow over the world and trade as you like for there is no longer a restraining force in Tyre.

The Lord God stretches out His hand over the seas; He shakes the kingdoms of the earth; He is not a provincial God—He is God of all creation and judge of all men.

Therefore, He has spoken out against Phoenicia and her strongholds will be destroyed.

Furthermore, He says, you will never again rejoice, O Tyre, you virgin daughter of Sidon. Even if you flee to Cyprus you will find no rest. It will be the Babylonians, not the Assyrians, who will make the territory of Tyre a habitation for wild beasts. They will besiege it, tear down its palaces and make it a heap of ruins. Wail you ships that take trade to Tarshish, your home port is destroyed.

### **Verses 15-18 SUBMISSION**

And it will come to pass in the day of Tyre's downfall, she shall lie waste till her devastation has achieved its purpose in the Divine disposition of things.

This state of affairs will remain constant with her, like the affairs of one king's tenure, for a long period of years symbolized by the number seventy.

After this "seventy years" of forgetting she will resume her former life just like the story told in the lyrics of the Son of the Harlot.

Tyre, you have been forgotten. Take up the harp and play sweet melodies, sing many songs, perhaps you may bring yourself to the attention of your former customers and be remembered.

Yes, after your long time of being forgotten the Lord will allow you to be restored but you will be no different than you were before; you will return to prostituting yourself with the nations of the world for money.

Yet, the time will come when she shall make contributions to the kingdom of God. Tyre's greatest treasure will not be hoarded silver and gold but will be the food and clothing of righteousness for those who dwell in the presence of God.

## **Chapter 24 JUDGMENT OF JUDAH'S ENEMIES**

### **Verses 1-6 JUDGMENT IS SURE**

Behold, the Lord is about to bring into judgment the whole world of worldliness. Human government and institutions which have attempted to thwart God's redemptive program and usurp His sovereign reign over man will be utterly emptied of their hold upon man. They will be made a vast wasteland of emptiness compared to His kingdom.

Human potentates and human schemes, high and low, rich and poor, powerful and weak, will be dealt with. God is no respecter of persons. God is going to deal a death blow to man's attempt to take over the world.

The world and its worldly rulers mourn at their demise. They suffer! They refuse to believe and therefore do not understand. The earth is profaned and polluted through the rebellion and sin of these people. Laws are violated and fear of God is scorned.

The structures of society collapse, and all that is good is defiled. This curse of God's moral judgment has devoured man's carnal scheme to usurp Him.

The downfall of their schemes proves their guilt. Such a judgment consumes multitudes. Only a few men of faith shall escape it.

### **Verses 7-16 JUDGMENT IS BITTER**

The juice of the grape will be sorry, the grape vine will lose its vitality, and all those who were glad and merry will be turned to mournful sighing. The music of tambourines and harps will cease when the people are turned to weeping. Singing and drinking wine will no longer be going on; drinking for the mere sake of intoxication will grow, but it will only bring bitterness to the drunkards.

Cities shall become moral wastelands—jungles of crime—where every house has to be locked against thieves and murderers.

The streets of the cities shall echo with the cries of wantonness and debauchery. They shall be filled with pessimism, gloom and despair. The great centers of population are filled with desolation and their bulwarks crumble into ruin. This is the way it shall be among nations of mankind.

Man in rebellion will destroy himself until very little of real value can be found in him—just like an olive tree shaken until few olives are left. But valuable "little" that is left of every nation will lift its voice in loud shouting, giving praise to the name of God, the God of Israel.

From east to west, from the uttermost part of the earth, a remnant of believers will sing, "Glory to the righteous." But my heart is still heavy with grief, for evil still prevails and treachery is everywhere. Multitudes remain impenitent and positive reactions to God's judgments are hasty, superficial, and soon erased.



## **Verses 17-23 JUDGMENT IS FROM GOD**

When God executes His judgments upon the present world order, man will be confounded like the wild animal who fears its pursuers and falls into the pit; if it avoids the pit, it is taken by the snare.

From heaven God is going to overwhelm man's rebellion like the great flood; He is going to shake the very foundations of man's utopian schemes like an earthquake brings down great edifices.

Earthly schemes and worldly schemes will be utterly broken, rent asunder and shaken violently.

Those forces and philosophies of man which have arrayed themselves against God's rule will be caused to stagger and reel under the defeat God brings upon them—they shall sway like a watchman's hut in a blowing storm. The futility of their rebellion and the guilt of their sin will be such a weight upon them they will fall never to regain complete dominance of the world again.

On that day the Lord will make a visitation of judgment upon the principalities and powers in the heavenly places who have rebelled against Him as well as those rulers of the earth who have joined with these wicked spiritual beings.

God will triumph over them all. He will gather these forces together in their greatest concentration of power, and He shall defeat them and take them captive like prisoners and He shall imprison them.

And after a long period of time the Lord will visit all these imprisoned beings with final judgment. Such will be the glory of God when this is accomplished the brightness of the sun and moon will seem to fade away.

The glorious reign of God will, at that time, be established among men in the form of His kingdom on earth, the church. And His faithful covenant people will be brought to glory with Him.

## **Chapter 25 JUBILEE BY JUDAH**

### **Verses 1-5 JUBILATION FOR GOD'S POWER**

O Covenant God, Thou art my Lord. I will extol and celebrate with thanksgiving Your Name. You have done wonderful things; Your plans formed long ago have been faithfully and absolutely fulfilled.

You turn a mighty city into a heap of rubble. Strong fortresses, You make into ruins. The castle of aliens, You make to disappear never to be built again.

There for a people of strength will glorify You; ruthless nations and their cities will fear You. To the weak and powerless, You have been a refuge; You have been a refuge to the needy in their distress. You have been a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat when the ruthless nations storm and burn down upon us.

As a heat in a dry and torrid land is cooled by the shadow of a cloud, so You subdue the shouts of the aliens and put in silence the boasting chants of the ruthless nations.

### **Verses 6-9 JUBILATION FOR GOD'S POSTERITY**

And at the same time the Almighty Covenant God defeats the enemies of His people and provides for them a refuge and shelter; He will make in His Zion a feast of choicest food and most refined drink. He will destroy all that obscures and hinders all men from coming to this feast. He will swallow up death forever and remove the fear and hurt that death has bought upon His faithful ones.

He will wipe away all tears from the faces of those who trust Him. He will take away forever all the reproach of their sin. It is as certain as the person of God Himself.

In that day, people from all nations will proclaim, "This now is our God, in Whom we trust, for Whom we waited. At long last the One for Whom we waited is here! He will save us! We gladly rejoice in His salvation!"

### **Verses 10-12 JUBILATION FOR GOD'S PREDOMINANCE**

Yes, in Mount Zion the victorious, festive presence of God will be residing. But all His enemies, like Moab, will be crushed and cast down in their own filth like straw is cast out and kicked into the miry dung pit.

God's enemy, Moab, will make great effort to save herself; like a swimmer to keep from drowning spreads her arms and makes a frantic effort to save herself. However, God will make a mockery of Moab's pride by humiliating her and foiling all her crafty plots to save herself. Yes, Moab, your walls, high and fortified, will be thrown down and scattered over the earth and ground into dust.

## **Chapter 26 JUSTICE AT LAST FOR JUDAH**

### **Verses 1-6 JUSTICE'S ORIGIN**

In that day when God makes a feast and removes the covering spread over all nations and swallows up death forever, this jubilant song of praise to God will be sung by God's people: Zion, our everlasting city, is strong; her strength is in the salvation

He has made. Those of you in the city already, open the gates that all who are righteous and those who keep the faith may enter in. Thou, O God, will keep in complete peace the man who bases his thinking on Thy will, because such a man has put all his reliance on Thee.

Rely totally and eternally on God; for it is the Covenant-God who is exclusively the eternal Rock-of-Hiding. He humbles the proud and brings the haughty, antagonistic world of opposition down to dust and oblivion. The poor and lowly, once scoffed at by the world and the lofty city, will walk on the ruins of the enemies of God.

### **Verses 7-15 JUSTICE'S OBJECTIVE**

The way of the righteous is straight and smooth because the Righteous God smooths the righteous man's way. Indeed, in Your Divine judgments have we waited hopefully to see You. To see Your name glorified in judgment upon Your enemies, as in ages past, is the earnest desire of our soul. With my soul I have longed for You in the night.

Indeed, in the depths of my being I am earnestly seeking You because when Your judgments descend upon the earth the world learns what is right. When Your goodness is enjoyed by the wicked man he does not learn to do right—he only keeps on doing wickedness because he does not become aware of the omnipotence of God.

Although You have raised Your hand threatening them, they refused to give heed. Show them Your zealous protection for Your covenant people and they will be humiliated. Indeed, God, let them be consumed by the fire You reserve for our enemies.

God, You will establish peace for us. You alone are the source of everything good that has ever come to us. God, You alone are our God. Other lords we have allowed to have dominion over us, but we acknowledge only Your name as

sovereign. Those other lords we served before are dead and shall not come again because they are like the deceased.

You came against them and destroyed them, causing us to forget them completely. You made our nation great, O God. You, indeed, have made our nation great! You receive the glory for it! You extended the borders of our land by Your judgments!

### **Verses 16-21 JUSTICE'S OPERATION**

O God, during their distress and oppression, Your faithful remnant visited You, pouring out their hearts in prayer when your correcting discipline was upon them.

As a pregnant woman writhes and cries out in her pain as her time to deliver draws near, so were we when we came to You, Lord, in our prayers for deliverance. We too were in labor; we writhed in pain, but we brought forth wind—nothing! No deliverance has come from all our pain; no inhabitants of the earth have come to birth through our agony.

But, O remnant, those who account themselves dead and cast off will live—they will rise again from oblivion. Those who dwell in dust shall awake and sing, for God's light of life will fall like refreshing dew upon them. Come, my remnant, enter your rooms and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourselves for a little while until the anger of God is satisfied in the captivities.

The Lord is going to come down from his place in heaven to punish your captors and those who oppose you because of their rebellions. The earth cannot hide their guilt—their murderous deeds will be revealed—and all those they have slain will be accounted for.

## **Chapter 27 JOINING OF JUDAH AND GENTILES**

### **Verses 1-6 JOINED BY DIVINE PROTECTION**

In that day when God makes a feast and removes the covering spread over all nations and swallows up death forever, He will take His hard, great and strong sword and will bring judgment upon the monster, the swift, serpent-like one.

He will slay the monster that is in the sea. In that specific day, the Lord will have a delightful vineyard. O sing of it! I, the Lord am its Sustainer.

My concern for it is constant and I will refresh it and protect it every day against those who would harm it. I, the Lord, harbor no spiteful resentment against My remnant.

If enemies, like thorns and briars, stubbornly set themselves against My covenant, I will come upon them and destroy them.

However, if these enemies cast themselves upon My mercy and make every effort to come to terms of peace with Me and Mine, then they shall have My strength. Indeed, I invite all My enemies to make peace with Me and Mine. The day is coming when the true Israel of God will be established certainly prosper. This true Israel of God will fill the earth with its offspring.

### **Verses 7-13 JOINED BY DIVINE PURGING**

Has God stricken His own people as severely as He has stricken their oppressors? Have His people known death as those who killed them have known it? No! He has dealt with His own people by driving them from their land and dispersing them. He has driven them by His fierce blast, it is true, like the scorching wind from the desert He has come upon them.

Yet only in this purging shall the guilt of His people be removed. Only in this way can the people's forgiveness be accomplished—if they smash their pagan alters and leave no idols standing. Look at most of the fortified cities of Israel to the north; they are desolate like a deserted house and as forsaken as the desert. Calves graze there; animals make their habitations and feeding grounds. The limbs of the trees of these cities wither, dry up and break off and women come and use them for firewood.

These northern neighbors of yours are foolish, stupid, and rebellious people. This is the reason their Creator cannot have pity upon them or show them His favor—they do not want it.

In that day when God begins to make His feast and removes the covering spread over all nations and swallows up death forever, He will gather His chosen together one by one like hand-picked grain. He will select them from the far reaches of the world—from Mesopotamia and from Egypt.

In that same day a great beckoning shall be made like a trumpet blast and those who were lost in the far reaches of the world will come and worship the Lord in Zion.

## **Chapter 28 FOUNDATION THAT IS FIRM**

### **Verses 1-13 STUPIDITY**

Woe to the crowning glory of Israel, the city of Samaria. It is a city of drunkards. Its glory is about to fade into nothing like the withering flowers. She sits as a crowned head of a lush green valley but her inhabitants have become slaves to wine. Beware! The Lord has an agent, Assyria, mighty and strong, and His agent comes like a devastating hail storm, a destructive storm, and like a roaring flood. His powerful hand is able to cast everything down to the ground.

Yes, Samaria, the glorious fortress in which drunkards of Israel boast is going to be trampled under the foot of this agent of the Lord. I repeat, this city of Samaria which sits at the head of the rich valley is nothing but a rapidly fading flower. In fact, Samaria shall be to the Assyrian like the fig ripe before its time is to the traveler. He will eagerly pick it and immediately devour it. He will not hold it in his hand.

When Samaria has fallen, at last the Lord of the Covenant Himself will be the crowning glory of His remnant. To the remnant, He will be beautiful. To the remnant the spirit of justice He restores to the leadership of the nation will be beautiful. He will restore to the remnant the strength, courage and faith to stand against their enemies.

Here in Jerusalem, even its leaders reel and stagger in drunkenness. Priests and prophets, the very shepherds of God's people, men who are to declare God's message, are drunkards. They are alcoholics!

They are in such a stupor they cannot understand anything nor make a sensible judgment. They are so depraved and debauched they vomit all over the tables and floors and furniture where they carouse and there is hardly a clean place to be found.

Yet these are the people who are saying, whom does Isaiah think he is teaching: to whom does he think he is explaining God's revelation? Let him search as widely as he wishes, he will not find any who is in need of such teaching.

Is it to babies he thinks he is speaking? Isaiah's teaching is childish. It is nothing but repetitious, command upon command and rule upon rule, and there isn't enough of it anywhere to make any sense.

As a matter of fact, God is going to treat the people of Jerusalem like babies and speak a message of chastening to them through a nation whose language they do not understand. God is going to make believers out of these unbelievers by delivering them to the Assyrians.

They are too immature and unbelieving to heed Isaiah's teaching, so they have to be dealt with as immature babies.

God repeated over and over His plea to the covenant people to walk in the way of true rest—obeying His commandments—but they would not do so! So, now, they are going to learn through chastening and hardship the will of God is to be obeyed.

That revelation of God given through the prophet in command upon command and rule upon rule is going to come to pass and they are going to realize they have stumbled over it when they are broken and trapped and taken captive. The word of God which they mocked is going to mock them!

#### **Verses 14-29 STABILITY**

Listen, you rulers of Judah that sit in Jerusalem and scoff—listen to the word of God! You scoff at the predictions of God's judgment and say, we have insured ourselves against death—death cannot harm us, neither can Sheol—and the flood of Assyrian invasion that is upon Israel shall not come to Judah, for we have protected ourselves with deceptive diplomacy and international sophistry. "Because your foundation of deceit and intrigue will crumble," the Lord says, "I am laying in the midst of My faithful remnant, the foundation of Zion."

The foundation will be a rock, the tested and precious rock, the promise of the Messiah, which will be a solid and sure foundation for everyone who believes.

Whoever believes this will not panic when My judgment comes. Not only will there be a secure foundation but the standards of measuring men will be according to God's standards—justice and righteousness. Our refuge of deceitful diplomacy will be swept away as by a fierce hail-storm or raging flood.

All the covenants and agreements you have made to insure against disaster will be cancelled out by the overwhelming might of the Assyrian invasion when it tramples down your land.

The Assyrians will conquer your land swiftly and advance toward Jerusalem daily. You will hear news of their advance every day and night and every message will strike terror into your hearts.

Your “bed is too short” and your “covers too narrow.” Your preparations for security are inadequate. Just as God rose up against the Philistines in David’s day at Mount Perazim and Gibeon, he is going to rise against Judah, strange as it may seem, and bring to pass His word spoken by the prophets.

Do not scoff at the warnings of God’s word, but give heed to them and repent or your destruction by the Assyrians will intensify because I heard a revelation from God of the powerfulness and universality of their conquests.

Now listen very closely to my words! Is the plowman so stupid that he plows his land over and over without sowing his seed? No! When he had prepared the ground doesn’t he broadcast the dill, scatter the cummin and plant the wheat and barley in rows?

Yes, he does, for God has made him to use common sense to see and understand what needs to be done.

The farmer never threshes all grains the same. A sledge is never used on dill—it is beaten with a stick. A cart-wheel is never rolled on cummin—it is beaten softly with a flail. Bread grain grinds easily so he does not pulverize it into dust. Once the cart-wheel has driven over it and ground it the farmer stores it.

This is not only good common sense but it is true wisdom and comes from the Lord of Hosts who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom.

## **Chapter 29 FOUNDATION THAT IS FIRM**

### **Verses 1-8 SUCCESS**

Woe to you altar city, altar city, Jerusalem, David’s city. Let year follow year and the ceaseless round of feasts and sacrifices continue! But I will bring tribulation upon you, altar city, and there shall be groaning and grief, and you will indeed become to me an altar of sacrifice!



The enemy camp that surrounds you will be My camp; the entrenched troops surrounding you will be My troops; the siege works built up around you will be My siege works. And you shall be humiliated so that you no longer boast loudly but you will speak humbly and low—your voice will be but a whisper like the low moaning of a ghost, barely audible. But then suddenly, the multitudes of enemy troops will vanish from their siege against you like dust and chaff when it is blown away in the wind.

I, Lord of Hosts, will come upon them with terrible judgment and power but multitudes of enemy troops that come upon her will fall short of completing total destruction of Ariel just like when a hungry or thirsty man goes to bed and dreams he is eating and drinking but awakens in the middle of his dream and finds himself dreaming and still hungry and thirsty.

Even so, the appetite of Zion's enemies to devour her will not be satisfied.

### **Verses 9-16 SULLENNESS**

Yes, go ahead and stand around with the look of doubt. Go ahead and stagger around in your stupor of blinding self-indulgence. The Lord has allowed you to drown yourselves in a spirit of deep stupor. The Lord has permitted your prophets and wise men to refuse to see His message.

God's revelation has become a closed book to you. When men give it to a learned man and ask him to read it he says, "I do not understand it. It is a closed book and I cannot read it." When they give it to the illiterate and ask him to read it, he says, "I cannot read." None of you, therefore, know God's revelation.

Now the Lord says, because you people pay Me lip service while your heart's desire is far away from Me, and because you revere the tradition and ritualism of men about My revelation, I will proceed with My program of judgment.

I am going to manifest a miraculous judgment, such as only God can do. I am going to destroy the wisdom of your wise men. I am going to bring you into such difficult and impossible circumstances that none of your counselors will know the solution and their so-called wisdom will be shown to be folly. All this

woe is to come upon you people because your leaders have taught you to believe the Lord is not the sovereign of your life.

Your teachers have caused you to reverse reality! You have gotten everything in life backwards.

The clay vessel does not create the potter—the potter is maker and sovereign of the vessel. The pot does not say of the potter, he has no sense.

### **Verses 17-24 SANCTIFICATION**

It shall surely not be long before what seems impressive among men, great, forest-like, man-dominating world empires like Assyria will be turned into plowed fields producing fruit for the Lord.

And what seems unimpressive among men, the covenant people of God, will be turned into a majestic forest.

In that day, many spiritually deaf and blind will hear the word from the book of God's messengers, and they will be brought out of darkness of falsehood and sin into the marvelous light of God's truth.

The meek have learned patience through discipline and the poor, having no riches to buy favors, have had to commit their cause into the Lord's hands, shall all find fulfillment and joy in their trust in the Holy One of Israel. Because at this time, those who have tyrannized God's faithful ones and those who have scoffed at them and shamed them, and all those who have deliberately done evil to them shall be overcome.

In that day justice will reign in God's kingdom. Those who try to make the innocent appear to be guilty, those who try to impugn the integrity of judges, and those who take bribes to pervert justice will be overcome. So, the God who redeemed Abraham from a world of sin, says concerning the lineage of Jacob, the Messianic people, you will never be ashamed of your God again when that day arrives. In that day, Jacob's lineage will see the work of God in its fulfillment in their midst in the person of the Messiah and they shall sanctify themselves unto Him, in reverence and awe to His name.

That God keeps His word will be so thoroughly proven then, Jacob's lineage will openly and unashamedly acknowledge Him as the Holy One of Israel. Many

of those who had erred will be enlightened, and many who had found fault will learn the truth.

## **Chapter 30 FRIENDS THAT FETTER**

### **Verses 1-14 SHAME**

I hereby threaten you, you rebellious and stubborn children of Mine, says the Lord. You make all your plans without once seeking counsel from Me. You conduct all your business affairs and make political alliances without taking My will into account at all.

All you are doing is multiplying your sins against Me. Without seeking the counsel of my prophet you have gone down to Egypt to get aid and security.

You think Pharaoh is your rind and is able to help you, but he is neither.

In fact, in trusting Egypt and the Pharaoh, you will be disappointed, humiliated, and disgraced. Even though Pharaoh's princes and ambassadors are making political overtures and promises to you from Zoan and Hanes, you are involving yourself in useless and unprofitable agreements with them which will only bring shame and reproach upon you.

This is My omniscient revelation concerning the Beast of the South: you take big risks going through a dangerous and troubled wilderness, populated by wild and fierce animals and poisonous serpents, carrying your nation's riches by caravan loads in tribute to a government that has not the power to help you! Egypt's promises to help are empty promises because, as much as she pledges to help, she is unable to do so.

I tell you she is "A Big-Mouth that is a Do-nothing."

Now, you Isaiah, go write My revelation concerning Egypt for this people in permanent tablet and book form so that future generations may know of Israel's unbelief and that My word is absolutely true.

The people of this generation are rebels, liars, and they refuse to listen to the proclamation of My word. They say to the prophets, don't get any more revelations for us; don't preach your truths to us. If you want us to listen to you, give us what we want to hear—pleasant words, illusions, intrigues. Get out of the way of our dealing with Egypt—leave our path clear. We've heard enough about the Holy One of Israel. Leave us alone!

This is what the Holy One of Israel replies to that! Because you hold My word in contempt and put your faith in force and intrigue and you are relying on this for your safety, you are going to reap the fruits of such perverseness. Calamity will come upon you explosively and suddenly like a damaged wall falls that has a stop heavy bulge from being breached.

The Holy One of Israel is going to smash this nation to pieces like a fragile earthenware pot it shattered when it is broken. God's shattering will be very thorough. Nothing usable will be left when He finishes with this nation.

### **Verses 15-33 SALVATION**

This is what the Holy One of Israel, the One from whom you wish to hear no more, says, "In turning again unto Me in humility you will find salvation; in calm trust in Me you will find power—but you refuse to do so."

You actually said, "No, we will find our safety in fleeing to Egypt upon fast horses. Our salvation will be in our swiftness, yes, if it is swiftness you wish to see, you shall see it, but it will be the swiftness of your enemies coming upon you.

If it is fleeing you wish to see, you shall see that also. Indeed, one thousand of you shall flee at the threat of just a very few enemies."

There will be so few of you left after the fleeing before your enemies those few will be like the solitary mast pole of a ship—standing all by itself. So, because of your attitude, the Lord will wait to show mercy to you until He has first completed His work of judgment.

The Lord is a Lord of justice, and therefore He must uphold His exalted name in judgment before He can be gracious.

All who wait with endurance upon the Lord to fulfill His purposes will find blessedness. Indeed, you who wait upon the Lord will dwell in Zion, even in the Holy city, where My presence is. There shall be an end to your weeping. The Lord will be gracious to you when He hears your cry to Him.

As soon as He hears your cry of repentance and turning to Him, He will answer you. Although the Lord is going to give you a diet of adversity and affliction for a while, the time will soon come when your God-sent teachers will no longer have to hide from threats to their lives.

You will once again be able to see and hear true teachers from God calling you back to the true way where Go wants you to walk. They will keep you from erring in walking the wrong way. And in that day you will despise your expensive and precious idols as repulsive things and cast them away, saying, "Good riddance, away with you!" Then God will make you prosperous.

He will bless you with rain at planting time and make what you plant produce abundantly and bring forth broad pastures for your flocks. Your livestock will eat the best kind of feed. In that day, when God defeats your enemies, He will give you refreshment like cool, clear streams of water flowing down every mountain and hill.

In that day, when the Lord treats the illness of His people and heals them, the glory of God and the abundance of His blessings upon His people will be so magnificent it will be like a sevenfold intensification of the shining sun and moon.

Behold, the Lord, who before removed Himself because of the sins of His people, will come in the day of their repentance, aflame with wrath, lips filled with fury, consuming His enemies by His word. His wrath will pour out upon them and sweep them away like a flood which drowns; they will be destroyed like chaff from a sieve; they will be led by their errors to their doom as a horse is led by its bridle.

But the Lord's people will have a festive song to sing like the songs of their holy feast days. The same kind of gladness of heart exhibited when worshipers go up to the mountain of the Lord playing on their flutes and other instruments will be the gladness that the Lord's people will have at that time.

The Covenant-God will cause the majesty of His voice to be heard in the deliverance of His people. He will exhibit the power of His arm to save His people and destroy His enemies. His destruction will be terrible and complete. By the power of the word of God His enemies, the Assyrians, will cease to exist. Every stroke with which the Lord smites His mighty rod of punishment, the Lord's people will rejoice at their deliverance with music and song.

In wars of heavenly power God will shake down His enemies to destruction. For ages and ages a cremating of His enemies has been prepared by the Lord. God has prepared a massive funeral pyre for the ruler of His enemies. Like

brimstone which set on fire Sodom and Gomorrah, the breath of the Lord will consume His enemies.

## **Chapter 31 FRIENDS THAT FETTER**

### **Verses 1-9 SWORD**

Cursed are those who run to Egypt for help, relying on Egypt's great numbers of horses, chariots and cavalymen. Woe to them because they do not turn to the Holy One of Israel, God, for their help.

God's word is wise and His word is faithful—He is going to keep His word and bring evil upon the evil-doers and upon those from whom they seek help. Let me remind you, these Egyptians are mere men, not God; and their horses mere flesh, not spirit.

When God stretches forth His omnipotent hand against them, both you and your helpers will fall and be consumed. But God has told me this: just like a lion growling over his prey is not frightened or cowed even when many shepherds shout at him, so the Lord will come down upon Zion and fight against her enemies, the Assyrians, and He will not be frightened or cowed by them.

As birds hover over their young to protect them, so God of hosts will hover over Jerusalem to protect her. He will shield, deliver, pass over and preserve her. Turn back, therefore, O chosen Nation, to Him from whom you so completely strayed. The day is soon coming when some of you will indeed recognize that you have rebelled and you will cast away your idols—images made by your own hands which reveal the sin of your hearts.

In that day the Assyrians will be destroyed—not by human swords but the sword of God will pursue them and scatter them.

The Assyrians, who have laid tribute on so many people will one day have their young men taken in tribute and made slaves. The real strength of the Assyrian nation will be so terrified and its leaders so cowed by fear they will desert their battle-flag in panic. This is a pronouncement of God whose fire is in Jerusalem ready to devour His enemies.

## **Chapter 32 FUTURE THAT IS FRUITFUL**

### **Verses 1-8 SOVEREIGN**

Behold, a king who will reign righteously. His entire kingdom will be characterized by the administration of righteousness and justice. The man on the throne will be a refuge from danger, a source of life and a resting place. When He comes things will be as they actually should be—people will see as they should see and hear as they should hear, confused men will understand clearly and men will speak the things of God clearly and boldly.

In His reign a man will be acknowledged for what he actually is and not for what he appears to be—a fool will not be called a great leader nor will a deceitful man be called noble. The fool will be shown to be what he really is, dedicated to opposing God’s will and doing harm to man.

And the crafty man, despite all his cunning, is evil because he is dedicated to the exploitation of his fellow man.

The truly noble man is one that advises true and pure ways and lives that way also.

### **Verses 9-20 SECURITY**

Get up from your lounging around in luxury, you women who have the “I could not care less” attitude and pay attention to what I say to you. In just a little more than a year you are going to change your attitude to that of caring immensely because the vintage which gives you the wine from which you get so much pleasure will fail—there will be no harvest of grapes.

You should be trembling now instead of lying around in luxurious ease. You had better strip off all the luxuriant clothes and frivolous dress and put on sackcloth and repent now than wait until you are driven to smite upon your breasts in mourning for the desolation of judgment that will surely come.

When this judgment comes it will turn the land of My people into fields of thorns and briars. Thorns and briars will engulf the whole land and grow up over the houses, and over the palaces, for they will all be deserted.

The cities will be empty and wild donkeys and goats will roam through the ruins of walls and watchtowers, sleeping in them and pasturing in the city gardens.

This desolation of His people shall continue until the Spirit is poured down on us from heaven. Then desolation will be turned into abundant blessing. Justice and righteousness shall be sown among His people. Peace and rest and security will be harvested from the sowing of righteousness. My people will have a safe and restful place to dwell. But for my enemies I will rain down a hail-storm of judgment that will sweep them away. But whatever my people do will be prospered with all abundance.

## **Chapter 33 FUTURE THAT IS FRUITFUL**

### **Verses 1-12 SUBJUGATION**

Woe is coming to you, you who destroy and never feel destruction. Judgment is coming to you, you who deal deceitfully and never seem to suffer being deceived.

Your days are numbered—your time to destroy and deceive will soon be over, and you are going to be destroyed and deceived. O Lord, I pray, have mercy upon us. We have been hoping in You.

We want You to be our source of strength for every-day life as well as saving us from the great crises of troublous times. We know that at the sound of Your thunder the enemy nations flee and when You stand up to take action your enemies disappear as if scattered. And Lord, Your people will gather spoil and booty from Your vanquished enemy like the caterpillars and locusts leap upon vegetation and devour it quickly.

God exalts Himself by His omnipotent power to deliver and by His power to fill His covenant people, Zion, with justice and righteousness.

And He shall be the source of our constancy in these changing, chaotic times. In fact, He is a treasure for us filled with salvation, wisdom and knowledge.

The reverent fear of the Lord is the door to that treasure house. Behold our present circumstances, O Lord; sturdy soldiers, in anguish of heart, cry out with a loud shriek of pain. Our ambassadors are not ashamed to be seen out on the streets shedding bitter tears. They know how desperate our situation is now.

Our highways lied untraveled like deserted wastelands; covenants made with Assyria which so many have hoped in are treacherously broken, and Assyria has shown itself to be an enemy instead of an ally.



Our enemy has plundered our cities and human life is cheap to him. The whole land of God's people is suffering; Lebanon is in a state of confusion and is about to pass out of existence; the territory of Sharon is like a deserted no-man's land; Bashan and Carmel are as barren as trees with all their leaves shaken off.

But, says the Lord, I am going to stand up and to take action, and when I do My power and might will be demonstrated against My enemies.

Assyria, you are pregnant with grandiose plans, but all that shall come of them will be uselessness, and your plans will be blown away like chaff and stubble.

The hot breath of war and aggression with which you pant after My people will be the very means of your own destruction. Your nation will be completely destroyed like a body burned down to lime or thorns burned to ashes.

#### **Verses 13-24 SERENITY**

Pay attention to what I, God, have done. Acknowledge My might, all you nations of the earth, both far and near.

The sinners among My covenant nation are filled with fear, the godless are paralyzed with terror. Who can live here, they cry; our God has become a consuming flame in bringing this judgment upon us.

I will tell you who can live here: all who live honestly and speak truthfully, who abhor making profit by fraud, who wave aside temptation to take a bribe, who refuse to even listen to plots of bloodshed, who refuse even to look at anything which appears to be evil.

Such a man shall live above evil and its consequences. He will dwell securely like a fortress built upon a rocky mountain. He will be sustained with all the food and water he needs. Your eyes will see the king in his beauty. You will look out upon a land of far-away horizons where the land meets the sky, and think back to this time of terror, wondering, where are those Assyrians who counted our people, estimated our military fortifications.

You will see no more of these violent and insolent people with their jabbering, incoherent language. Soon they will all be gone. Instead you will see Jerusalem, the festive city, at peace. It will be secure like a tent that never has its stakes pulled up, its ropes broken and is never moved from place to place.

God will dwell with us in all His majesty. The protection He shall give us will be greater than the wide rivers surrounding cities like Thebes.

No ships of war shall sail across this river. The Lord God is our judge; the Lord God is our lawgiver; the Lord God is our king; He will save us!

Right now the ship of Zion's tackle is not ship-shape. Everything is not taut and strong like it should be. The masthead wobbles on an unsure footing and the battle ensign is not hoisted.

However, in a short time Zion will be dividing the treasure of its enemy in great abundance; even the lame will be in on plundering of the enemy. Then those on board the ship Zion will not say, I am ill, for they will be healed—their iniquity will have been forgiven.

## **Chapter 34 FOES WILL FALL**

### **Verses 1-7 SLAUGHTER**

Come close and listen to me, all you nations of the world, all of creation had better pay attention to what I have to say! For the God of Creation is filled with wrath against the whole world because it has schemed to usurp His sovereignty by human governments.

Because human empires are in rebellion against God's rule of man. God has marked them for utter destruction. Their destruction will not only be total, it will be humiliating and horrifying. It will be as when a city is conquered and its slain are cast out into the streets and left unburied and the stench of rotting flesh permeates everything.

The destruction of the world empires will be so complete it could furnish enough blood to wash away mountains. When God finishes His destruction of all that oppose Him, even the material world will be dissolved, the skies will be taken away, and the stars will go out of existence like leaves dying and dropping from a fig-tree.

My sword of wrath in heaven is filled to staggering. It is going to stagger forth upon Edom, one of those kingdoms opposing My sovereignty, as an example of the inevitable judgment that is to come upon all kingdoms opposing Me.

This sword of the Lord is about to be saturated with blood and gorged with flesh like the sword used to slay lambs and goats. It is Edom that will come

under God's bloody, sacrificial sword. The small and the great, the weak and the powerful, the rich and the poor alike are going to be slaughtered in Edom.

The land will stagger and reel with blood like a drunken man reels from wine. Their whole land will be saturated with dead bodies.

### **Verses 8-17 SHAMBLES**

Yes, the Lord will be in Zion in its day of recompense. Edom has had its day opposing Zion, but the Lord will bring vengeance upon Edom at the proper time. Edom's streams will be fouled with tar and pitch and her soil turned into sulphurous dust and her land into burning, smoldering pools of tar, not fit for habitation.

The desolation of Edom will never end. It will be an uninhabited kingdom forever, from one generation to another. It will never again be made a habitable place. The only creatures inhabiting this territory henceforth will be wild, unclean creatures of loneliness and desolation-pelicans, porcupines, owls and ravens.

God has measured that kingdom by His standards of righteousness and justice, and it is found to be fit only for destruction and desolation. They shall call it "No Kingdom There," and its princes shall soon all be gone. Thorns, bushes and weeds will grow up inside its palaces and mansions; its fortresses will fall into complete disuse and be the haunts of wild jackals and ostriches. The animals of the desert will forage there along with the wolves and wild goats.

The screeching night-thing will settle there and build her nest. The dangerous darting snake and the scavenging vulture will settle there and reproduce their young.

Search what the Lord has caused to be written in His book; not one of these predictions shall go unfulfilled because the Lord who revealed the predictions through my mouth is the same Lord whose Spirit will cause the wild animals to inhabit the desolation of Edom.

The Lord of Creation has set this territory aside and marked it off to be given to those doleful and despised wild creatures from one generation to another.

## **Chapter 35 FREEDOM WILL FLOURISH**

### **Verses 1-7 STRENGTHENED**

While the glory of the God-opposing world empires will be changed to wastelands and desolations, the desolation of God's people is only temporary. Yes, their wastelands will someday be filled with gladness and the unproductiveness will be turned into beauty and fertility.

There will be great joy and singing in that day. The majestic glory and beauty of Lebanon's mountains, the verdant lushness of Mount Carmel and the fertile productiveness of Sharon's plain will be faint comparison with the glory and excellency of the Lord which they shall enjoy in that day.

On account of this promise let those of God who are afraid be valiant and walk on in God's way with confidence.

Tell those who are apprehensive to be courageous and strong. Your God is coming to destroy your enemies and save you.

When He comes the blind will be made to see and the deaf made to hear. When he comes the crippled will be made as agile as the deer and those who cannot speak will be enabled to shout and sing.

Refreshing and life-giving water will gush forth in the arid places and turn into running streams. That which is parched and dried up will be made into an oasis for the thirsty. Even that which normally would never be fertile and refreshing shall be so.

### **Verses 8-10 SANCTIFIED**

And a main thoroughfare shall be there in the rejuvenated wilderness. It shall be a road leading the redeemed directly to their destination. This will be called the "Way of Holiness," and sinners will not walk in this "Way." It is reserved for those who desire to be sanctified unto the Lord.

It is a "Way" so clearly built and recognizable that even the inexperienced and those who have not known this "Way" before may not fail to comprehend it if they wish to learn of it.

All dangers involved in traveling through the wastelands will be eliminated on this "Way." Those whom the Lord purchases with a ransom-price will return to Him and to Zion rejoicing with songs about their redemption. Everlasting joy will crown their whole lives.

They shall finally find the refreshment of their souls for which they have longed. All that would frustrate or hinder their travel will be made to disappear.

## **Chapter 36 CHASTENING THROUGH CAPTIVITY—PRESSURE**

### **Verses 1-12 PREDICAMENT**

It was in the fourteenth year of the reign of King Hezekiah that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, made military expeditions against many fortified cities of Judah and conquered most of them. While he was occupied with the siege of Lachish, the king of Assyria sent his commander-in-chief with a great number of troops to deliver an ultimatum to Hezekiah.

When the king of Assyria's commander arrived in Jerusalem, he set up camp with his troops by the conduit of the upper pool along the road going down to the bleaching field. A trio of high officials from Hezekiah's court went out to where the Assyrian troops were to confer with their leader, Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, chief administrator; Shebna who was formerly chief administrator but now serving as a scribe; Joah, son of Asaph, an official chronicler—all went out to talk to the Rab-shakeh.

The Assyrian official said to them, go tell this Hezekiah that the great king of Assyria wants to know what kind of a fool he is for thinking the king of Egypt will help him?

The great king of Assyria wishes to inform Hezekiah of the uselessness of his strategies and conferences on war. Who in the world will be able to help him now that he has rebelled against the great king of Assyria?

Egypt is not just a useless ally, she is a dangerous one. She is like a broken but sharp stem of the reed—she will pierce your hand if you lean upon her.

Now before you say to me, we are trusting in God, let me ask you, is this the God Hezekiah defied by tearing down all the altars your people built to your God in the high places and groves and made everyone worship only at the altar in Jerusalem?

My master, the king of Assyria, wants to make a wager with you—that you don't have 2000 cavalymen in your whole army. If you do, the king of Assyria will give you 2000 horses for them to ride on! Now with a tiny army like that, how do you propose to make war on even the smallest and worst section of my

master's army? With so little to offer, how do you expect to get help from Egypt?

Furthermore, do you think I have come here without the help of your own God. Let me tell you, your own God spoke to me and told me to make war on this land and destroy it. Then the three Hebrew men representing King Hezekiah said, with much consternation in their voices, speak O Rab-shakeh, I beg you, in the Aramaic language; we understand it.

Please do not continue to speak these threats in Hebrew because our countrymen there on the city's walls will hear and chaos will fill the city.

But the Rab-shakeh said, do you think my master has sent me just to threaten Hezekiah? I was sent to threaten the whole Jewish nation and warn them they will suffer atrocious and inhuman degradations if they do not surrender. They will eat their own dung and drink their own urine if they force my master to war against them.

#### **Verses 13-20 PROPOSITION**

Then the Assyrian commander-in-chief stepped forth and shouted loudly in the Hebrew language toward the people gathered on the city walls. Listen to the words of the greatest king, the king of Assyria: do not let Hezekiah's promises deceive you—nothing he can do will save you. Do not let Hezekiah deceive you by telling you to trust in your God—that He will save you—that He will not let this city be taken over by the king of Assyria. I repeat, do not listen to Hezekiah! You had better listen to this proposition from the king of Assyria: he says, "Surrender on my terms, open the gates of the city and come out in peace and I will let each of you go ahead living on your own land, conducting your own business, prospering until I have time to come and take you away to a land very similar to this one where you will find as much prosperity as you do here.

My taking your city is inevitable. You will be much better off to surrender. Beware that you do not be fooled by Hezekiah's promise that your God will save you from me. The gods of no other nation have been able to deliver from the king of Assyria.

Remember Hamath and Arpad? Their gods did not deliver them. Neither did Sepharvaim's gods and Samaria's gods. Of all the gods of these nations, which

one has ever delivered them from my power? Not a one! And do not think this God of yours can deliver Jerusalem from me? Do not be foolish!"

### **Verses 21-22 PATIENCE**

But in the face of all these taunts and temptations, the people were silent because king Hezekiah had ordered the people, "Do not answer the Assyrian Rabshakeh."

Then Eliakim, chief administrator, and Shebna, the royal scribe, and Joah, the royal chronicler, returned to the presence of Hezekiah with their clothes ripped and torn as a sign of their grief and misery and told him all that had been said by the Rabshakeh.

## **Chapter 37 CHASTENING THROUGH CAPTIVITY—PERSEVERANCE**

### **Verses 1-7 THE PLEA**

When King Hezekiah listened to the report of the men sent to meet with Rabshakeh, he tore his robes indicating his anguish of soul, put on camel's hair clothing indicating his penitence and went into the Temple to humble himself before the Lord. Just before doing this he had sent Eliakim, his chief administrator and Shebna his royal scribe, and the chief priests—all camel's hair clothing of humility—to Isaiah, the prophet of God, son of Amoz.

They were sent to Isaiah with this message from King Hezekiah: This is a day of distress and anguish, punishment, and rebuke, reproach and rejection from the Lord—it is a day from which only a miracle can deliver us like a day when children are ready to be born but the mothers' wombs will not open. So, I am hoping, Isaiah, your God will take note of the defiant, insulting words of the Rabshakeh, who was sent by the king of Assyria for that very purpose and will punish him for the words He has heard Rabshakeh speak.

So pray, Isaiah, for those of us remaining, as many as we can find. So, they came to Isaiah with this message. And this was Isaiah's reply to them: say this to Hezekiah, your master. God's word is, "Do not be afraid of the threats and insults of the men sent by the king of Assyria. I will dispose the king of Assyria to leave Judah through a report that will come to him from his homeland that he is needed back there at once."

He will return to his own land, and he will eventually die a violent death by the hand of his own people.

### **Verses 8-13 THE POTENTATE**

The Assyrian army general left Jerusalem and returned to his king. But he found his king waging war on Libnah, having already departed from Lachish. Then the king of Assyria received an intelligence report that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was marching toward southern Palestine to fight against him.

Immediately, the king of Assyria sent messengers with a warning to Hezekiah, saying to him, do not be fooled with any oracle from your God that Jerusalem will be delivered from my hand. If you trust in your God you will be deceived.

Let me remind you that the reports of Assyrian destruction and victory over the world are not exaggerated. Now, what makes you think you will be delivered?

None of the gods of the different peoples of the world, such as those of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, or the gods of territories like Beth-eden or Telassar, have been able to deliver them from Assyrian conquest. Do you think yours shall deliver you?

Where are the kings of nations like Hamath, Arpad, Seoharvain, Hena and Ivvah? They are gone—dethroned by the mighty Assyrian king.

### **Verses 14-20 THE PRAYER**

Hezekiah took the letter from the Assyrian messengers and read it for himself. Then, taking it to the Temple, he presented it before the Lord and prayed, saying, "O Lord of hosts, Great God of Israel enthroned upon Thy mercy seat here in this Thy Temple, Thou art the Only God, King of all kingdoms, and Omnipotent Creator of the universe. Please turn Thine ears to hear my pleas and direct Thine eyes, O Lord, to see what I have to present to Thee.

See, Lord, this letter of Sennacherib; it is a mocking defiance of Thy sovereignty. Admittedly, Lord, the kings of Assyria have conquered and destroyed all those peoples listed in the letter. Yes, they have thrown their gods into the fire and proved they were not gods at all but just pieces of wood and stone carved into images by men's hands. Of course, men can destroy gods like those. In view of this, my prayer to Thee, O Living God, is that Thou wilt save us so that the world may know that Thou are the Only God."



## Verses 21-35 THE PRONOUNCEMENT

Immediately Isaiah sent this message to Hezekiah; "This is what the God of Israel says: In answer to your prayer to Me concerning Sennacherib: the untouchable daughter of Zion laughs and scorns you despicable Assyrians. Jerusalem shows her disdain of you by a shake of her head. Who do you Assyrians think you are defying and mocking? At whom are you railing with your loud boasting and haughtiness?

You are defying the Holy One of Israel! You have sent your aides to threaten the Lord, and they have boasted, we have come over the great mountains of Lebanon with thousands of my chariots and have plundered every nation in my path of its treasures.

We have taken whatever we wanted from any nation. We have conquered and occupied many nations and dug wells for our occupation forces. Egypt with its Nile River is no obstacle to me—I simply walk across it as if it were dry land. How is it you do not know that it was I, the Holy One of Israel, who decreed all of this long ago? How is it you do not acknowledge that you do what you do only by permissive will? I have allowed you to have all this power to devastate nations and cities. This is the only reason other nations have had no power against you.

This is why they were as helpless as grass and tender plants before you and as dead and used-up as the dead grass on a thatched roof.

I, the Lord God, know everything you do. I know when you sit down, when you go out, when you come in, I know every word of defiance you have uttered against Me. Now because of your arrogance and challenge to My sovereignty, manifested by your intimidations toward My people, I will lead you in humility and docility back to where you came from like a bull is led with a ring in its nose or a horse is led with a bit in its mouth.

And I will prove that I, the Holy One of Israel, am delivering this city by giving this sign to My people; before the year is over the Assyrians will be gone. The time will again come when you will reap abundantly from the fruits of your toil and your enemy will not plunder your fields. It will not be immediately.

It is too late now to plant your crops for this year. You will harvest first only that which comes up from volunteer seed. The next year will be about the same,

due to the devastation of the land by the enemy. But in the third year you will once again sow and reap good crops from this land.

Those of you who are left in Judah will be firmly established in your land again without interference from foreign occupation, and you will flourish as a nation again.

For I, the Lord, have purposed to always preserve, small though it may be, a Messianic people for Myself. And because I am very zealous to fulfill My Messianic covenant, I will deliver Jerusalem from the king of Assyria.

The king of Assyria will not be allowed by God to make war on Jerusalem. In fact, he will not even come to the city, but he will return to his own land by the same route he entered, Palestine. I, even I, will defend this city and save it for the vindication of My name and to fulfill the promise I made to David."

### **Verses 36-38 THE PHENOMENON**

That night the Angel of the Lord went out to the camp of the Assyrian army and killed 185,000 warriors. When those who were still alive awakened in the morning they beheld the terrible sight of all the dead bodies strewn throughout their camp.

Then Sennacherib, king of Assyria, set out to leave and he went immediately, returning to his own country, Nineveh.

A number of years later, while he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer assassinated him with their swords. They escaped into the land of Ararat, and Esar-haddon, another of Sennacherib's sons became king.

## **Chapter 38 CHASTENING THROUGH CAPTIVITY—PROSTRATION**

### **Verses 1-8 PERPLEXITY**

About nine years earlier in the reign of Hezekiah, he had become deathly ill. Isaiah the prophet and son of Amoz was sent to the king with this message from the Lord: "Thus says the Covenant God, you are going to die from this illness, so you had better give your last word of instruction and get things in order for you are about to be succeeded on the throne." When Hezekiah heard these words from Isaiah he was very upset because he had no son to succeed him and the menace of the Assyrian Empire had become critical.

The only recourse left to Hezekiah in the face of these impossible circumstances was the Lord, so Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed. He said, "O Lord, please remember that I have always tried to live my life according to Thy truth with my whole heart, and I have always tried to do what Thou hast said is good." Overcome with the emotions of this moment Hezekiah began to weep with great sobs.

Immediately the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: Go and say to Hezekiah, "Thus says the Covenant God, the same God who promised your ancestor David that his throne would abide forever, I have heard your prayer and I have seen your tears. Since you have such true concern for the promise of Thy God through David's throne I will let you live fifteen more years and produce an heir to David's throne." (Isaiah told him to put a poultice of figs on his boil and he would recover).

"I will also deliver you and Jerusalem from any Assyrian menace. I, God, will defend this city." (Hezekiah asked what sign he would be given to verify God's promise of the extension of his life and deliverance from the Assyrian menace. Isaiah asked Hezekiah whether he would prefer the shadow of the sun to go immediately forward ten steps on Ahaz' "step-sun-dial" or backwards ten steps. Hezekiah replied that the shadow going forward would be easy so he preferred it to go backward. Isaiah prayed to the Lord). Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "This will be the sign to you from God. He will do what you asked."

God says, "I will cause the shadow on the step-sun-dial of Ahaz to go backward ten steps from where it is now." The sun went backward ten steps on the step-dial from where it was at that time.

### **Verses 9-20 PRAISE**

When Hezekiah had recovered from his deadly illness, he wrote this psalm expressing his thanksgiving to God for his recovery. This is what my thoughts were; "Just as my life has reached its zenith, suddenly I must depart this life and enter into the place of disembodied souls—the unknown and unknowing realm of the dead: I have been consigned to this nether world for the rest of my existence."

I was saying, "I will never be able to be in the Lord's presence again in this living existence and I will never again enjoy the fellowship of living people.

My life is to suddenly disappear from this place like a Bedouin's tent when it is moved from its place; my life is terminated like a rug being woven is suddenly rolled up and cut loose from the loom; as swiftly as the day passes into the night, so swiftly is my life to end.

After the first shock of my illness I composed myself. But my composure was shattered, like bones are scattered when broken by a lion, by the message of Isaiah that I would die from my illness. How swiftly the Lord brings my life to an end!

Delirious with grief, shattered like a swallow and mourned like a dove; I looked with weary eyes, despairing of help, and cried, O Lord, I am crushed down under this heavy grief, help me!

I am so astounded at my miraculous recovery I do not know what to say! Surely the Lord Himself has done this. I shall live submissively the rest of my days as a result of the distressing experiences I have come through.

O Lord, it is through these disciplinary experiences men live; they are the well-springs of spiritual life. O Lord, give me full recovery and restore me to life again.

At first, only grief for my shortened life possessed me. But I learned a great deal about Thy love, O Lord and that Thou art in control of my dying and my living. From this great experience I know also, Lord, that thou has pardoned my sins. I am so glad I am alive to praise Thee, O Lord, for when men die and their spirits leave their bodies and go to the place and disembodied spirits, they cannot praise Thee; disembodied spirits cannot join in the joy and celebration of the feasts consecrated to Thee; they cannot know hope in Thy truth. The man still living, yes, only the living, like I am, shall praise Thee.

Life is for the experience of the father teaching his son the word of God; there is no joy like that for the dead. I have learned from this experience that I need Thy help always and Thou art ready to give it always. On account of Thy helpfulness, O Lord, my compatriots will join me and we will sing my songs of praise all the rest of our lives, to the accompaniment of stringed instruments in Thy Temple."

## **Verses 21-22 PRESCRIPTION**

For Isaiah had told Hezekiah's servants, make an ointment of crushed figs and spread it over the boil, and he will get well again. And then Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, what sign will the Lord give me to prove that He will heal me?

## **Chapter 39 CHASTENING THROUGH CAPTIVITY—PRESUMPTION**

### **Verses 1-4 PRIDE**

About nine years before Hezekiah's confrontation with the Assyrian Rabshakeh, soon after his recovery from his illness, the king of Babylon, Merodachbaladan, son of Baladan, sent his envoys with a letter and a gift to Hezekiah. The king of Babylon was interested in the reports of Hezekiah's phenomenal recovery from terminal illness.

Hezekiah was proud of the fact that the king of Babylon had sent envoys to inquire of his recovery so he took them on a tour of his palace, showing them the wealth of his treasury and the armaments in his armory. Hezekiah was so taken with the overtures of the Babylonians, he showed them everything in his city they wanted to see.

Immediately, Isaiah the prophet confronted King Hezekiah and said to him, What did these men say to you; where are they from? Hezekiah did not tell Isaiah what the men said but did reply, they are from far away in Babylon. Then Isaiah asked the king, what have you shown them of your kingdom?

Hezekiah replied, "I have shown them everything about my kingdom—everything in my treasury and in my armory."

### **Verses 5-8 PUNISHMENT**

Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, hear the word of God of Hosts. "Behold, the time is coming when all of the armament and treasures which you have so boastfully shown your Babylonian visitors—everything your ancestors have worked so hard to accumulate and store up—will be carried off by the Babylonians as the booty of war.

"None of your wealth or weapons will be left," says the Lord. "Your own sons and grandsons will be taken away by these same Babylonians and made slaves in the palace of their king."

Hezekiah was humbled by the prophet's words and said, "Yes, the word of the Lord is good and just. Furthermore, the word of the Lord is merciful. The Lord will make peace and truth to prevail for us at least for the rest of my days."

## **Chapter 40 PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—COMFORT**

### **Verses 1-11 PREPARE FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD**

"Encourage and strengthen my people," says your God. "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call out to her that her warfare and her struggle is fulfilled—it is over; her iniquity is paid for; God's wrath is abundantly satisfied."

Hark, a voice crying! In the wilderness prepare a way for God; make smooth and level in the desert a highway for our God. Every dark valley will have to be filled in and raised up and every mountain and hill scraped off and lowered.

Everything that is uneven must be made level, and the rough places must be smoothed out like a plain. When the way is prepared then the glory of the Lord will be made manifest and the human race will have His glory shown to them together.

The Lord has promised this and it shall certainly come to pass. Hark, a second voice saying, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" Cry out that the human race is frail like grass and the flowers of the field. When the breath of God blows upon the grass in the hot, dry winds of summer, the grass withers and the flowers fade. That is just how fragile man is. He and grass and flowers wither and fade, but the word of our God stands forever.

O Zion, bringer of good news, get yourself up on a high mountain where you can really cry the good news to Jerusalem, as a bringer of good news and shout with a strong voice. Do not be afraid to cry loudly to all the cities of Judah, behold, your God! Behold indeed! The Lord God is coming like a strong and powerful ruler and His arm will rule for Him.

He is bringing His rewards and compensations with Him for His people. He is going to provide food for His people like a shepherd; He is going to provide safety and protection for His people like a shepherd; He is going to show compassion and gentleness to all those who need help.

### **Verses 12-26 PERCEIVE THE NATURE OF THE LORD**

Who else has measured all the oceans, lakes and rivers in the infinite palm of His hand and measured off the heavens with His yardstick? Who else is able to measure the land of the earth in its proper one-third portion? Who else is able to weigh accurately the mountains and hills in proportion needed upon the earth?

Who regulated the Spirit of the Lord with rules or directions according to which all this was to be done? With whom did He consult? Who instructed Him how to create all this and who taught Him what to do with it? Who gave him this omniscient understanding?

Indeed, the great masses of people over whom the Lord rules are no more burden to Him than a drop in a bucket is a burden to the man who carries it and no more than a tiny speck of dust would tip the balance of a scale.

Indeed, the islands and continents may be carried by Him as if they were an infinitesimal atom. All the wood of Lebanon's forests is not enough to provide a sacrificial fire, nor all Lebanon's animals enough to provide a sacrifice sufficient to His majesty. Compared to His greatness, the masses of humanity and the power of man's empires are as nothing—as if they did not even exist.

To whom then will you compare God? Who or what resembles Him? Will you be so foolish as to liken God to one of your man-made images? These are made by men, in the likeness of man, from earthen metals and with man-made ornamentations. Even your people, who cannot afford gold and silver, will not be outdone in foolishness. They select a tree they think will not rot and hire skilled artisans to carve them an idol they think will be permanent.

Why do you continually refuse to acknowledge who the real God is? Why do you continually refuse to listen to His prophets tell you who the real God is? Is

it not because you have not had the truth about God preached to you, is it? It is not because you have not been able to understand what His creative works say about Him, is it? What you have heard and what you have seen should have taught you that it is God who is enthroned upon the zenith of the earth and upholds His creation by His almighty power.

Men and their idols are as weak and powerless as grasshoppers when compared to Him. He stretches out the heavens as easily as man would a curtain and makes a tent of all the heavens for His own dwelling place. He is the one who deposes princely rulers from their thrones and brings down high and mighty human judges to nothingness.

In fact, many of these pretended potentates scarcely come to power before God sees fit to remove them. Rulers are one moment upon the throne; the next they are gone like stubble in a whirlwind.

So, there is no one to whom you may compare Me, is there? There is nothing that is equal to Me, is there? Look up into the heavens! Understand that God is Creator of the universe. He brought every single star into being and knows exactly how many stars there are. He has named every one of them and calls the roll like a military commander. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

### **Verses 27-31 PERSEVERE IN WAITING FOR THE LORD**

O Jacob, O Israel, how can you say, the difficult way I must travel is hidden from God, and God does not notice any trouble and take up my cause and defend my rights? You certainly have had plenty of opportunity to know this is not true of God, haven't you? You have certainly heard the truth about God, haven't you?

God is the God of eternity. He was before creation and He is the Creator. He is eternal in all His attributes and eternally powerful and strong and vigilant. He never tires or grows weary. Finite men will not understand this eternality because it is impossible for men to fully comprehend the infinite.



There is abundant evidence of God's eternal power so men may believe even if they cannot understand it.

God is the One who gives power and strength to everyone else! All men eventually grow weak and exhaust their strength, even the young, virile athletic-type men tire and grow weary. But those who believe in God will be given fresh strength, will rise up from their difficulties as if they were eagles soaring upward to the heavens, will run upon their course of life as steadily as a racer who never tires or as one who walks for miles and miles and never grows weary.

God will give those who believe in Him a measure of the Divine strength that He Himself has.

## **Chapter 41 PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—CONQUEST**

### **Verses 1-7 GENTILES SILENCED**

Shut up and listen to me, all you heathen enemies of Mine. I challenge all My enemies to clothe themselves in all the power they can muster and present themselves before Me. Then, when they have all the strength they can muster let them speak and we will enter into contest together. I want to ask you ahead of time, who do you think is raising up from the east your conqueror and My executioner of justice? It is I, God, whose sovereign providence gives you into My servant's hand.

I give all your kings to be ruled over by him and I give your people to be ground into dust and smashed into pieces like stubble by the sword and bow of his warfare. He chases all my enemies away and goes wherever he wishes in safety—even through territory unfamiliar and hostile to him.

Who is capable of such omnipotence? It is He who, ever since there has been a human history, has called into existence the generations of men—even God, the Eternal, Uncaused First Cause. He is, I AM.

The pagan peoples see and fear. My servant will strike trembling terror into the hearts of all people. Still they will draw together with one another and unite

in their opposition to him to help and encourage one another insisting he is not capable of overcoming them all.

They will feverishly engage themselves in the production of new and more ornate idols. The craftsmen will urge one another saying, we are doing a good job on those idols—these will surely be great enough and permanent enough to keep us safe from him.

### **Verses 8-13 GOD'S PEOPLE SAVED**

But you, Israel, you are my chosen servant. You have a special heritage to fulfill because you are the descendants of Abraham whom I knew as My friend. Through him I fashioned you as a nation to serve me for out of the midst of heathendom.

If I had done all this especially for you I certainly will not desert you if you will carry out your mission of service to Me.

Therefore, do not fear any of your enemies because I am with you. There is no reason for you to despair. I, God, am your God and I will give you Divine strength and help. Yes, indeed, I will cause you to stand with My righteous and powerful right hand. Wait and see—all those who hate you will be confounded, humiliated and destroyed.

Those who oppose you will be annihilated

Even if you go around looking for your enemies you will not be able to find any. I repeat, those who make war against you will be utterly obliterated.

It is I, the Lord your Great God, holding on to your right hand. And I say to you I will not let go so do not be afraid.

### **Verses 14-20 GLORY TO GOD**

Do not be afraid O Israel. Although you are as despised as a worm, I will help you, says God. Your Savior is the Eternal Holy One of Israel. I am going to make you grind your enemies into pieces like a new threshing sledge grinds wheat into chaff.

Even though those who oppose you may be as formidable as great mountains, you will grind them down and blow them into nothingness. Then you will give praise and glory to God and be filled with joy because the Holy One of Israel has delivered you.

Right now you are spiritually destitute and in need of the living water and there is none. But I, God, will answer those who recognize their need and call upon Me. I will not forsake any of My faithful ones.

In the midst of the thirst of My people for life I will open a river. I will completely reverse those conditions of spiritual aridness. The change will be miraculous.

Those who remain faithful to Me will partake of life-giving water everywhere and will grow and produce fruit and will be like an oasis of trees and pools in a desert wilderness. The objective is that man may see, know, consider, and understand together that the Lord, not man, created this miraculous change.

#### **Verses 21-29 GOOD TIDINGS**

All you have put your trust in idols. I, God challenge you to demonstrate causes and reason for such trust. Bring forth your idols and let them declare what is going to happen. Challenge them to tell what has occurred in years gone by and what it all means; and I challenge them to tell what is yet to come—predict the future.

Indeed, your idols may prove they are deities if they are able to predict the future and do supernatural works of deliverance and judgment which will astound us.

As a matter of fact, your idols are less than nothing and they can do nothing at all. Men and women who choose to worship idols are disgusting and detestable. I, the Lord, am going to raise up one (Cyrus) to deliver My people from their enemies. He will come from the east by way of the north and he will do My will. He will tear down rulers and kingdoms as easily as he does mortared walls.

As the potter is able to trample upon the clay with which he works, so will this deliverer trample underfoot the pagan deities.

Which of the pagan deities have predicted this so that when it comes to pass we may know they are gods? Not a one! No other god known has said anything at all about it! I, God, was the first and only one to tell MY covenant people, "Look, Look, your deliverers."

Furthermore, I will give to Jerusalem a prophet to announce this good news of deliverance. But when I look among all the pagan deities there is not a single one who can give any kind of counsel—not a one of them answers. My challenge is that they are foolish, worthless things; these idols are all as empty as the wind.

## **Chapter 42 PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—COVENANT**

### **Verses 1-9 SEE MY SERVANT**

Look! By faith see My Servant-Messiah whom I shall give My full support. He shall be sent as My Chosen One, and My delight in Him shall be made manifest. I will demonstrate that I have put My spirit upon Him. He will accomplish justice for the people of all nations.

He will not be loud and boisterous. He will be gentle, meek, and humble and will not practice self-seeking methods. He will not crush and exploit the helpless nor extinguish hope and faith. He will establish real justice and real truth. He Himself will not be quenched or bruised until He accomplishes His mission to establish justice for all mankind.

All mankind waits for His truth. This is what Almighty God, Creator of the heavens, Creator of the earth and the green grass, Creator of life, breath and spirit in all men who live upon the earth affirms: I am God, Covenant God, and I have called You, My Servant, to a covenant of righteousness. I have made a solemn promise to You to clasp Your hand in Mine and to protect You. It is My purpose to give You for a covenant of Mine for all people—even a light to the pagans. I, God, am giving You to open the "eyes" of men's minds which have

been blinded by sin, to deliver all men who are imprisoned and enslaved in the dungeon of unbelief.

I am God, Faithful-Promiser, that is My express nature; I share this glory with no other, least of all with the gods of wood and stone. Everything I, God, foretold in the past came to pass just as I said it would. These new things I tell you about My Servant will just as surely come to pass even though I tell you before they happen.

### **Verses 10-17 SING A SONG OF PRAISE**

Sing to God a new song appropriate to the new thing He will do. Sing His praises all over the whole earth. Let all who travel over the world by sea and every creature in the sea sing to God.

Let all the coastlands around the sea, the islands, and all who inhabit them sing to the Lord. Let the inhabitants of the desert cities and villages of Arabia and Edom shout loud praises from their mountain tops.

Let all the Gentiles in the far off eastern islands praise and glorify God. The reason the whole earth should sing and shout the praises of God is that God is going forth as a mighty warrior to win a decisive and complete victory over His enemies and all who oppose His redemptive work for man.

God says He has held Himself in restraint against His enemies long enough. Now, like the great inhalations and exhalations of a woman gasping in child delivery, that which I have so long concealed in Myself shall be accomplished. I will make the land of My enemies a wasteland; its hills and mountains I will level; its vegetation I will kill with drought; I will dry up rivers and pools until they are dry land. I am going to devastate My enemies.

The ones My enemies have captured and made blind I will deliver by a deliverance known only to Me. I will lead them along a Way they can never discover.

I will turn their darkness into light and all the rugged hindrances and crooked places will be straightened out by Me.

"These are the things I will do," says God, and I will not forsake all these blind ones. When I accomplish this great, magnificent victory, it will reveal the utter shame of idolatry and cause those who worship idols to recognize the impotence of idols.

### **Verses 18-25 SIGHTLESS SERVANTS**

People of God, servants of God, open your ears and listen; open your blind eyes and see what I am showing you. But then, who in all the world is as blind as My servant Israel or as deaf as Israel who was sent as My messenger in the earth?

I repeat, the blindness of Israel who is supposed to be My confidant, is incredible! You see much but you do not keep what you see; you listen to many things but you do not obey them.

To display His own righteousness God was glad to give Israel a great and glorious revelation of Himself in His law. And, yet His greatness and gloriousness is not reflected in this people of the law for they are a people robbed, enslaved, imprisoned, trapped—fair game for all their enemies and, having refused Him, there is no one to protect them. Oh, isn't there just one of you who will listen to Me and My prophet? Isn't there one who will learn from all the instruction and experience of this nation and obey and avert the ruin that awaits disobedience?

Don't you know Who let Israel be robbed and hurt? Was it not plain to you that it was God? It was the Lord this people sinned against when they refused to walk in His ways and did not obey His law. On account of this disobedience God poured out upon Israel His Divine fury in war and other calamities—still Israel refused to recognize that this was chastening from God.

### **Chapter 43 PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SERVANT, CALL**

#### **Verses 1-7 TO BE A POSSESSION**

And now, in light of the foregoing, God says, "I am your Creator and your Former, O Israel, so you need have no fear. I have redeemed you in the past and

will do so in the future. You are mine; I have special claim on you. You did not even name yourself—I did. You were singled out by Me for a special purpose.

So, when you have to pass through dangerous waters and flooded rivers you need not fear they will overcome you; when you have to walk through fires of your oppressors you will not be burned—you will not even be touched by the flames.

You know Who I Am, I Am God, Covenant God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I have paid a high price for you giving up whole continents like Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba as a ransom for you.

Ever since the time you became My precious possession I have honored you and loved you dearly. And on account of My love for you I will continue to exchange the lives of other peoples to keep you as My special people. Do not be afraid of your enemies, for I, your Covenant-God, am with you always. Even if you are scattered all over the world, I promise to gather my sons and daughters from the east, west, north, and south. Yes, everyone who will surrender to be called by My name, I will have produced a new creation, will have shaped him and perfected and completed him for My glory."

### **Verses 8-13 TO BE A PROCLAIMER**

"I, God, challenge the blind heathen to bring forth their gods, and their soothsayers who claim they can see and hear supernatural things. Gather all the heathen nations as one; who among their gods can proclaim anything like My present prediction of the restoration of My people Israel?

To prove that they can, let them cite former events which they predicted and which had really taken place. Let them present their eyewitnesses of such earlier prophecies and so prove themselves to be gods substantiating the truthfulness of their claims.

But I call you, Israel, as witness of the historical facts concerning My infallible knowledge of the future, says God. You have been Mine in a special, miraculous relationship and you can certainly testify to that experience of service. You,

Israel, have enough evidence to know and believe that I am the only God there is. There was no god before Me and there shall be none after Me.

I, indeed I, am God; there is no other Savior. I have declared My power and have shown you My power by My great saving acts among you. This demonstrated to you that there was no foreign god who could claim to be a god.

You have seen My deeds, you know that I am God, and therefore, you Israel, are My witnesses. As long as time has existed, from the first day of time and before that, I Am; there are no other gods anywhere; there is no one to stop what I wish to do."

### **Verses 14-21 TO BE A PROTOTYPE**

A prediction! Your Covenant-God, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, says for you, "I have decreed the doom of Babylon. I have determined to send an army to Babylon to execute My decree and I will defeat them and send them all fleeing like fugitives in the merchant ships and battle ships they are so proud of now.

Though you are about to go into captivity and be without a human king, I want you to know I am God, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your only real and everlasting King. "

It is God who says all this; the God who makes pathways in the seas as He did through the Red Sea when He delivered your forefathers from Egypt. God was the One who brought the great Egyptian army with its horses and chariots to its grave in the sea.

God literally extinguished the enemies of His people there, like a man blows out a lamp.

But, do not let your minds dwell on the past to the point that you wish you could go back to those days. Look! That is nothing compared with what I am going to do! I am going to do something completely new; in fact I have already begun it.

Do you recognize what I am starting to do? I am beginning to make drastic changes that will affect the whole world. I am going to give living water to a



desert-type world of humanity through my servant-people, My chosen, as they testify to My redemptive acts.

### **Verses 22-28 TO BE PERFECTED**

In spite of all My graciousness in calling you to the honored place of servant of the living God, you have not honored that call by seeking after Me, O Jacob. As a matter of record, you have said, we are tired of God, and of doing things His way! All the offerings of sheep and all the other sacrifices you have brought are not really because you love Me but are dedicated to your own self-righteousness.

The offerings and sacrifices I commanded in My law intended to give you a way to express your joy for My grace and goodness to you, never did I think they would be considered insufferable to you.

You never did anything special for Me like buying expensive sweet cane to make the sacred incense and anointing oil. You did not drench My altar with the choicest fat of your sacrifices. But you have gone out of your way to load Me down with your insults and rebellions.

I am sick and tired of your disobedience. When I blot out your transgressions and forget your sins, it will be for My own sake and out of grace—not from any perfect goodness on your part. Remember who I am. I am God and you receive forgiveness on My terms—not yours.

If you think you can justify yourself without My grace, then plead your case! The father of your nation was a sinner, and those who have been sent to teach you not to sin have sinned.

Because of this continual increase in rebellion and sin I will take Israel and her spiritual leaders and profane them in a pagan land. There they will be like outlaws and mocked as fugitives.

## **Chapter 44 POWER OF THE LORD'S SERVANT— SOVEREIGN OVER ALL GODS**

### **Verses 1-8 SHOWS FAVOR TO THE FAITHFUL**

Although chastisement is sure to come to you, O Jacob my servant, I want you to know I called you Israel because I have chosen you for something better that will surely result from your chastening if you will listen and obey Me.

*First of all*, remember, I, God, created you as a nation; your birth as a people was My doing. Surely you know I will help you. Do not be afraid Jacob my servant, Jeshurun, my chosen, for your offspring who are faithful and the Messianic seed among you will have My Spirit poured out upon them and they will spring up and grow a harvest like the dry ground produces when streams of water are poured upon it. They will thrive like the abundant grass and trees that grow by the river banks.

One by one they will proclaim that they belong to God. Some will bear witness that they belong to God by writing it down, counting it an honor to be called, "God's."

*Secondly*, need I remind you that I am the King of Israel: I am Israel's Redeemer; I am God, Lord of all the heavenly hosts, I am before all that begins and after all the ends—First and Last; there is no other God besides Me.

If there is any man or god like Me, let him stand forth and declare it and prove his claim by ordering the course of history like I have from the very beginning. If there is anyone like Me let him prove it by predicting what will happen in the future.

No, Israel, you have nothing to fear from these others who claim they are gods and have omnipotent power. I have proved to you long ago that I am the only God there is, haven't I! By the prophecies I have declared and their fulfillments which you have experienced, you are witnesses to the fact that I am the only God. Is there any other God? No! None that I know about! There is no other Rock!

## **Verses 9-20 SHOWS THE FRAUDULENCE OF FALSE GODS**

Those who carve out graven images and call them gods are all fools. These idols which they are so proud of are worthless. All those who make testimonies to idols are as dumb as the idols because they have blinded themselves to the truth about their gods.

Who but a fool would create something with his own hands and call it a god when he knows it cannot be greater than he is. All those who join with this fool who has made his own god will also be shown to be fools.

Yes, and included in this group of fools are the workmen who manufactured the idol—they stand right alongside other fools. The foolishness of the making of idols is seen in the exhaustive amounts of energy craftsmen waste in manufacturing gods which cannot see or know.

The ironsmith has had to first make his tools to work the metal which covers the wooden image. Then he uses these tools, working long, hard, exhaustive hours working and reworking the metal. He foolishly works himself so long over the forge he gets weak and almost faints. Before he wastes this much energy on a block of wood, shape it with his tools, sketch some more, work it some more, and what does he end up with—something in the image of a man.

Even it is in the image of the most masculine of men, it is still a man-made image and then it is put into a man-made temple. But before the carpenter has wasted all his energies in producing the mere image of a man to call his god, the woodsman has wasted time, energy, and money planting trees, cultivating them, selecting just the right one. Then he cuts it down and half of it may be used to make an idol and half of it may be used to fire an oven for cooking meals.

Yes, as stupid as it may sound, a man will take a tree and with half of it he will build a fire and warm himself and cook his meals and with the other half of it he will carve himself an image of man and fall down before it and worship it.

Incredible as it may sound, a man takes half a tree and builds a fire, cooks his meal, stands right there in front of the fire and says, "Oh, that feels good, I feel that heat warming me;" then, with what is left of that same tree, he carves an

idol and falls down and worships, praying to it, deliver me, oh my god! Such idiocy—they act like they do not have any brains at all. Apparently, they have never reflected a moment on how stupid such an action is!

They have plastered shut their own eyes so they cannot see and they have plastered shut their hearts so they cannot understand. These fools never stop to really think all this out with any perception.

They never reason this way: now, part of this tree I have burned in the fire and cooked my meal! Does it make sense to take the other half of a piece of the wood and make it into something as deprecating and shaming to good sense as an idol? They never stop to think: shall I, a living, thinking, feeling being, fall down to a chunk of wood and call it a god?

The fool who makes idols, so easily reduced to ashes, has been deluded by his own choice. He really does not want spiritual deliverance and so finds none and it never occurs to him to say, this is a big lie, isn't it?

#### **Verses 21-28 SHOWS THE FRUSTRATION OF FOOLISH COUNSEL**

As you contemplate the idiocy of idolatry, remember the following things too, O Jacob, and Israel. *First*, you are mine. I chose you and I created you as a people, to be My servant in a Divine destiny.

*Second*, I could never forget you Israel, for it was I, who blotted out your transgressions and sins. You must return to Me and never forget Me, Israel, for I purchase you with the price of redemption. Indeed, your redemption is so glorious it involves the heavens, mountains, and the forests.

The whole universe will sing and shout God's praise. God's redemption of Israel will, in its completion, rebound to His glory in Israel. This is what God, your Redeemer and Progenitor says; "I am God the faithful. I am God, Creator of all things. I alone formed the heavens and the earth. Who could say they helped Me?"

I frustrate the fulfillments of the false prophets and expose them as liars and make the soothsayers appear to be mad men. I refute the wisdom of unbelieving counselors and demonstrate it to be foolishness.

But when My servants, the prophets, predict that Jerusalem shall be inhabited and the cities of Judah shall be built and that the waste places shall be populated, I make their predictions come true!

When I say to what opposes My redemptive people, Be gone! It shall be gone! And when I say Cyrus shall be My shepherd to fulfill My purposes by giving permission for the building of Jerusalem and the Temple, that is exactly what shall come to pass.

## **Chapter 45 POWER OF THE LORD'S SERVANT— SOVEREIGN IN SALVATION**

### **Verses 1-8 OMNIPOTENCE**

This is what God says to Cyrus the man He has especially chosen and his career of conquest and government God will guide and sustain. The Lord will subdue great world powers and strip emperors of their strength for him. He will open city gates and no one will be able to shut them against Cyrus.

God says, I will be the one preparing your path of conquest. All obstacles will be removed. Doors of brass, barred with iron will not stand in your way.

Secret treasures which these kings assume cannot be found will be given to you to the end that you may know that I am God and that it is I, the God of Israel, who called you by your name many years before you were born.

I have called you primarily for the sake of My servant, Israel, My chosen people. I prophesied your name long before your birth, even though you do not acknowledge Me as the Only God. There is no other god. I, God, am sovereign in the affairs of all men.

It is I, God, who will empower you in your conquests Cyrus, although you do not acknowledge Me. I will do this so that the whole world will have opportunity to know there is no god besides me.

I am God, and there is no other god. I create both light and darkness, I send both blessing and woe; I, God, am the creator of everything. I have created all of

heaven and earth and I will command it and use all My creation to bring about the blessings of salvation and righteousness which I have promised to Israel, My chosen.

### **Verses 9-13 OBEDIENCE**

Cursed is the man who contends with Me about what I have just predicted! Men are creatures, not Creators—they are like earthenware pots and have been formed. They are not Formers! Now shall the clay (man) say to him that fashions it (God), what do you think you are doing—you can't do that!?

For man to tell God He cannot do what He says He will do is as foolish as an unborn son telling his father and mother they cannot bring him forth in birth.

This is what God, the Holy One of Israel, Sovereign Creator says; "Will you dare to question Me about what I intend to do in the future? Do you presume to tell Me what I can and cannot do with My covenant children?"

I am Omnipotent Creator of everything that is! I created the earth and I created man; I created the heavens and all the heavenly things, and everything that exists is at My command.

As I predicted, because of My own righteous purpose, I raise up Cyrus and I will personally make all his ways successful. He will build My city Jerusalem, and he will free My people from their captivity. He will not do it because he has been paid to do so; he will do it because the Lord God of hosts has spoken."

### **Verses 14-19 ORDER**

As a result of what I am going to do with Cyrus, says the Lord, Israel will eventually inherit the wealth of those who once opposed her, like Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sabeans. That wealth will be the best of mankind putting itself in willing servitude to follow the leadership of Israel.

Men from all over the world will bow down and confess that the True God is in this new Israel, beseeching her.

Let us join you for we believe there is no God except your God. Of a truth, O God of Israel, you are a Savior who works mysteriously and incomprehensibly to the finite mind of man. At that time, the great contrast between the futility of

worshipping idols and the complete and eternal salvation God gives will be made manifest.

The idol worshippers will be shown to be confused and the worshippers of God will never be confused.

This is what God, the One who does everything for a purpose, says, "God is the God of Order and Design. Everything He does has as its goal the exaltation of His name and the salvation of man—even the captivity and return of His children.

He is Creator, and there is no other! He is Sovereign, and there is no other! All of this concerning His Sovereignty and His purposefulness He has made known by revelation. He has even revealed His intention to redeem mankind.

He has not, like the false gods, made Himself inaccessible or unknowable. I have never said to Israel, you may look for Me but I will not let you find Me. I am God, and I speak the truth openly; whatever I say is right, and it will come to pass. "

### **Verses 20-25 OUTREACH**

When this work, begun by Cyrus, resulting in a new Israel shall have culminated, all you Gentiles who wish to escape the judgment of God gather yourselves together and draw near.

Those who worship idols are ignorant and lost; they pray to gods that are unable to save. Let all idol-worshippers who wish to contest My sovereignty combine all their wisdom and power and try to keep My predictions from coming to pass! After all, who has made such prophecies and had them to come to pass—one of your idol-gods?

No, only God knows the future with certainty. I am the Only God there is! I am absolutely just and faithful to keep My word and I am the only Savior there is; let all the world turn to Me and be saved, for I am the only Absolute, I have sworn by My absolute sovereignty.

I have spoken in these prophecies on the basis of My absolute faithfulness; they will come to pass! Indeed, every human being shall ultimately

acknowledge My sovereignty; every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess someday that I am Lord.

Some will say, only in God may we have real righteousness and strength and they will come to Me and be saved.

Those who continue to hate God will eventually acknowledge His sovereignty, but in disgrace. Through God's grace and power all the spiritual offspring of true Israel will be vindicated and justified because they have put their trust in Him, and God will give them of His glory.

## **Chapter 46 POWER OF THE LORD'S SERVANT— SOVEREIGN OVER NATIONS**

### **Verses 1-13 CONDEMNING THEIR GODS**

Bel and Nebo, the images of Babylonians gods, are as good as gone! They are about to be loaded on camels and horses and taken captive along with their worshipers. Those pagan gods you carried about with such fondness and care are to be unceremoniously loaded on animals like so much burdensome baggage.

Where are the gods these images represent? Why do they not save the images from such humiliation? Because the gods consist of nothing more than the wood and metal of which their images are composed! Therefore, the Babylonian gods disappear into captivity!

Listen to Me, descendants of Jacob and you who remain of My covenant people, Israel; take heed to the One who gave you birth as a people and who has given you paternal care ever since. I am your Father through all your lifetime; even when your hair is white with age I will continue to take care of you. I created you and I will sustain you.

I am not like the pagan gods—I will deliver you. Is there any pagan god with whom I may be compared? None! All other gods are made of metal and stone by human hands.



That is what the Gentiles worship—a creation of their own hands. They take metal or wood, make themselves a god, move it around wherever they wish and when they set it down any place it stays there, for it is unable to move! And when those who made it cry out to it in prayer and supplication it does not answer, nor does it deliver those who are in trouble. It is not really a god at all—just a piece of wood and metal!

Do not forget what I have just told you, My people, and fix it firmly as a part of you; take it to heart you sinners! Do not forget all the former demonstrations of My sovereignty, both to you and your forefathers.

Remember that I, God, am God and there is not another like me. I predict the events of history and the affairs of men’s lives many centuries before they happen.

Now, what I have predicted shall just as surely come to pass! My sovereign decree that a “bird of prey” (Cyrus) shall come to from the east, a man from a far country to carry out My counsel will be brought to fulfillment.

I, God, have planned it and I will surely do it! Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted who are resisting the idea that I will certainly fulfill My predictions of righteous judgments; I am very near to showing My righteousness—it is not far away. And all I have predicted concerning My salvation will soon come to pass. “Zion” will be the location of My salvation and the true Israel will be the recipient of My glory.

## **Chapter 47 POWER OF THE LORD’S SERVANT— SOVEREIGN OVER NATIONS**

### **Verses 1-15 CONQUERING THEIR GOVERNMENTS**

Babylon, you may be a virgin in respect to foreign nations, but you will come down from your delicate luxury and your face will be rubbed in the dirt. From haughtiness to humiliation you will come because God has commanded it.

No longer will you sit upon the throne of the world like a queen. You, O Chaldea, will be forced into a humiliation like the lowliest slave-girl. You will be

subjected to the worst degradation, shame and toil. You are going to be exposed for what you really are, Babylon, a shameful, wicked nation.

I, God, will see that vengeance is done upon you and no man will stop Me. Yes, Babylon, our Redeemer is God of hosts, the Holy One of Israel—and He is sovereign.

God says to Babylon, you will be dumbfounded with grief and anguish when I judge you. No more will you be the center of My attention—the darling of the nations. I was angry with My people, says the Lord, so I allowed My possession to be captured by this pagan, wicked Babylon. But you, Babylon, did not show them any mercy or kindness; even the elderly are despised and persecuted.

In addition, O Babylon, you have said, "I shall be the darling of the world forever." You have not given heed to the warnings of history or conscience and therefore you do not recognize that you are headed for destruction. So now pay attention to this you sensuous city, secure in your wicked wealth and power. You may say to yourself that you are sovereign of the universe and there is no people or nation that will ever bring you down; you may think you will never know the bereavement of a widow or a mother having lost her children.

However, that is exactly the kind of fate you will suffer. In spite of all the hocus pocus of your magicians and soothsayers you will become as destitute and bereaved as a widow and a mother who has lost her children. This will come upon you because you have trusted in your apparent ability to do as evilly as you please and get away with it.

You have said, there is no power higher than I to whom I must give account. You have become so sophisticated and wise in your own good. Your wisdom has led you to an arrogant self-delusion and to believe you are sovereign ruler of all creation. Because of this attempted usurpation of God's sovereignty, judgment shall come upon you which you will not, with all your magicians, be able to "charm" away. Destruction is going to come upon you and you cannot pay the price to take it away. You are going to be a wasted, desolate place with such suddenness it will be beyond human understanding or explanation.

Go on using your hocus pocus magic charms by the thousands, like you have since your nation's beginning, if it is the only thing you have to ward off the destruction that is sure to come. You have so many magicians and such a complex system of magic that most of your people have grown tired of it all.

But, go ahead, let the astrologers, (those who study the stars) and horoscope-casters arise and save you from the judgments predicted upon you if they are able to do so!

Soon it will be apparent to all that they are powerless as stubble which is so easily and quickly consumed by fire. They will not even be around long enough to provide an afterglow like the coals of a wood fire.

How quickly shall all that disappear for which your generations have used their energy and wages?

In the end all those upon whom you relied for military and financial assistance since your beginning shall desert you. Your allies will not help you; they will not want to have anything to do with you lest they suffer the same destruction. There is not anyone who can save you!

## **Chapter 48 POWER OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—**

### **SOVEREIGN IN WISDOM**

#### **Verses 1-8 PROOF**

Listen to this, you descendants of Jacob whom I have called Israel, you are from the royal tribe of Judah and who take their oaths in the name of God boasting of your relationship to Him; I know that your relationship is not in truth or righteousness!

You boast of your citizenship in the holy city of God and of your dependence upon Him; but do you not realize He is the Lord God Almighty?

The Lord says to Israel, for centuries I have been proving to you My sovereignty in wisdom by predicting what would take place; then suddenly I brought it to pass. I knew beforehand that you would be stubborn and

unbending and hard-headed. And so I predicted your future long ago, telling you through prophets what was going to happen to you before it happened.

I had prophets predict your future for centuries in advance so you would realize I am sovereign in wisdom and not the idols of wood and stone you worship. You have seen all My prophecies come true thus far, but you have refused to confess the truth of it, haven't you?

Now I am predicting, through My prophets, new revelations—things impossible for you to know unless I tell you.

They are completely new things; nothing like this has taken place in the past. You cannot say of these things, this is no proof of God's sovereignty—we knew this all along!

The reason you never got the message from all My revelations, both present and past, is you deliberately chose to close your ears to My word. I know you, Israel, you have been treacherous and rebellious from the days you became a nation!

### **Verses 9-16 PERSPECTIVE**

In order that the faithfulness and mercifulness of My nature may be manifested and praised I am putting a muzzle on My anger and I will not utterly destroy you, Judah, I have put you to the test in the furnace of affliction, like silver is refined, but I have found no silver in you.

Therefore, I want you to know that what I am going to do in redeeming you, this “new thing” I am predicting, is not because you deserve it but because I do not intend for my name to be dishonored. The violability of My name is of supreme importance to all men lest they think My absolute sovereignty and glory can belong to another.

Listen to Me My Chosen people, Israel. I am the Absolute God; I am the only God there is—First, Last, and Always. I created the earth and the heavens; they are at My command and when I command, they obey!

Get yourselves together, Israel, and decide this: which of the heathen gods has predicted or is able to command the future like I am commanding Cyrus now

before he is even born? God has chosen Cyrus as the object of His pleasure to execute God's will upon Babylon; yes, it shall be the arm of Cyrus descending upon the Chaldeans on My behalf.

I, the Absolute Sovereign of all creation, have spoken; I have determined that it shall be Cyrus; I will support him in My work, and nothing shall keep him from doing My purpose.

Draw near to me and pay close attention to what I am telling you: from the time I began speaking to man My will has always been clearly made known and not secret like the heathen oracles; My sovereign will has been present in everything that has happened to you and it will continue to be present in what is going to happen through Cyrus—even to the coming of the “new things” of the Messianic Age. Now, I the Suffering Servant, tell you, Israel, the Lord God sends Me along with His Holy Spirit.

#### **Verses 17-22 PRACTICE**

This is what God, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel says, "I am your covenant-God, God who wishes to reach you to help you and who wishes to direct you in the way you should go.

If only you had obeyed My commandments. Then you would have had peace in your soul—deep, steady, living and ever-flowing just like a river and you would have had a rightness in your soul that was powerful and never exhausted itself, just like an ocean.

Your descendants would have been as numerous as the grains of the sand on the seashore and I would not have had to take away your nationhood. Now when the time comes for your release from exile, leave Babylon and everything she stands for; you are going to be freed from that pagan oppressor so leave all her paganism behind and flee!

Go, singing about your deliverance so the whole world can hear about it; make sure everyone knows it is God who has delivered His covenant people. The Lord God will sustain you in your deliverance. You will not need to cling to Babylon as if you need her. When God led His people through the deserts in the

days of Moses He sustained them. They did not need Egypt to give them water and food. The Lord made water come from a rock for them; He split the rock open and water flowed out.

If you will be firm in your commitment to My commandments you will have deliverance, peace, and righteousness, but there is no peace for those who are wicked and who are lax about My commandments, says God.

## **Chapter 49 PROGRAM OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—RESCUE**

### **Verse 1-6 DESPISED SERVANT**

Listen to Me, all you people in far distant parts of the earth, God called Me to be His servant long before I was ever born. From within the womb of My mother I was given My name by God. God is going to make My words His weapon, like a sharp sword.

I will be the greatest weapon in His hand. He will make Me like a finely polished and sharpened arrow, ready in His quiver for His warfare.

God said to Me, You are My Servant, My Prince, and people will praise Me because of You. But I replied, My work as Your instrument seems fruitless. I have spent My strength and it appears I have accomplished nothing! Nevertheless, I will commit it to God—I know He will do what is just and give Me the reward I should have.

And now says God, "The One who is going to incarnate Me in a woman's womb to be His Servant, to gather Israel unto Him, the One who has honored Me, with this task gives Me strength to do it, He says to Me, I have a greater task for You than gathering just a remnant of the Jews to Me; I will also make you a revelation of My truth to the Gentiles and You will be My salvation to the whole world.

### **Verses 7-13 DESIRABLE SAVIOR**

God, Redeemer, and Holy One of Israel speaks to the One whom men will at first despise, for whom His own nation will feel revulsion, and whom men in high places will esteem lower than a slave, His servant, and says, "Do not be

discouraged, kings and princes will one day recognize Your deity and will respectfully worship You.

This will happen because God is absolutely faithful to fulfill His Divine purpose of redemption in You. God also says, at the time acceptable to Me, at the time when, according to My sovereign will, I decide to accomplish My salvation of the world, I will deliver You from those who would try to thwart Your mission and I will make You, personally, My covenant.

Through you My people shall receive the inheritance I promised to their forefathers; through you I will say to those in bondage—you are freed; to those in blindness—you may now see.

My people, like sheep, shall be fed in green pastures and on grassy hillsides. They shall not be hungry or thirsty for righteousness; nothing will be allowed to hurt them any more for they will be led by One who loves them to an everlasting source of living water.

I will remove all obstacles in their way and smooth out all the rough places. Behold, these people of Mine will be coming from the remote reaches of the world—even from the far east.

All of creation is invited to sing praises unto God because when He has done what He here predicts through His Servant, He will have comforted His afflicted people as He promised to do.

### **Verses 14-21 DEJECTED ZION**

But those in Zion who have been listening to these predictions of their glorious future say, how can all this come to pass if we are to go into captivity? Surely God is showing that He has forsaken us and forgotten us if we must go away to Babylonian exile. God answers, as incredible as it may seem, occasionally a mother may disown her own baby, but I will never disown My true Zion. Look! I have cut your name deeply into the flesh of the palms of My hands.

Your walls may be broken down from time to time but I see them ultimately and eternally built up.

When the time of the Servant comes I want you to observe that many of those who have previously been your destroyers will cease opposing you and will come to you and become a part of Zion. Your beauty will be enhanced by their joining you. You will look as lovely as a bride dressed for her wedding.

You think your population will be decimated by the captivity, and your nationhood destroyed. I tell you, you will become so populous you will think there is no room for all the people joining themselves to you and your destroyers will be made powerless.

The descendants of those who shall go into exile will one day shout to you, Zion is not large enough for all these people; it must be enlarged. Then you will say in amazement, "Where did all these children of Zion come from, seeing I have suffered so much destruction and death of my own children? I have spent most of my existence wandering to and fro, so how could I have produced all these children?"

Look, I was left all alone in captivity and no seemed to come forth to help me, so where have all these children been hidden all this time?"

### **Verses 22-26 DELIVERED SOCIETY**

Now this is what the Lord God says, "Look, I will give directions to the Gentiles and point out to them the sign I have set among the covenant people of My presence among men and they shall bring Zion's sons and daughters to her in gentle safety.

Gentile kings and queens will be like foster-fathers and foster-mothers to you. They will humiliate themselves to Zion and serve her like slaves. Then you will acknowledge that I am God and realize that trusting in Me with faith and patience will result in victory.

How you are despondent, saying, it is utterly impossible for us to be rescued from mighty Babylon—the righteous usually do not escape from the unrighteous. But God replies, quite to the contrary, and as incredible as it may seem, I will do as I have promised and rescue My people from the giant. They shall be the prey of the tyrant no longer.



I, God, will make your enemies feed upon one another—they will make war upon one another, until they stagger and reel in defeat like drunken men. When all this comes to pass then all mankind will have evidence to know that I am the One Sovereign Lord who saved His people and set them free. This will be the revelation to all the world that I am the Mighty One of Jacob.

## **Chapter 50 PROGRAM OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—TEACH**

### **Verses 1-3 OBJECTIONS CANCELLED**

This is what God says to your objections: I am the husband, you are my wife. You know My law says when a husband divorces his wife he must give her a written certificate of divorce. You may say I have divorced you, Israel, and I am putting you away—where is the certificate?

No, I have not divorced you, you have left me. Look at it another way: Do you think you have gone into slavery because I sold you to pay somebody a debt I owed them? I owe no one! You are going into slavery because you wanted to be as much like the Babylonians as possible.

It is your rebellion against Me and your infatuation with and dependence upon ungodly men that will bring about your enslavement to them. Why did everyone try to hide and keep away from Me when I came to save you? Why did no one answer Me when I called through My prophets? Have I ever given anyone reason to think that I could not save you from your enemy?

No, you and all your ancestors have seen with your own eyes that I have saved you from greater powers than men. I have dried up seas and rivers and some of you have seen the heaps of rotting, stinking fish when this has happened.

I have also worked great miracles in the heavens which some of your ancestors saw and have written in your Scriptures. No, you are not going to be enslaved because I am powerless to help you or because I wanted it that way, said God.

### **Verses 4-9 OBEDIENT CHRIST**

The Servant of Israel who comes to redeem Zion speaks.

The Lord God gives Me words of Divine wisdom so that I may sustain the weary and despairing. I am in constant communion with the will of God just like an obedient disciple to His Master.

The Lord God speaks His commandments to Me and I keep them—I do not rebel and turn away from them. I willingly conform to God’s plan and will offer my back to those who will smite Me. I will suffer the humiliation of having the hairs of my beard plucked out by my tormentors,

I will not be resentful or rebel when My enemies try to shame me by spitting in My face. I will trust completely in the Lord God for He will come to My aid.

My intention to do His will cannot be thwarted by such actions and I will not be distracted from His will by them.

I have set My will as hard as diamond to do His will and I know that ultimately I will be glorified in doing so. He is always present and He will vindicate My trust in Him. He will show to the world once and for all that I am sinless and righteous. If there is someone in all creation who can prove any unrighteousness against Me, let him stand up and present his case. There is no one!

The enemies of the Servant may falsely accuse Him, but they will all be put to shame as easily as a moth devours old, worn-out clothes.

### **Verses 10-11 OUTCOME CONFIRMED**

Whoever among Israel says he fears God must give obedient belief to all I have said about the coming Servant. There will be times when you will have to struggle through dark hours of tribulation because you belong to God and you may not be able to understand it all.

Remember what I say about MY servant. He too shall suffer dark tribulation. But you, Israel, follow the Servant’s obedient life and trust in the name of God.

Put yourself totally dependent upon your God. On the other hand, you among Israel who ignite the hellish fire of rebellion against Me and My Servant and arm yourselves with the fiery darts of Satan, you go ahead and build your fires as big as you want and gather as many of Satan’s firebrands as you desire.

Those who play with that fire are sure to be burned up with it. I will take this fire you have ignited and turn it upon you and you will be struck down to suffer torments.

## **Chapter 51 PROGRAM OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—RULE**

### **Verses 1-8 TURN TO JUSTICE**

Listen to Me, you small and fearful remnant. If you are truly seeking to know God and wanting His way of life, look unto the character of your ancestors Abraham and Sarah—that is where you will find an example of what you seek.

I called this one man, Abraham, and he responded in faith and obedience. I delivered him from all that opposed him and made of him a great nation.

Now God has promised to deliver and strengthen true Zion, a small remnant though she may be. He has promised to change Zion's despair and destitution into a salvation that will restore the fellowship between Him and man which was present in Eden.

True joy and thanksgiving will abound when this has come to pass. Listen to Me, O My people: I am going to send into this world the final and full expression of My will and it will be a revelation to the Gentiles, as well, to bring them to salvation.

This is near—it is as good as done. When it comes to fulfillment (and it is beginning now), it will be both salvation and judgment; salvation for all (even Gentiles) who trust in Me, and judgment upon those who reject My will.

Study the universe: both the heavens and the earth are doomed to disintegration and dissolution. All humanity likewise is dying.

But what I will and what I work shall endure forever. Listen to Me, you who have allowed My will to rule your mind and heart so that you are doing right; do not fear the threats of human beings, no matter how powerful they may appear to be.

They will be consumed and disappear like a garment eaten by moths, but My righteousness and salvation will endure forever.

### **Verses 9-16 TRUST IN GOD**

Help! Help! Come forth to help us gird with power as you did for our ancestors in olden times O Lord! Did you not slay the “big Mouth” dragon, Egypt? Did You not dry up a path through the great Red Sea for Your people to walk across and escape from Egyptian slavery?

You have promised: those whom the Lord purchases with a ransom-price will return to Him and to Zion rejoicing with songs about their redemption. Everlasting joy will crown their whole lives. They shall finally find the refreshment of their souls for which they have longed.

All that would frustrate or hinder their travel will be made to disappear. God answers, "Yes, I, the same God who delivered your ancestors, am the God who is coming forth to deliver you.

What kind of people are you that are so afraid of human beings? Mortal man is no more enduring than the grass of the field! Have you forgotten God, your Maker, who spread the stars through the skies and brought the earth into existence?

Are you in constant dread of the oppressions of men? Are you paralyzed with terror at the anger of your enemies?

Soon Zion shall be set free; dungeon, starvation and death are not going to put an end to Zion.

Remember, I am your God, Lord of all creation. I control the sea and everything else. Zion's deliverance will be revealed and accomplished through My Servant, for I have put My words in His mouth and I protect Him with My mighty hand.

Through Him I will make a whole new creation, a new Zion, who shall truly be My people.

## **Verses 17-23 TORMENTORS JUDGED**

Attention! Be alert, Zion! You will soon drink of the cup of God's punishment. You will have drained every drop; you will have been made to reel under your punishment. You must now decide what course you will take. You cannot depend on any of this generation of Israelites to take spiritual leadership of Zion. None of them are capable of stopping the desolation and destruction that is coming upon them.

Starvation and war and captivity is coming and how will I, God, save you? Your young men, in whom you hope for leadership, have collapsed everywhere from spiritual and moral weakness. They are as helpless as deer caught in a hunter's net. They shall feel the full force of the Lord's wrath.

On account of this, you suffering people of Zion, you shall reel under the Lord's punishment but the Lord your God will defend you. You can believe this: "I will take the cup of staggering punishment out of your hand. You will not drink from My wrath-filled cup again when I comfort you through My Servant. I will put the cup of judgment in the hand of your tormentors.

Those who have forced Zion to surrender to the chains of captivity and those who have oppressed and trampled her, body and soul, into the dust—they shall stagger under My judgment."

## **Chapter 52 PROGRAM OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—EVANGELIZE**

### **Verses 1-6 REDEMPTION**

Attention! Alert yourself! You will be strong and beautiful, My True Zion! You will be My holy dwelling place and those who have not made covenant with Me will not, from the day of your establishment, be given entrance. But you must do your part, O true Zion, and shake yourself free from the filth and enslavement of Babylonian paganism. When I deliver you from captivity, you must return to your royal Messianic destiny, I am your Sovereign.

When I sent you into exile it will be because I exercise My Absolute Sovereignty and not because someone pays Me to do it. When I redeem you

from your exile it will be because I exercise My Absolute Sovereignty and not because I pay someone to release you.

When you went down to Egypt, you went of your own choice and Egypt enslaved you without the right to do so; the Assyrians had no right to take some of you into exile. And now, what do I have in the Babylonian exile—the same thing?

Babylon's intent is without moral justification and motivated by wicked rebellion against My Sovereignty. The rulers of Babylon are already screaming out their hateful threats and blasphemies. But I am going to save you, O Zion, from Babylon. And when I do reveal My Sovereignty in this unequivocal manifestation, true Zion will acknowledge Me as her Savior in a way she has never done before; she will recognize that it is I, God, who is calling her back to her Messianic destiny.

#### **Verses 7-12 REVELATION**

How lovely will be the Messenger coming across the mountains of this land bringing good news, the good news of peace, goodness and salvation, announcing to faithful Zion.

God has established His sovereign rule among men; the kingdom of God has come! Listen to the voices of your prophets who been watching and announcing its coming! They are shouting and singing for joy!

They see the eventual rule of God over Zion as surely as if it were right before their eyes! Babylon may ruin you, O Jerusalem, but God is going to restore you and make you strong, so burst forth into joyous singing.

God is going to unleash His holy power so that the whole world will witness it; His salvation will be revealed from Babylonian captivity in anticipation of the coming kingdom of God, separate yourself completely from all the unholy paganism which has surrounded you there.

Do not let your heart be defiled by desiring to cling to the worldliness of Babylon. You are a kingdom of priests to God and you must be holy unto Him.

You will have plenty of time to arrive at the right attitude toward separating yourself from the ungodliness around you. Your exodus this time will not be in haste or in fear, as it was in the days of your forefathers and the Egyptian captivity. The Lord, your God, will surround you, guiding you and protecting you on every side.

The contextual flow of our present passage; chapter 52:13 through chapter 53:12 should be studied as a unit. These verses are all one dissertation of the success of the Suffering Servant.

### **Verses 13-15 REGENCY**

Behold! My servant shall succeed. He shall be exalted to the highest degree. At first, many will be shocked at the humiliating physical torture and disfigurement He endures—so much more than is possible for others in human form. But his exaltation will be that much more astounding.

His success will cause the hearts of many to leap within them. Kings and great men will be awed by His glory. They will see and understand things they could never know before His coming.

## **Chapter 53 PROGRAM OF THE LORD'S SERVANT—ATONE**

### **Verses 1-3 SHUNNED**

But when the Suffering Servant comes, who will have believed this message of the exaltation of the Servant from such a state of deep degradation? Who will have recognized in this the victorious, powerful “arm” of God? It was the plan of God that His Servant take on the form of man and grow up like a fragile, green plant sprouting from dry and sterile ground.

In our eyes there is nothing in Him to make Him attractive as King or Messiah. We saw nothing in Him that made us want Him or want to follow Him as our leader. In fact, we despised Him and rejected Him; He suffered the sorrow of rejection and grief of our unbelief as well as our physical persecutions. We went out of our way to shun Him and ignore Him.

## **Verses 4-9 SUFFERS**

And yet, it was the suffering that should have been ours He suffered; it was our pain He bore. All the time we were thinking that His suffering and humiliation was a sign that He was a blasphemer and God was punishing Him! But He was not a sinner—we were, and it was because of our sins He was wounded and because of our evil that He was willing to be scourged and crucified.

Because of His substitutionary punishment for our sins we are vicariously justified and cleansed of iniquity and declared at peace with God.

We are the ones who strayed away from the Shepherd. We are the ones who acted like dumb sheep wandering into unsafe and self-destructive pathways. We are the guilty ones, but God laid on Him the guilt of every one of us. He was treated unjustly and cruelly, but He endured it willingly and without retaliation.

He was innocent, and like an innocent lamb that is sacrificially slaughtered, He surrendered to death for us.

Like sheep that submits to being sheared without fighting back, so He did not resist His persecutors. He was tried, sentenced, and led away to be crucified when He was completely innocent, and no one cared or understood that He was suffering the penalty that should have been every man's. He was buried like a criminal but in a rich man's grave. He had done no wrong and had never spoken falsehood.

## **Verses 10-12 SUCCEEDS**

Although it was God's purpose for the good man to allow His Servant to be pierced to death and to suffer, when the Servant's death has become expiation for sin, then He will produce a multitude of spiritual descendants. He will then live forever and God's purpose for the good man will have succeeded, He will rejoice with satisfaction.

And because He knows and fulfills perfectly God's plan of salvation, He shall be able to impart righteousness and justification to many people through His



atonement sacrifice. On account of His absolute victory over sin and death, He will be rewarded with a glory commensurate with His victory!

He will be the greatest among the great. He is the greatest of all because He was Servant of all pouring out His life unto death, allowing Himself, though He was sinless, to be made sin for others, putting His sinless innocence down as an offering on behalf of evil and wicked mankind.

## **Chapter 54 WED TO THE LORD IN COVENANT RELATIONSHIP**

### **Verses 1-8 RECONCILED**

When the Suffering Servant of God accomplishes His work, O Zion, My covenant people, you will sing and shout for joy. You have been able to produce spiritual offspring; you have been like a childless woman. You have been cast off by your Husband-God because you sinned against Him, but through the reconciling work of the Messiah you shall have more children than you had when you were married.

Prepare yourself to accept the expansion of God's kingdom beyond your present nation because through the Messiah, God is going to establish a kingdom that stretches to the ends of the earth. The offspring that shall be given you through the Servant will include people from every nation on the earth. The Servant will also take away the humiliation of your present barrenness. You will not suffer reproach of spiritual barrenness again, because the God who created you is also your Husband.

The faithful Covenant God—the Holy One of Israel—the Sovereign, Omnipotent God of all creation—He is your Redeemer. This is the God who has promised to betroth you to Himself through the Servant, even though He has forsaken you and cast you off because of your unfaithfulness.

I will cast you off into captivity for only a short time, but My mercy extended to you through the Servant, will be great. In a flood of wrath I will turn away from protecting you for a short time, but I will love you and be kind to you forever through the Servant.

## **Verses 9-17 REGALED (to delight)**

Your redemption from captivity and salvation through the coming Servant is certain. The covenant relationship through the Servant is as sure as the covenant I made in the days of Noah when I swore that the waters would no more destroy the earth. I have sworn to turn away My anger from you through the atoning work of the Servant. My covenant through the Servant is even more certain than that!

Even if the mountains and hills and the earth pass away, My covenant of reconciliation in the Servant shall never pass away.

O you helpless and oppressed Zion, I am going to make you beautiful. I will lay your foundations with sapphires, your towers with rubies, your gates will be built of stones that shine and glow like fire and I will build your walls with precious stones of all kinds.

All your children shall have the privilege of being taught by God himself. He will come directly from heaven to earth in the flesh. He will bring peace and prosperity to all your children.

You shall be vindicated and declared righteous, O Zion, and you shall be delivered from spiritual oppression and fear; the terror of guilt and judgment shall never come to you again.

You will survive all your enemies even though they may conspire to destroy you; they do so against My will and I will destroy them.

I create and control those who build weapons; I also create and control those who use weapons against My people. I will not let any weapon or any army completely destroy My Zion.

There will be no accusation permitted to stand against you then, because your righteousness shall be imputed to you from Me. This is what I am going to give you, Zion, says the Lord.

## **Chapter 55 WORD OF THE LORD IS BOND AND BOUNDS OF COVENANT**

### **Verses 1-5 EVIDENCE**

Attention, come to the water of life everyone who is thirsting for righteousness; it will be given to you freely. You may obtain refreshment, joy and nourishment and you will need no money because it will come to you by the grace of God.

Why do my people spend all their lives trying to buy satisfaction for their souls from that which can never satisfy? Listen to Me and obey My word and you will be filled with goodness and your soul will be satisfied.

Pay attention to what I am saying to you, Zion; be obedient, and you shall have eternal life for I am preparing to make an eternal covenant with you which shall prove My faithfulness and fulfill all the promises I made to your forefather, David.

Look! I have appointed My Servant for a herald of good news to the whole world; He will be the King and the Prophet I promised. And you, Zion, will call to share the kingdom of God with you a people which you formerly considered outside the kingdom of God.

Yes, people from Gentile nations will hasten to make themselves members of Zion motivated by the glorious redemption of God through the Holy One of Israel. That will result in the glory of God being manifested in Zion!

### **Verses 6-13 EXTENT**

Believe what the Lord says about His Servant and His covenant, Zion, and seek Him in faith while the opportunity to do so is still yours. Those who are rebelliously and wickedly pursuing lives of worldliness, assuming that the Lord's covenant promises are not going to come to pass had better forsake their unbelief and turn back to God.

Trust in the faithfulness of God is the only source of mercy for the sinner; and that mercy will be abundant. You may not understand all I am saying about My Servant and His covenant of grace, but that is because My thoughts are not completely reducible to human experiences and concepts, says the Lord.

My sovereign program and plan of redemption through My Servant and His covenant is beyond human wisdom. But just as rain and snow falling from heaven have life in themselves and are the source of life for physical vegetation on the earth, so My Word has spiritual life in it.

When I promise forgiveness only through My Servant and His covenant it shall be so. My word will produce eternal life through an eternal covenant. Do not think that the imminent captivity of Zion by Babylon is going to stop My promises from coming to pass. Your redemption from captivity by My sovereign purpose will eventuate in an everlasting covenant of joy and peace for Zion.

Indeed, even nature itself shall ultimately be redeemed through My sovereign word. When this covenant is fulfilled it will be a sign that will last forever, a reminder of what I God, have done.

## **Chapter 56**

### **WORLDWIDE IS THE INVITATION TO COVENANT RELATIONSHIP**

#### **Verses 1-5 DISTINCTIONS DESTROYED**

This is what the Lord says, I am going to establish My covenant of salvation by grace through the Suffering Servant. It is your responsibility to enter into My covenant by doing justice and righteousness.

Blessedness for all men shall be found in keeping My covenant according to My terms. All the former distinctions that hindered foreigners and eunuchs from full covenant relationship will be abrogated when My salvation through the Servant becomes a reality. The Lord says, "Let the foreigners and eunuchs be faithful in keeping My covenant terms out of a heart that chooses to do so, and I will give them a relationship to be of much more value than any earthly blessing or reputation; I will give them an eternal reputation of blessedness."

#### **Verses 6-8 DOERS ARE DISCIPLES**

When My new covenant is established by the Servant, many Gentiles will love the Lord and join themselves to Him and serve Him through obedience to the terms of the Servant's covenant.

I, the Lord, will bring them into Zion and cause them to partake of all My blessings there; I will also allow them to minister to Me in Zion. Indeed, My new house shall be the house of worship for all nations.

The same Lord who gathers the believing scattered ones of Israel will gather others from all the Gentile nations to join the gathered of Israel.

### **Verses 9-12 DUMB DOGS DENOUNCED**

Come like wild beasts, all of you pagan nations, and devour this helpless people of Mine, says God. The watchmen of this people are blind to unbelief and covenant-breaking which is crippling them.

The men who are supposed to be spiritual leaders of My people are like stupid dogs; they should be barking the alarm, but they do not because they have sated themselves with self-indulgence so they lie around lazily sleeping and dreaming.

These so-called spiritual leaders are like greedy dogs that never get enough. They are like shepherds who cannot seem to understand that an enemy is about to attack their flock because they are completely engrossed in their own selfish pursuits of making money and they are oblivious to the needs of the flock. Not only are they profligates themselves, but they are busy trying to seduce others into their debauchery. They are advocating deliberate drunkenness in order to blot out any concern or responsibility for the spiritual problems facing Israel.

## **Chapter 57 WEARINESS TO THE WICKED WHO BREAK COVENANT WITH THE LORD**

### **Verses 1-5 SORCERY**

These insensitive, indulgent, leaders of Israel have produced a whole nation of uncaring people. These are times when good men are being destroyed and dying and no one seems to care or wonder why.

Most do not realize that when the good man dies he is being taken away from these calamitous times. When the good man dies he enters into a peaceful rest from the trials of life.

But you followers of sorcery and idolatry prepare yourselves to face the wrath of God. Who are you making fun of? Who are you mocking with your impudent face-making? You are the sinners, aren't you?

You passionately indulge in the sexual orgies of idol worship in the groves of terebinth trees and let your children be slain as human sacrifices in the rocky valleys of Palestine, do you not?

### **Verses 6-10 SENSUALITY**

You stupid people! You go down into the valleys and take the stones worn smooth by the rains and winds and make them your gods. You have declared that these rocks are the focus of all your existence. You worship rocks with wine and grain offerings. Do you think this is acceptable to me, the Living God?

You have not allowed any obstacle to deter you from entering into the gross sexual immoralities connected with your idolatry.

You laboriously carry your loads up steep mountains and set them there to aid in your indulgence. Up there you also haul all your offerings and sacrifices.

The Scripture plaques that are supposed to be where they can be seen on the door-posts of your homes you have deliberately hidden behind the posts. You have done this because you have committed yourselves to total intimacy in idolatry and immorality.

You take off your clothes and climb into your large beds up among the groves of the hills along with those prostitutes you have paid to have sexual intercourse with you.

This is your consuming passion, Israel! You spared yourself no trouble in developing these abominable practices as your way of life.

A long time ago you sent merchants and envoys to pagan kings trading your goods for their gods. You continued to go out of your way to make yourself more and more comfortable to heathen practices.

You allowed yourself to be debased with a rottenness like that of the grave in order to practice your immorality.

All this made you physically and psychologically weary but you never admitted the stupidity of it all because you found a certain intoxicating exhilaration in your rebellious immorality. So, you kept it up!

### **Verses 11-13 STUPIDITY**

Israel what has preoccupied you and possessed you? Who has so impressed you that you have so thoroughly devoted yourself to that which is false? Why have you forgotten Me?

Apparently, you no longer fear Me because I have withheld My hand of judgment so long from you. Let me tell you that I am soon going to show you, in no uncertain terms, what I think of your alleged righteousness. I am going to show you that the idols you have made for yourself are not gods at all.

Then you will cry out for deliverance but I will say, let your idol-gods deliver you. They will be proven to be absolutely useless. They will disappear like a feather in a windstorm.

In that time of trial, the person who puts his trust in Me will be able to look forward in hope that I will fulfill My promises to the faithful.

### **Verses 14-19 SMITING**

And it will be said by the Lord, build up a roadway, build up a roadway; make a way that is prepared for My people. Take every obstacle over which they might stumble out of their way. This is the declaration of The High and Lofty One who dwells beyond time and space in eternity and who is Absolute Holiness.

This One says, I dwell in the realm of Absolute Holiness beyond time and space, but I also dwell in people and supply the power to regenerate the broken and humble hearted.

I have smitten My people time and time again, but I will not smite forever (in fact, I am working toward a peaceful reconciliation with those who will be reconciled, for if I smote them forever and did not provide a way of reconciliation then all mankind would perish—all the souls I have made.

It was on account of My people's greed and defrauding of one another that I smote them. Time after time I withdrew My presence and protection from them but they went right on rebelling and turning away from Me to their own devices.

Yes, I have been fully aware of Israel's rebellions, yet, I will accomplish My work of reconciliation and offer Israel healing by My grace. I will offer Myself to Israel for leadership and I will restore blessings to her I promised her long ago.

The work of reconciliation and its proclamation will come from Me, says God, I will accomplish and proclaim peace to everyone in the world who will accept it—to Israel who has been in special covenant relationship to Me and to all Gentiles who have not. This reconciliation will heal all who accept it of the sickness of their rebellion.

#### **Verses 20-21 SEETHING**

But the wicked are never healed in the inner man because they are filled with a restlessness of soul that keeps boiling up within like the sea whose waves never stop rolling in, bringing up filth and muck. There is no secure feeling of being at peace with the wicked.

### **Chapter 58 WHOLENESS TO THE WISE WHO KEEP COVENANT WITH THE LORD**

#### **Verses 1-5 HEARKEN**

Shout this message to the whole nation. Do not relent when they try to justify themselves. Shout clearly to the nation this warning so the wise will acknowledge their sin and hypocrisy. Most of the people go right on tramping into the courts of the Temple daily as if they really were sincere in knowing My will. They pretend they are concerned about righteousness and obeying My commandments.

On the one hand they say they want Me to give them holy guidelines for living because they enjoy doing them. And on the other hand they say, why should we afflict our souls to fasting and obedience since it appears God is not taking notice of our righteousness and rewarding us?



Hearken to what I have to say, says the Lord; "I know exactly why you fast! The truth is that you are not really afflicting your souls in penitence when you fast. You use your fasts to indulge yourselves in carnal pleasures and to defraud the poor and powerless.

"You do not prepare your mind and heart to worship God when you fast. Your indulgence and oppression cause you to bicker and fight one another when you are pretending to fast!

"Do you actually think this is the kind of fasting I have commanded? Is this what you think I call afflicting one's soul? Do you think by such an outward show of extreme humiliation (bowing yourself double like a reed and lying down on a bed of sackcloth and ashes) that you can hide your hypocrisy? Is this what you call fasting? Do you believe I will accept your hypocrisy?

### **Verses 6-12 HOLINESS**

To the contrary, I do have standards for that kind of fasting that is acceptable to Me. If you will afflict your souls and truly repent, you will cease to oppress your fellow man and make every effort to free the oppressed from any unfair exploitation they may be under.

If you will feed those who are hungry, give shelter to the outcast and the needy stranger, clothe those in need of something to wear and remember to minister to the needs of your own family, then you will be repenting as I wish you to do.

When you do these things, the glory of God's goodness will burst on your nation like the suddenness and brilliance of the morning sun. Your land will be cured of its chaos and wickedness rapidly.

The glory of the Lord will completely surround you, protecting and sustaining you as in the days of old. Then you will be able to call upon the Lord and He will be able to answer. No longer will you be rebelling against Him and running from Him, but you will find Him and He will come to you.

Let me repeat for emphasis, put an end to all the oppression, stop making contemptuous gestures and slanderous words toward people.

Then turn in sympathy to the hungry and feed them and help all who are in need, then the darkness around you now will turn to goodness and truth as bright as the noon-day sun.

The Lord will guide such a people every day and will bring life and health to them. Such a people will blossom with righteousness and produce the fruit of justice and give life to all about them like an ever-flowing spring in an oasis. If you people will do this you will produce offspring that will build back the Messianic nation that was once founded and is now in ruins.

What you build, as a result of such repentance, will lay a foundation upon which many generations of the future may be able to build the Messianic kingdom. You will be known as the people who repaired the ruined walls of God's redemptive "city" and as the people who restored the way that leads to man's salvation.

#### **Verses 13-14 HERITAGE**

You people must stop kicking around My Sabbath day and wiping your feet on it as something that can be desecrated by exploiting it for your own greedy gain. You must cherish My Sabbath as that which is exquisitely precious, that which you delight in and honor.

You must honor My Sabbath by ceasing to take the day to concentrate on your own indulgence and talking of everything but Me. If you will take this attitude toward My Sabbath and cherish Me, then I will exalt you and make you conquerors.

I will give you the spiritual birthright which I promised to your ancestor Jacob. That will sustain you for all eternity. These are the words of God, the omnipotent God!

### **Chapter 59 WRATH OF THE LORD UPON COVENANT DESPISERS**

#### **Verses 1-8**

Look! The reason My great redemptive plan has to be delayed by a period of chastening for you is not because My power or My willingness is insufficient.

You are the reason, O Israel. You are in rebellion against all I want to do for you and through you. Your rebellion and sin has built a wall of unwillingness and rejection.

As long as you are determined to continue in your wickedness, you will not see Me as I am. Yes, it is because you have your hands in every conceivable practice of wickedness there is (murder, thievery, covenant-breaking, slander) that you cannot receive My purpose for you.

No one practices justice in legal suits or tries cases honestly. People are building this society on moral impotence and falsehood. They spend most of their time plotting wickedness and their plots produce violence.

Poisonous seed is produced by these snakes like the eggs of a viper. They build traps for one another like a spider weaving webs. They produce poisonous offspring and everyone who partakes of their wickedness is poisoned also.

They think that their subtle “webs” will provide a covering or escape, but the evil of their hearts is clearly seen in what their lives produce. They do not merely stumble into sin, they eagerly race one another to kill and maim the innocent.

They dream and think and plan wickedness all day and all night. They haven't the slightest desire for real peace in this society. They prefer to live crooked and devious lives and when anyone prefers that, he is an enemy of justice and peace.

### **Verses 9-15a THE CONSEQUENCES**

Yes, it is on account of our crimes that our nation is in such a state of chaos. There is no justice or righteousness in our society. It is no wonder that this generation which is expected light finds nothing but darkness and ignorance.

It is no wonder we grope and grasp at things like blind men; no wonder we stumble around wounding ourselves like blind men in broad daylight; no wonder we are like a nation of dead corpses.

Our whole nation is filled with confusion and turmoil and some people run around like bears roaring at the agitation they are suffering. Others go moaning

like troubled doves. This disordered and disturbed society looks everywhere for justice and salvation but they never find it. There is no way this society can deny the multiplicity of its sins. Our sinfulness manifests itself to us in the consequences we are suffering.

We know we are a sinful, disobedient people, rebelling against the Law of God. We have deliberately turned away from Him, we have advocated oppression of our fellow man and revolt against our leaders and we are a nation of liars.

Injustice is the order of the day; justice has been completely perverted. Righteousness is unheard of in this country; truth is dead in the wicked streets of the cities and honesty and fairness could not come into this society if it wanted to because it is banned. Indeed, there is no truth here, it is all falsehood, and the man who tries to quit his wickedness becomes an outcast and a hunted man!

#### **Verses 15b-21 THE CURE**

The Lord saw all this depravity and it excited His wrath that there was nothing being done to bring justice and righteousness to the nation.

The Lord also saw that there was no one strong enough or good enough to intercede with the salvation and it appalled the Lord. The Lord is going to take it upon Himself to intercede with His own power and His own righteousness and bring salvation to His covenant people.

The Lord will dress Himself in the armor appropriate for the battle (righteousness, salvation, vengeance, and zeal) and He will conquer His enemies and punish them, no matter who they are, according to what they deserve.

All over the world those who were His enemies will fear Him because He will overwhelm the world with His Spirit like a flood overwhelms the land when it is sent from heaven. God will come as a Redeemer to the Zion that has turned from transgression, He says. I, even I, am their covenant, says God.

And when I become their Redeemer, their Covenant, My spirit will abide with them through their receiving My word and obeying My word and proclaiming My word forever.

## **Chapter 60 REWARD OF ZION, WEALTH OF THE NATIONS**

### **Verses 1-7 GLORY**

Do not let the coming captivity prostrate you Zion. Stand up, be steadfast and faithful and begin to be a light to the dark world. The glorious light of God is shining on you—the grandeur, splendor and righteousness of God is being given to you.

It is still night and darkness to the heathen nations around you, but you are going to be light for the whole world when God gives you His glory. You will become a reflection of God's truth and love that will be seen by people from all over the world.

The Gentiles will be attracted to your glory and come to it; great and famous rulers will humbly come to bask in the splendor of your majesty.

Look around you, Zion, from all directions people of every nation and tribe and tongue are coming to you; they all are bringing others to you with the tenderness and compassion a foster-parent shows its adopted child.

You will see all this and it will make you radiate joy and gratitude. Your heart will be thrilled and swell with excitement toward the Gentiles coming to you. This will be your attitude because you will recognize that God is giving you, in these who are coming, the true wealth of the islands and coastlands—believers!

Multitudes of people will make their way to you, Zion; people from every direction will come bringing their most precious possessions as gifts and they will testify to the majesty and power of God. Even your inveterate enemies from Mesopotamia and Idumea will be accepted by Me and by you and they will join you in ministering and worshiping Me. The Lord will make His house more glorious than ever when He brings people from all over the world into it.

## **Verses 8-14 GAIN**

There are shadowy forms on the prophetic horizon drifting inexorably in our direction; they are like homing pigeons or doves going straight for their nests. Who are they? They are ships coming from all over the world bringing all those Gentile sons of Zion who have been waiting so long in darkness to find her.

These ships of the prophetic future are bringing the real wealth of the world to Zion. They have been attracted to Zion because God has made her beautiful by giving her His redemptive glory and they want to be made a part of that beauty also.

Yes, Gentiles are going to be participants in forming the future Zion; Gentiles will be co-laborers and fellow citizens of the Messianic city. Even some of the rulers of Gentile peoples will become citizens and serve the new Zion.

I, God, am about to destroy the present city of Jerusalem, but I will in mercy also restore a remnant and through them eventually build the everlasting Zion. Access to the new Zion will be open as long as there are people deciding they want to take up citizenship.

Nations from the ends of the earth will contribute their best and greatest resources to the new Zion; people great and small shall become willing captives of this glorious city. Those peoples and individuals who do not willingly surrender to Zion will perish.

The attitude of many peoples toward you Zion, My dwelling place, will be reverence and a desire to give the best of their possessions to beautify you.

Those who have been Zion's enemies will become willing citizens, humbling themselves and believing that what God has said about her belonging to Him is true. They shall willingly confess that you are Mine, that I dwell in You and that I am God.

## **Verses 15-22 GOODNESS**

Zion, you have been laughed at and scoffed at by the world because it never believed what you proclaimed about your God. You have also been despised for your hypocrisy and vices. Although you have been mocked and shunned by the

world, I am going to make you so exalted and majestic for all eternity you will be an object of rejoicing for millions.

You shall be fed and grow into beautiful maidenhood from the life and vitality that comes from the nations of the world. Kings and great leaders of these nations shall become a part of that food that shall be given you.

When this comes to pass you will compare the experience with the predictions I have made in My Word and you will know that I, the God of the Jews, am the only God there is! Only the best will be good enough for you Zion. You will be built with that which is superior and precious instead of that which is inferior.

Failing, faltering human rulers will no longer be needed in Zion because I will put Peace and Righteousness upon her throne. There will be no more violence in her midst.

Desolation and destruction will be banished from within Zion. My salvation and My Praise will protect her like walls round a city. She will no longer be dependent upon mere reflections of My Glory for her light, but she shall have the ultimate origin and source of all Light, My Person, illuminating her forever. There will never again be sadness or grief with Zion.

Her citizens will all be made righteous and they shall all be given the eternal inheritance I promised them and this will cause all the world to see My glory.

From a small and insignificant remnant Zion will grow into an innumerable multitude of people forming a universal kingdom. I, God, will accomplish this according to My time schedule of the world's history.

## **Chapter 61 REJOICING OF ZION**

### **Verses 1-4 FREEDOM**

The Servant says, "The Sovereign God will send Me in all the fullness of His Sovereign Spirit because His mission for Me is to deliver the message of the good news of redemption. The Spirit of God upon Me will be the sign that I come with His authority."

My mission is to heal men who have been broken in heart and spirit by sin, to declare liberation for all those who have been made prisoners of sin and to announce that the time God has set in His schedule to be gracious and conciliatory toward sinful man has arrived. Yes, I am to be sent to comfort and strengthen all who are mourning in Zion for spiritual help. I am going to give them a crown of beauty in exchange for the ashes of affliction they have had to suffer, anointing My Spirit for joy in exchange for their mourning; I am going to wrap them in Divine praise and take away their heaviness of heart.

I am going to do this so that My New Zion may be established and stabilized like firmly rooted trees. After I have done this no winds or storms of affliction shall uproot them. The ancient house of Israel which for hundreds and hundreds of years has been in ruin and disarray will be rebuilt by these people whom I will liberate from the prison-house of sin.

#### **Verses 5-7 FORTUNE**

Amazing but true, many of those who are now your enemies, alienated against you, will, in the days of the Messianic Jubilee, become subjects of the New Kingdom of Zion and join with you in service to God. All of you together will be anointed as priests and ministers of God.

Those former enemies who become members of New Zion will be the most precious thing their nations have and they will aid in the ongoing of Zion and their coming will bring fame and honor and blessing to you. The fact that God will conquer and make citizens of Zion of those who once opposed and mocked Him will replace whatever shame you once knew with twice as much glory and honor and blessing. And Zion will be glad and happy forever because of this.

#### **Verses 8-11 FAME**

I am Absolute, I am Faithful-God, and so justice is My very nature. I despise injustice and wickedness and so I will faithfully reward My people by delivering them from their wicked oppressors and My pledge of this shall be in an everlasting covenant which I will establish with them.



The citizens of New Zion shall be uniquely recognizable and even famous wherever they are all over the world. It will be so simple to identify the godly that everyone who sees them will recognize and acknowledge that Almighty God has blessed them.

Zion will be filled with joy and she shall continually offer happy praise to God for His goodness.

God has wrapped Zion in the grace of His righteousness and salvation and made her as beautiful and admirable as a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride wearing her precious jewelry.

The earth produces fruit when seeds are sown in it, so the fruits of righteousness and praise will sprout from the “seed” of New Zion sown by God among the nations.

## **Chapter 62 REGENERATION OF ZION**

### **Verses 1-5 NEW NAME**

For the sake of Zion, I dare not remain silent. For the sake of My Holy city, I dare not remain inactive. It has come time for Me to act on her behalf again so that men may not think I have become powerless or defaulted on My promises toward her.

I will act historically and supernaturally so that what I do toward her salvation will be as unmistakable as the bright sunshine and a burning lamp.

What I am going to do in justification of My people will be so radically different from anything I have ever done before these people will have to be called by a new name, which comes directly from the mouth of God.

When God totally remakes His people, they will be so glorious they will sparkle and dazzle in God’s hand like a jewel-covered diadem. Just like a young man eagerly takes possession of a virgin when he marries her, so God’s people will be eagerly possessed by Him. Just as a groom is delighted with his bride, so God will delight in His people.

## **Verses 6-9 NEW NOURISHMENT**

I will set sentries all around you, O City of Righteousness and Peace; they will be constantly vigilant crying out warnings and directions. I will establish intercessors within you, Zion, and instruct them that they are to continually offer supplications and intercessions and prayers of thanksgiving for your establishment throughout the earth.

God has sworn by His Own Self, the most powerful oath there is, saying I will not permit your enemies to plunder you and take away from you what is rightfully yours anymore. What is yours by right of inheritance you shall have and joy because you shall be forever in My presence.

## **Verses 10-12 NEW NATURE**

Zion you must get out of the middle of heathenism, separate yourself once and for all from such a life, and build your highway toward the City of God as He is preparing it for you.

Your mission is to become, as it were, a flag or signal towards which people from all over the earth may be drawn to find God.

Listen, this is what God has announced to the whole world; "Zion, your salvation is surely coming, and all the blessings and judgments promised in connection with that salvation are coming also. When this great salvation comes, Zion's citizens will be acknowledged as holy, separated unto the Holy God, purchased by God. Zion will at last be what she was intended to be, Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.

## **Chapter 63 RESTLESSNESS OF ZION**

### **Verses 1-9 PREDICTED VINDICATION**

Who is this majestic figure I see approaching Zion from the direction of Edom? He has on royal robes and strides along in a grand and stately march.

He answers, "I am the One who vindicates Zion, the One who is Zion's Savior." But why are your robes stained all over with red as if you had been

tramping grapes in the wine vat? He answers, there was no one capable or willing anywhere to do what I have been doing in enforcing My threats of wrath and anger by utterly destroying the enemies of My people. That is the blood of My enemies staining My garments! I have done this because the allotted time for punishment to be meted out has reached its fulfillment in My divine program of redemption.

When this time came, I looked for someone to join with Me in this work of judgment but there was no one and I was disturbed. So I did the work of destroying the enemy alone. When I executed My anger upon My enemies, I made them reel and stagger with the destruction. The cup of their wrath which they made others drink, I filled up with My wrath and made them drink until they died of it.

In all of this judgment upon Zion's enemies the compassion of God is manifest toward Israel and I will therefore praise Him and proclaim His lovingkindness with all that is within me. It is also evident in this great deliverance through judgment that God has saved Zion to make of her a people who will not deal falsely but will be righteous and just.

God Himself experienced affliction when His people were afflicted and so He sent Himself to save His people.

Personally, affected as He was by His love and compassion for them, He personally entered into the salvation and redemption of His people all the years of their past history and He will take a personal hand in their future salvation and redemption.

#### **Verses 10-14 PRAYER FOR VICTORY**

In spite of all the times God vindicated His people by saving them from their enemies in past times, they have grieved His Holy Spirit by rebelling against His commandments. Because of their rebellion He had to become their enemy and must now fight against them.

Now they are remembering those days gone by when Moses delivered God's people and they are crying out, where is the One who brought our ancestors through the Red Sea with shepherds like Moses?

Where is the One who put His Holy Spirit within them? They are also saying, where is the One whose glorious power parted the Red Sea in the path of our ancestors and vindicated His name forever when Moses lifted up his rod? Where is the One who guided them through the bottom of the Sea?

Like horses galloping easily through a desert cleared of all obstacles, our ancestors never slipped or stumbled walking through that Sea's rocky bottom.

Just like cattle that go easily and safely down to graze in the wadis, the Spirit of God gave our ancestors rest. That is the way You led our ancestors, Lord, and Your name then was made glorious. Where are you now, Lord?

#### **Verses 15-19 PETITION OF VICTIMS**

Lord, where have You gone? Lord, are You oblivious to our predicament? Look down from where You sit on Your transcendently glorious and holy throne and give attention to our situation.

Where is all the eagerness and power You used to show us now? Apparently You are deliberately keeping Your love and pity from us! You are the only Father we have with enough power to save us from the impending captivity.

Yes, Abraham and Jacob were our earthly fathers, but they are not able to redeem us or save us; You, God, are our only Everlasting Father, why have you disowned us?

Why have You prevented us from wandering away from You and prevented us from hardening our hearts toward You?

Come back, Lord, for the sake of those who serve You and help us, for we are the people of Your possession. We, Your holy people, have possessed the land so briefly; our enemies are making us a dispossessed and dispersed people by taking over Your land. Lord, You are treating us as if You had never been our Sovereign and as if we had never been Your people.

## **Chapter 64 RESTLESSNESS OF ZION**

### **Verses 1-7 PENITENTLY VEXED**

O Lord we wish you would break open the impenetrable expanse of the skies that seems to be keeping You from coming down personally to us in all Your omnipotence making the whole earth shake and tremble with your judgment.

If you would intervene directly, Lord, Your righteous glory would consume our enemies like fire consumes brushwood and the fiery lava of volcanoes makes the waters boil.

Yet, when we think about it Lord, if you came down thus You would do such awe-inspiring wonders that we do not even have language to describe them.

Since the world was created no person anywhere has ever seen or heard of a God like You who works for those who patiently trust in Him. Lord, You gladly receive any man who comes to you doing righteousness and joyfully following in your ways.

But we have continued in our sinning; even when You expressed Your hatred of our rebellious ways we went right on sinning. How can we ever be saved? Yes, we all stand in relationship to You as one cut off from the covenant because of our uncleanness; any righteousness we might think we have is really non-existent and we are as legally unclean as the bloodstained rags of a woman at her monthly period.

Like the leaves of autumn, we fade, fall and wither; our sins sweep us away like the wind blows away autumn leaves. In spite of our very apparent condition, no one calls upon Your name and no one ever prods himself to make any firm commitment of his life to Your word. You have withdrawn Your grace from us and we are being consumed by the consequences of our sins.

### **Verses 8-12 PLEA FOR VERIFICATION**

Now, Lord, we are pleading that You will intervene directly and relieve our present circumstances. First, You alone are our Father. We are clay and You are our Former or Potter, the One who formed us with Your own hand. You should

not be so angry with us, or keep on holding our sins against us, Lord, because we are begging You to remember, we are Your children.

Second, the cities and villages of Your consecrated land, (even Zion, Jerusalem, the city where our presence dwells) are being desecrated profaned and ruined by Your enemies.

And, if they are not stopped, our beautiful temple, Your house, where our ancestors worshipped You is as good as ruined by the fires of our enemies. All our beautiful, peaceful land will be made a place of desolation and ruin. In view of all this, will you still withhold Your judgment upon our enemies and refrain from intervening for us and allow us to continue to be afflicted?

## **Chapter 65 REFINING OF ZION**

### **Verses 1-12 CLEANSED**

This is what the Lord says in answer to Zion's complaint; "While some seek Me and do not find Me, others who never before sought Me will find Me!

I will reveal Myself to a people I have not chosen. However, the rebellious people I have chosen—with whom I have been continually pleading to come to Me—they have chosen to follow their own evil ideas and desires.

These people of Mine insult Me continually, and blatantly to My face, worshipping in the idol-gardens and burning incense to images on heathen altars. They go out at night to the graveyards and other secret places to hold a séance and try to contact the dead; they indulge in the pagan rituals of eating swine's flesh and rotten food. They have so completely given themselves over to pagan ritual and mystery-cults they think they have attained extraordinary sanctification and do not wish to associate with their fellow countrymen so they say, stay away from me, you are not in the same class as I am in wisdom and religion."

The Lord says of these, "They are as vexatious and repulsive to Me as smoke in the nose from a fire that smolders continually. I have been recording their deeds and I have written down a decree that I will no longer restrain Myself

toward these rebels. I am going to pay them with a full penalty for their rebellion, I am going to dump their entire mess of ungodliness they have made right back into their laps.

I am going to punish them, not only for their own sins, but also for the sins of their forefathers too, says the Lord, because their forefathers taught them to worship idols on the hilltops and profane My name and insult My name; I will pay them back for the centuries of profanity with which they profaned Me.

But I will not destroy them all," says the Lord; "Just as one does not want to throw away a cluster of grapes because there are some good grapes mixed in with the bad ones, so there are some good people in Zion I do not want to destroy. There are a few in Zion who are My good servants.

I will save a small group and these will provide "seed" to form a people who will receive the inheritance and the dwelling I have promised them.

This inheritance and dwelling place will be one of prosperity and security like Sharon's Plain and the Valley of Achor for those who seek Me. But as for the rest of you, who worship the gods of Good Luck and Destiny, and who forsake My temple and forget Me, I will "destine" you to slaughter by your enemy's sword.

You are marked for the slaughter because when I plead with you to come to Me you did not answer My pleading; when I commanded, you did not obey. In fact, you deliberately did what I had said was evil and your every desire was what I told you was undesirable to Me.

### **Verses 13-16 CHARACTERIZED**

On account of the fact that there are a few good people who have chosen to serve Me while the majority of Israel was deliberately chosen to do evil, I will fill My servants with spiritual nourishment and satisfaction but those who rebel against Me will suffer spiritual starvation and shame, says God.

Indeed, those who choose to serve Me will express their joy in singing, but those who disobey Me will weep, moan and wail with sorrow and confusion. The

name of this disobedient nation will be forever after used as an illustration of rebellion, mockery and blasphemy by those who are really My chosen people."

God is going to deliver a deathblow to Israel's status as the elect people and He will choose obedient people from every nation on earth and call by a new name which will characterize their new nature and blessedness. I will completely and certainly fulfill My promises, the people who are chosen will invoke My name as the source of all truth for those who are My servants will be pardoned forever from the guilt and penalty of sin.

### **Verses 17-25 CREATED**

And when this refining takes place I will also create a whole new age or order of things; the former order or age will be considered by the Lord and His new people as being no longer valid. None of the Lord's people will regret the passing away of the old; they will be eternally grateful for His new creation. The Lord says, "I am going to create a new Jerusalem which will be characterized by and inhabited by a people filled with joy. This new Jerusalem and her joyful people will bring Me joy, too, says the Lord. There will be no more occasions for sorrow and mourning in My new Jerusalem."

There will be no more limited life in My new Jerusalem—neither among the very young nor the very old. Every citizen of new Zion will live in eternal joy.

The sinner is also going to live forever, but in accursedness and not in new Zion. The citizens of new Jerusalem will no longer labor in vain; whatever they do will prosper and they shall know eternal satisfaction in their service to God.

Nothing shall be able to separate them from their heavenly Father; they shall be the children of God and enjoy eternal fellowship with Him.

They shall live in eternal dependence upon Him and He will hear and answer their requests before they even make them! In new Zion man and his environment will be in harmony with one another.

There will be nothing to harm the citizen of New Zion—all will be safe and secure. The devil, that old serpent, will be ground into humiliating defeat, and peace shall reign supreme.



## **Chapter 66 EPILOGUE**

### **Verses 1-6 BURIAL OF OLD ZION**

What arrogance you disobedient ones manifest by thinking I will have anything to do with that building you call My Temple. The wickedness and hypocrisy you are practicing are abominations to Me. I am Omnipotent and Absolute Holy; I am not like the provincial gods of the idolatrous heathen which have to have earthly houses to live in. Neither will I allow My name to be profaned by having it associated with your blasphemies.

I created the whole universe; I am omnipresent and I desire an atmosphere of humility where I am worshipped. I dwell in people of afflicted and contrite hearts—those who respect and obey My word. But people like you—arrogant, haughty, rebellious and blasphemies—your hypocritical animal sacrifices are as abominable to Me as if you had made human sacrifices or offered an unclean sacrifice like a dog; your wicked attitudes make your attempts at ceremonial purification as repugnant as if you had offered swine's blood for your cleansing; your burning of incense is as ungodly as if you were worshipping an idol.

This is so because you are arrogantly and blatantly doing these things when you know they are against My will. You are not making innocent mistakes; you are doing these abominations because you like them and want to mock Me.

You worship the stars because you fear famine and pestilence; you worship pagan idols because you want to trust in the pagan nations of those idols; now I am going to use those very things you fear as a judgment upon you and prove to you that they are delusions. This is the alternative you have left Me, you rebellious people. When I spoke to you through My messengers, you refused to listen and obey.

You deliberately did what I told you would profane My name and anger Me. Now, hear Me those of you who claim to be your brothers but really hate you and make you outcasts of this society and mock you, saying, "We have cast you out, but of course, you are God's so why don't you praise His name and rejoice now! "Let Me tell you," says the Lord, "It is these arrogant mockers who will be soon put to shame."

Very soon now there will be the clash, clatter and din of warfare heard from inside the walls of this very city—yea, even from within the Temple you hold so dear shall come the noise of judgment. That noise will be the voice of God rendering His vengeance upon those who have deliberately declared war upon Him.

### **Verses 7-14 BIRTH OF NEW ZION**

But a marvelous thing shall happen with Jerusalem. She will fall and this nation will be cast off by God and dispersed all over the world. She will be like a woman pregnant with child but she will miraculously give birth before the travail of labor pains come upon her. Before her time of judgment, she shall deliver the predicted Son! At one stroke the nation that is destined for destruction shall produce a new nation.

Such a miracle has never occurred before—no one has ever seen such an instantaneous birth of a nation. The reason such a miracle will occur is that God started His work. Will the Lord, having begun this new nation in its germinal form, not be able to bring it to completion?

"Rest assured that when I decide to bring something into existence, I will certainly do so," says God.

Therefore, be jubilant with this news concerning new Jerusalem all you who love the place where God dwells and mourn over old Jerusalem's sin. Rejoice that you will be cuddled to her breast and drink deeply of her sustenance and find security, satisfaction, and pleasure.

This is what God says, "I will fill her up and running over with goodness and glory from the best people of all the nations of the world and she will be nourished and cared for like a mother cares for her baby.

Those who will be citizens of this miraculously-born new Jerusalem shall acknowledge this when it happens and they shall praise God for having brought them forth and causing them to grow and or manifesting Himself to them.

The birth of God's new nation will become His pronouncement of judgment upon all human attempts to usurp His sovereignty over man and the world.

When God forms His new kingdom on the earth, it will, in fact, become a judgment upon all other kingdoms.

### **Verses 15-24 BUILDING OF ZION**

Yes, God must come with His judgment of wrath to prepare the way for the redemption of mankind. He comes in all the awful consuming fierceness of fire when He judges. His sword of judgment will fall upon the world.

Those who have rejected the Lord will suffer His wrath and many will die. Yes, the manifest judgment of God is near upon all, both Israelite and Gentile who dedicate and purify themselves to idolatry, who follow those who indulge in perverseness like eating swine's flesh, mice and other abominable things contrary to My Holy Law.

I see what they do and I know their secret thoughts, says God. The time is coming when I will summon all nations and races to behold the ultimate demonstrations of My glory. At this time, men will see My awesome sign of redemption and judgment in its historical certainty, and some of them will escape the judgment I have pronounced upon the world.

Those who escape I will send as messengers with the good news of My salvation to the far reaches of civilization to people who have never heard of Me and have never seen My sovereign omnipotence.

These messengers will go to Spain, North Africa, Armenia, Greece and other lands beyond these. They shall proclaim My glory among men of all nations and races. All who hear and obey will become brethren and precious gift to My honor.

They will be brought to My New Zion from all over the world; they will come from different directions by every means possible.

Many will come because some of the children of Israel will have accepted My salvation and offered themselves to Me in obedience. They will become messengers, bringing Gentiles to Me with that same faith and obedience; these Israelites will finally have offered Me clean offerings; these Gentiles will also be considered cleansed and I will consecrate them as My servants, says the Lord.

For as surely as the New Order which I am creating will last forever, so those who accept My salvation shall be My children forever and their relationship to My name shall stand forever.

People from all nations will come into covenant relationship to Me and worship Me according to My will forever. These will behold My judgments upon those who were so favored but who rebelliously rejected My will; this will be a constant reminder of the terrible punishment of the rebellious and of the greatness of redemption to the obedient.