

Isaiah



This book takes its name from the great prophet Isaiah who lived in Jerusalem in the latter half of the eighth century B.C. It contains warnings about God's judgment on the people of Judah because of their disobedience to God. But it also has messages of hope that point to a future king descended from King David who would bring a time of comfort and peace to all nations.

1 I am Isaiah, the son of Amoz.
And this is the message[>] that I was given about Judah and Jerusalem when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were the kings of Judah:

A Guilty Nation

2 The LORD has said,
"Listen, heaven and earth!
The children I raised
have turned against me.
3 Oxen and donkeys know
who owns and feeds them,
but my people won't ever learn."

4 Israel, you are a sinful nation
loaded down with guilt.
You are wicked and corrupt
and have turned from the LORD,
the holy God of Israel.

5 Why be punished more?
Why not give up your sin?
Your head is badly bruised,
and you are weak all over.

6 From your head to your toes
there isn't a healthy spot.
Bruises, cuts, and open sores
go without care
or oil to ease the pain.

A Country in Ruins

7 Your country lies in ruins;
your towns are in ashes.
Foreigners and strangers
take and destroy your land
while you watch.

8 Enemies surround Jerusalem,
alone like a hut in a vineyard
or in a cucumber field.

9 Zion would have disappeared
like Sodom and Gomorrah,
if the LORD All-Powerful
had not let a few
of its people survive.

Justice, Not Sacrifices

10 You are no better
than the leaders and people
of Sodom and Gomorrah!
So listen to the LORD God:

11 "Your sacrifices
mean nothing to me.
I am sick of your offerings
of rams and choice cattle;
I don't like the blood
of bulls or lambs or goats.

12 "Who asked you to bring all this
when you come to worship me?"

- Stay out of my temple!
- 13 Your sacrifices are worthless,
and incense is disgusting.
I can't stand the evil you do
on your New Moon Festivals
or on your Sabbaths
and other times of worship.
- 14 I hate your New Moon Festivals
and all others as well.
They are a heavy burden
I am tired of carrying.
- 15 "No matter how much you pray,
I won't listen.
You are too violent.
- 16 Wash yourselves clean!
I am disgusted
with your filthy deeds.
Stop doing wrong
- 17 and learn to live right.
See that justice is done.
Defend widows and orphans
and help those in need."▷

An Invitation from the LORD

- 18 I, the LORD, invite you
to come and talk it over.
Your sins are scarlet red,
but they will be whiter
than snow or wool.
- 19 If you willingly obey me,
the best crops in the land
will be yours.
- 20 But if you turn against me,
your enemies will kill you.
I, the LORD, have spoken.

The LORD Condemns Jerusalem

- 21 Jerusalem, you are like
an unfaithful wife.
Once your judges were honest
and your people lived right;
now you are a city
full of murderers.
- 22 Your silver is fake,
and your wine
is watered down.
- 23 Your leaders have rejected me
to become friends of crooks;
your rulers are looking
for gifts and bribes.
Widows and orphans
never get a fair trial.

- 24 I am the LORD All-Powerful,
the mighty ruler of Israel,
and I make you a promise:
You are now my enemy,
and I will show my anger
by taking revenge on you.
- 25 I will punish you terribly
and burn away everything
that makes you unfit
to worship me.
- 26 Jerusalem, I will choose
judges and advisors
like those you had before.
Your new name will be
"Justice and Faithfulness."

The LORD Will Save Jerusalem

- 27 Jerusalem, you will be saved
by showing justice;▷
Zion's people who turn to me
will be saved
by doing right.
- 28 But those rebellious sinners
who turn against me, the LORD,
will all disappear.
- 29 You will be made ashamed
of those groves of trees
where you worshiped idols.
- 30 You will be like a grove of trees
dying in a drought.
- 31 Your strongest leaders
will be like dry wood
set on fire by their idols.▷
No one will be able to help,
as they all go up in flames.

Peace That Lasts Forever

- 2 This is the message▷ that I was given about
Judah and Jerusalem:
- 2 In the future, the mountain
with the LORD's temple
will be the highest of all.
It will reach above the hills;
every nation will rush to it.
- 3 Many people will come and say,
"Let's go to the mountain
of the LORD God of Jacob
and worship in his temple."
The LORD will teach us his Law
from Jerusalem,
and we will obey him.

- 4 He will settle arguments
between nations.
They will pound their swords
and their spears
into rakes and shovels;
they will never make war
or attack one another.
- 5 People of Israel, let's live
by the light of the LORD.

Following Sinful Customs

- 6 Our LORD, you have deserted
your people, Israel,
'because they follow customs
of nations from the east.
They worship Philistine gods
and are close friends
of foreigners.'
- 7 They have endless treasures
of silver and gold;
they have countless horses
and war chariots.
- 8 Everywhere in the country
they worship the idols
they have made.
- 9 And so, all of them
will be ashamed and disgraced.
Don't help them!

A Day of Judgment

- 10 Every one of you,
go hide among the rocks
and in the ground,
because the LORD is fearsome,
marvelous, and glorious.
- 11 When the LORD comes,
everyone who is proud
will be made humble,
and the LORD alone
will be honored.
- 12 The LORD All-Powerful
has chosen a day
when those who are proud
and conceited
will be put down.
- 13 The tall and towering
cedars of Lebanon
will be destroyed.
So will the oak trees of Bashan,
- 14 all high mountains and hills,
15 every strong fortress,

- 16 all the seagoing ships,▷
and every beautiful boat.
- 17 When that day comes,
everyone who is proud
will be put down.
Only the LORD will be honored.
- 18 Idols will be gone for good.
- 19 You had better hide
in caves and holes—
the LORD will be fearsome,
marvelous, and glorious
when he comes to terrify
people on earth.
- 20 On that day everyone will throw
to the rats and bats
their idols of silver and gold
they made to worship.
- 21 The LORD will be fearsome,
marvelous, and glorious
when he comes to terrify
people on earth—
they will hide in caves
and in the hills.
- 22 Stop trusting the power
of humans.
They are all going to die,
so how can they help?

Judgment on Jerusalem and Judah

- 3 The mighty LORD All-Powerful
is going to take away
from Jerusalem and Judah
everything you need—
your bread and water,
*2 soldiers and heroes,
judges and prophets,
leaders and army officers,
3 officials and advisors,
fortunetellers and others
who tell the future.
- 4 He will let children and babies▷
become your rulers.
- 5 You will each be cruel
to friends and neighbors.
Young people will insult
their elders;
no one will show respect
to those who deserve it.
- 6 Some of you will grab hold
of a relative and say,

"You still have a coat.
Be our leader and rule
this pile of ruins."

⁷ But the answer will be,
"I can't do you any good.
Don't make me your leader.
There's no food or clothing
left in my house."

⁸ Jerusalem and Judah,
you rebelled against
your glorious LORD—
your words and your actions,
made you stumble and fall.

⁹ The look on your faces shows
that you are sinful as Sodom,
and you don't try to hide it.
You are in for trouble,
and you have brought it all
on yourselves.

The Wrong Kind of Leaders

¹⁰ Tell those who obey God,
"You're very fortunate—
you will be rewarded
for what you have done."

¹¹ Tell those who disobey,
"You're in big trouble—
what you did to others
will come back to you."

¹² Though you are God's people,
you are ruled and abused
by women and children.
You are confused by leaders
who guide you
down the wrong path.

¹³ The LORD is ready to accuse
and judge all nations.

¹⁴ He will even judge
you rulers and leaders
of his own nation.
You destroyed his vineyard
and filled your houses
by robbing the poor.

¹⁵ The LORD All-Powerful says,
"You have crushed my people
and rubbed in the dirt
the faces of the poor."

The Women of Jerusalem

¹⁶ The LORD says:
The women of Jerusalem

are proud and strut around,
winking shamelessly.
They wear anklets that jingle
and call attention
to the way they walk.

¹⁷ But I, the LORD, will cover
their heads with sores,
and I will uncover
their private parts.

¹⁸⁻²³ When that day comes, I will take away from
those women all the fine jewelry they wear on their
ankles, heads, necks, ears, arms, noses, fingers, and
on their clothes. I will remove their veils, their belts,
their perfume, their magic charms, their royal
robes, and all their fancy dresses, hats, and purses.

²⁴ In place of perfume,
there will be a stink;
in place of belts,
there will be ropes;
in place of fancy hairdos,
they will have bald heads.
Instead of expensive clothes,
they will wear sackcloth;
instead of beauty,
they will have ugly scars.

²⁵ The fighting men of Jerusalem
will be killed in battle.

²⁶ The city will mourn
and sit in the dirt,
emptied of its people.

4 When this happens, seven women will grab
the same man, and each of them will say, "I'll
buy my own food and clothes! Just marry me
and take away my disgrace."

The LORD Will Bless His People Who Survive

² The time is coming when the LORD will make
his land fruitful and glorious again, and the people
of Israel who survive will take great pride in what
the land produces. ³ Everyone who is left alive in
Jerusalem will be called special, ⁴ after the LORD
sends a fiery judgment to clean the city and its peo-
ple of their violent deeds.

⁵ Then the LORD will cover the whole city and its
meeting places with a thick cloud each day and with
a flaming fire each night. God's own glory will be
like a huge tent that covers everything. ⁶ It will pro-
vide shade from the heat of the sun and a place of
shelter and protection from storms and rain.

A Song about a Vineyard

The LORD said:

- 5 I will sing a song
about my friend's vineyard
that was on the side
of a fertile hill.
- 2 My friend dug the ground,
removed the stones,
and planted the best vines.
He built a watchtower
and dug a pit in rocky ground
for pressing the grapes.
He hoped they would be sweet,
but bitter grapes
were all it produced.
- 3 Listen, people of Jerusalem
and of Judah!
You be the judge of me
and my vineyard.
- 4 What more could I have done
for my vineyard?
I hoped for sweet grapes,
but bitter grapes
were all that grew.
- 5 Now I will let you know
what I am going to do.
I will cut down the hedge
and tear down the wall.
My vineyard will be trampled
and left in ruins.
- 6 It will turn into a desert,
neither pruned nor hoed;
it will be covered
with thorns and briars.
I will command the clouds
not to send rain.
- 7 I am the LORD All-Powerful!
Israel is the vineyard,
and Judah is the garden
I tended with care.
I had hoped for honesty
and for justice,
but dishonesty
and cries for mercy
were all I found.

Isaiah Condemns Social Injustice

⁸You are in for trouble! You take over house after house and field after field, until there is no room left for anyone else in all the land. ⁹But the LORD All-Powerful has made this promise to me:

Those large and beautiful homes will be left empty, with no one to take care of them. ¹⁰Four hectares of grapevines will produce only 27 liters of juice, and 180 liters of seed will produce merely 18 liters of grain.

¹¹You are in for trouble! You get up early to start drinking, and you keep it up late into the night. ¹²At your drinking parties you have the music of stringed instruments, tambourines, and flutes. But you never even think about all the LORD has done, ¹³and so his people know nothing about him. That's why many of you will be dragged off to foreign lands. Your leaders will starve to death, and everyone else will suffer from thirst.

¹⁴The world of the dead has opened its mouth wide and is eagerly waiting for the leaders of Jerusalem and for its noisy crowds, especially for those who take pride in that city. ¹⁵Its citizens have been put down, and its proud people have been brought to shame. ¹⁶But the holy LORD God All-Powerful is praised, because he has shown who he is by bringing justice. ¹⁷His people will be like sheep grazing in their own pasture, 'and they will take off what was left by others.'

¹⁸You are in for trouble! The lies you tell are like ropes by which you drag along sin and evil. ¹⁹And you say, 'Let the holy God of Israel hurry up and do what he has promised, so we can see it for ourselves.' ²⁰You are headed for trouble! You say wrong is right, darkness is light, and bitter is sweet.

²¹You think you are clever and smart. ²²And you are great at drinking and mixing drinks. But you are in for trouble. ²³You accept bribes to let the guilty go free, and you cheat the innocent out of a fair trial.

²⁴You will go up in flames like straw and hay! You have rejected the teaching of the holy LORD God All-Powerful of Israel. Now your roots will rot, and your blossoms will turn to dust.

²⁵You are the LORD's people, but you made him terribly angry, and he struck you with his mighty arm. Mountains shook, and dead bodies covered the streets like garbage. The LORD is still angry, and he is ready to strike you again.▷

Foreign Nations Will Attack

²⁶The LORD has signaled for the foreign nations to come and attack you. He has already whistled, and they are coming as fast as they can. ²⁷None of them are tired. They don't sleep or get drowsy, and they run without stumbling. Their belts don't come loose; their sandal straps don't break. ²⁸Their arrows are sharp, and their bows are ready. The hoofs

of their horses are hard as flint; the wheels of their war chariots turn as fast as a whirlwind.

²⁹They roar and growl like fierce young lions as they grab their victims and drag them off where no one can rescue them. ³⁰On the day they attack, they will roar like the ocean. And across the land you will see nothing but darkness and trouble, because the light of day will be covered by thick clouds.

A Vision of the LORD in the Temple

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I had a vision of the LORD. He was on his throne high above, and his robe filled the temple. ²Flaming creatures with six wings each were flying over him. They covered their faces with two of their wings and their bodies with two more. They used the other two wings for flying, ³as they shouted,

"Holy, holy, holy,
LORD All-Powerful!
The earth is filled
with your glory."

⁴As they shouted, the doorposts of the temple shook, and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵Then I cried out, "I'm doomed! Everything I say is sinful, and so are the words of everyone around me. Yet I have seen the King, the LORD All-Powerful."

⁶One of the flaming creatures flew over to me with a burning coal that it had taken from the altar with a pair of metal tongs. ⁷It touched my lips with the hot coal and said, "This has touched your lips. Your sins are forgiven, and you are no longer guilty."

⁸After this, I heard the LORD ask, "Is there anyone I can send? Will someone go for us?"

"I'll go," I answered. "Send me!"

⁹Then the LORD told me to go and speak this message to the people:

"You will listen and listen,
but never understand.
You will look and look,
but never see."

The LORD also said,

¹⁰"Make these people stubborn!
Make them stop up
their ears,
cover their eyes,
and fail to understand.
Don't let them turn to me
and be healed."

¹¹Then I asked the LORD, "How long will this last?"

The LORD answered:

Until their towns are destroyed and their houses are deserted, until their fields are empty, ¹²and I have sent them far away, leaving their land in ruins. ¹³If only a tenth of the people are left, even they will be destroyed. 'But just as stumps remain after trees have been cut down,' some of my chosen ones will be left.

Isaiah Offers Hope to King Ahaz

7 Ahaz, the son of Jotham and the grandson of Uzziah, was king of Judah when King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel went to attack Jerusalem. But they were not able to do what they had planned. ²When news reached the royal palace that Syria had joined forces with Israel, King Ahaz and everyone in Judah were so terrified that they shook like trees in a windstorm.

³Then the LORD said to me:

Take your son Shearjashub and go see King Ahaz. You will find him on the road near the cloth makers' shops at the end of the canal that brings water from the upper pool. ⁴Tell Ahaz to stop worrying. There's no need for him to be afraid of King Rezin and King Pekah. They are very angry, but they are nothing more than a dying fire. Ahaz doesn't need to fear ⁵their evil threats ⁶to invade and defeat Judah and Jerusalem and to let the son of Tabeel be king in his place.

⁷I, the LORD, promise that this will never happen. ⁸⁻⁹Damascus is just the capital of Syria, and King Rezin rules only in Damascus. Samaria is just the capital of Israel, and King Pekah rules only in Samaria. But in less than 65 years, Israel will be destroyed. And if Ahaz and his officials don't trust me, they will be defeated.

A Son Named Immanuel

¹⁰Once again the LORD God spoke to King Ahaz. This time he said, ¹¹"Ask me for proof that my promise will come true. Ask for something to happen deep in the world of the dead or high in the heavens above."

¹²"No, LORD," Ahaz answered. "I won't test you!"

¹³Then I said:

Listen, every one of you in the royal family of David. You have already tried my patience. Now you are trying God's patience by refusing to ask for proof. ¹⁴But the LORD will still give you

proof. A virgin[▷] is pregnant; she will have a son and will name him Immanuel. ¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Even before the boy is old enough to know how to choose between right and wrong, he will eat yogurt and honey, and the countries of the two kings you fear will be destroyed. ¹⁷ But the LORD will make more trouble for your people and your kingdom than any of you have known since Israel broke away from Judah. He will even bring the king of Assyria to attack you.

The Threat of an Invasion

¹⁸ When that time comes, the LORD will whistle, and armies will come from Egypt like flies and from Assyria like bees. ¹⁹ They will settle everywhere—in the deep valleys and between the rocks, on every bush and all over the pastureland.

²⁰ The Lord will pay the king of Assyria to bring a razor from across the Euphrates River and shave your head and every hair on your body, including your beard.

²¹ No one will have more than one young cow and two sheep, ²² but those who do will have enough milk to make yogurt. In fact, everyone left in the land will eat yogurt and honey.

²³ Vineyards that had 1,000 vines and were worth 1,000 pieces of silver will turn into thorn patches. ²⁴ You will go there to hunt with your bow and arrows, because the whole country will be covered with thornbushes. ²⁵ The hills where you once planted crops will be overgrown with thorns and thistles. You will be afraid to go there, and your cattle, sheep, and goats will be turned loose on those hills.

A Warning and a Hope

8 The LORD said, ‘Isaiah, get something to write on. Then write ‘in big clear letters’ the name, MAHER-SHALAL-HASH-AZ. ²¹ I will tell Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah to serve as witnesses to this.’

³ Sometime later, my wife and I had a son, and the LORD said, ‘Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Az. ⁴ Because before he can say ‘Mommy’ or ‘Daddy’, the king of Assyria will attack and take everything of value from Damascus and Samaria.’

⁵ The LORD spoke to me again and said:

⁶ These people have refused the gentle waters of Shiloah and have gladly gone over to the side of King Rezin and King Pekah. ⁷ Now I will

send the king of Assyria against them with his powerful army, which will attack like the mighty Euphrates River overflowing its banks. ⁸ Enemy soldiers will cover Judah like a flood reaching up to your neck.

‘But God is with us.
He will spread his wings
and protect our land.’

⁹ All of you foreign nations,
go ahead and prepare for war,
but you will be crushed.

¹⁰ Get together and make plans,
but you will fail
because God is with us.

¹¹ The LORD took hold of me with his powerful hand and said:

I’m warning you! Don’t act like these people.

¹² Don’t call something a rebellious plot, just because they do, and don’t be afraid of something, just because they are. ¹³ I am the one you should fear and respect. I am the holy God, the LORD All-Powerful! ¹⁴⁻¹⁵ Run to me for protection. I am a rock that will make both Judah and Israel stumble and break their bones. I am a trap that will catch the people of Jerusalem—they will be captured and dragged away.

Isaiah and His Followers

¹⁶ My message and my teachings are to be sealed and given to my followers. ¹⁷ Meanwhile, I patiently trust the LORD, even though he is no longer pleased with Israel. ¹⁸ My children and I are warning signs to Israel from the LORD All-Powerful, who lives on Mount Zion.

¹⁹ Someone may say to you, ‘Go to the fortune-tellers who make soft chirping sounds or ask the spirits of the dead. After all, a nation ought to be able to ask its own gods ²⁰ what it should do.’

None of those who talk like that will live to see the light of day! ²¹ They will go around in great pain and will become so hungry that they will angrily curse their king and their gods. And when they try to find help in heaven ²² and on earth, they will find only trouble and darkness, terrible trouble and deepest darkness.

9 But those who have suffered ‘will no longer be in pain.’ The territories of Zebulun and Naphtali in Galilee were once hated. But this land of the Gentiles across the Jordan River and along the Mediterranean Sea will be greatly respected.

War Is Over

² Those who walked in the dark
have seen a bright light.
And it shines upon everyone
who lives in the land
of darkest shadows.

³ Our LORD, you have made
your nation stronger.▷
Because of you, its people
are glad and celebrate
like workers at harvest time
or like soldiers dividing up
what they have taken.

⁴ You have broken the power
of those who abused
and enslaved your people.
You have rescued them
just as you saved your people
from Midian.

⁵ The boots of marching warriors
and the blood-stained uniforms
have been fed to flames
and eaten by fire.

A Child Has Been Born

⁶ A child has been born for us.
We have been given a son
who will be our ruler.
His names will be
Wonderful Advisor
and Mighty God,
Eternal Father
and Prince of Peace.

⁷ His power will never end;
peace will last forever.
He will rule David's kingdom
and make it grow strong.
He will always rule
with honesty and justice.
The LORD All-Powerful
will make certain
that all of this is done.

God Will Punish Israel

⁸ The Lord had warned the people of Israel,
⁹ and all of them knew it, including everyone in the
capital city of Samaria. But they were proud and
stubborn and said,

¹⁰ "Houses of brick and sycamore
have fallen to the ground,
but we will build houses
with stones and cedar."

¹¹ The LORD made their enemies attack them.
¹² He sent the Arameans from the east and the
Philistines from the west, and they swallowed
up Israel. But even this did not stop him from
being angry, so he kept on punishing them.▷

¹³ The people of Israel still did not turn back to
the LORD All-Powerful and worship him.

¹⁴ In one day he cut off their head and tail, their
leaves and branches. ¹⁵ Their rulers and leaders
were the head, and the lying prophets were the tail.
¹⁶ They had led the nation down the wrong path,
and the people were confused. ¹⁷ The Lord was an-
gry with his people and kept punishing them, be-
cause they had turned against him.▷ They were
evil and spoke foolishly. That's why he did not have
pity on their young people or on their widows and
orphans.

¹⁸ Evil had spread like a raging forest fire sending
thornbushes up in smoke. ¹⁹ The LORD All-Powerful
was angry and used the people as fuel for a fire that
scorched the land. They turned against each other
²⁰ like wild animals attacking and eating everyone
around them, even 'their own relatives.' But still they
were not satisfied. ²¹ The tribes of Ephraim and
Manasseh turned against each other, then joined
forces to attack Judah. But the LORD was still angry
and ready to punish the nation even more.

10 You people are in for trouble! You have made
cruel and unfair laws ² that let you cheat the
poor and needy and rob widows and or-
phans. ³ But what will you do when you are fiercely
attacked and punished by foreigners? Where will
you run for help? Where will you hide your valu-
ables? ⁴ How will you 'escape being captured' or
killed? The Lord is still angry, and he isn't through
with you yet!▷

The Lord's Purpose and the King of Assyria

⁵ The Lord says:

I am furious! And I will use the king of Assyria
as a club ⁶ to beat down you godless people. I
am angry with you, and I will send him to attack
you. He will take what he wants and walk on
you like mud in the streets. ⁷ He has even big-
ger plans in mind, because he wants to destroy
many nations.

⁸ The king of Assyria says:

My army commanders are kings! ⁹ They
have already captured the cities of Calno,
Carchemish, Hamath, Arpad, Samaria, and
Damascus. ¹⁰⁻¹¹ The gods of Jerusalem and

Samaria are weaker than the gods of those powerful nations. And I will destroy Jerusalem, together with its gods and idols, just as I did Samaria.

¹² The Lord will do what he has planned against Jerusalem and Mount Zion. Then he will punish the proud and boastful king of Assyria, ¹³ who says:

I did these things by my own power because I am smart and clever. I attacked kings like a wild bull, and I took the land and the treasures of their nations. ¹⁴ I have conquered the whole world! And it was easier than taking eggs from an unguarded nest. No one even flapped a wing or made a peep.

¹⁵ King of Assyria, can an ax or a saw overpower the one who uses it? Can a wooden pole lift whoever holds it? ¹⁶ The mighty LORD All-Powerful will send a terrible disease to strike down your army, and you will burn with fever under your royal robes. ¹⁷ The holy God, who is the light of Israel, will turn into a fire, and in one day you will go up in flames, just like a thornbush. ¹⁸ The Lord will make your beautiful forests and fertile fields slowly rot. ¹⁹ There will be so few trees that even a young child can count them.

Only a Few Will Come Back

²⁰ A time is coming when the survivors from Israel and Judah will completely depend on the holy LORD of Israel, instead of the nation that defeated them. ²¹⁻²² There were as many people as there are grains of sand along the seashore, but only a few will survive to come back to Israel's mighty God. This is because he has threatened to destroy their nation, just as they deserve. ²³ The LORD All-Powerful has promised that everyone on this earth[>] will be punished.

²⁴ Now the LORD God All-Powerful says to his people in Jerusalem:

The Assyrians will beat you with sticks and abuse you, just as the Egyptians did. But don't be afraid of them. ²⁵ Soon I will stop being angry with you, and I will punish them for their crimes.[>] ²⁶ I will beat the Assyrians with a whip, as I did the people of Midian near the rock at Oreb. And I will show the same mighty power that I used when I made a path through the sea in Egypt. ²⁷ Then they will no longer rule your nation. 'All will go well for you,' and your burden will be lifted.

²⁸ Enemy troops have reached the town of Aiath. They have gone through Migron, and they stored

their supplies at Michmash, ²⁹ before crossing the valley and spending the night at Geba. The people of Ramah are terrified; everyone in Gibeah, the hometown of Saul, has run away. ³⁰ Loud crying can be heard in the towns of Gallim, Laishah, and sorrowful Anathoth. ³¹ No one is left in Madmenah or Gebim. ³² Today the enemy will camp at Nob and shake a threatening fist at Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

³³ But the LORD All-Powerful will use his fearsome might to bring down the tallest trees and chop off every branch.

³⁴ 'With an ax, the glorious Lord will destroy every tree in the forests of Lebanon.'

Peace at Last

11 Like a branch that sprouts from a stump, someone from David's family[>] will someday be king.

² The Spirit of the LORD will be with him to give him understanding, wisdom, and insight.

He will be powerful, and he will know and honor the LORD.

³ His greatest joy will be to obey the LORD.

This king won't judge by appearances or listen to rumors.

⁴ The poor and the needy will be treated with fairness and with justice.

His word will be law everywhere in the land, and criminals will be put to death.

⁵ Honesty and fairness will be his royal robes.

⁶ Leopards will lie down with young goats, and wolves will rest with lambs.

Calves and lions will eat together and be cared for by little children.

7 Cows and bears will share
the same pasture;
their young will rest
side by side.
Lions and oxen
will both eat straw.

8 Little children will play
near snake holes.
They will stick their hands
into dens of poisonous snakes
and never be hurt.

9 Nothing harmful will take place
on the LORD's holy mountain.
Just as water fills the sea,
the land will be filled
with people who know
and honor the LORD.

God's People Will Come Back Home

¹⁰ The time is coming when one of David's descendants[>] will be the signal for the people of all nations to come together. They will follow his advice, and his own nation will become famous.

¹¹ When that day comes, the LORD will again reach out his mighty arm and bring home his people who have survived in Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Ethiopia,[>] Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and the land along the coast.[>] ¹² He will give a signal to the nations, and he will bring together the refugees from Judah and Israel, who have been scattered all over the earth. ¹³ Israel will stop being jealous of Judah, and Judah will no longer be the enemy of Israel. ¹⁴ Instead, they will get together and attack the Philistines in the west. Then they will defeat the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites in the east. They will rule those people and take from them whatever they want.

¹⁵ The LORD will dry up the arm of the Red Sea near Egypt, and he will send a scorching wind to divide the Euphrates River into seven streams that anyone can step across. ¹⁶ Then for his people who survive, there will be a good road from Assyria, just as there was a good road for their ancestors when they left Egypt.

A Song of Praise

12 At that time you will say,
¹ I thank you, LORD!
You were angry with me,
but you stopped being angry
and gave me comfort.

2 I trust you to save me,
LORD God,
and I won't be afraid.
My power and my strength[>]
come from you,
and you have saved me."

3 With great joy, you people
will get water
from the well of victory.

4 At that time you will say,
"Our LORD, we are thankful,
and we worship only you.
We will tell the nations
how glorious you are
and what you have done.

5 Because of your wonderful deeds
we will sing your praises
everywhere on earth."

6 Sing, people of Zion!
Celebrate the greatness
of the holy LORD of Israel.
God is here to help you.

Babylon Will Be Punished

13 This is the message[>] that I was given about
Babylon:

2 From high on a barren hill
give a signal, shout the orders,
and point the way
to enter the gates
of Babylon's proud rulers.

3 The LORD has commanded
his very best warriors
and his proud heroes
to show how angry he is.

4 Listen to the noisy crowds
on the mountains!
Kingdoms and nations
are joining forces.
The LORD All-Powerful
is bringing together
an army for battle.

5 From a distant land
the LORD is coming
fierce and furious—
he brings his weapons
to destroy the earth.

6 Cry and weep!
The day is coming

when the mighty LORD
will bring destruction.

*7 All people will be terrified.

Hands will grow limp;
courage will melt away.

8 Everyone will tremble with pain
like a woman giving birth;
they will stare at each other
with horror on their faces.

There Will Be No Mercy

9 I, the LORD,
will show no mercy or pity
when that time comes.

In my anger I will destroy
the earth and every sinner
who lives on it.

10 Light will disappear
from the stars in the sky;
the dawning sun will turn dark,
and the moon
will lose its glow.

11 I will punish this evil world
and its people
because of their sins.
I will crush the horrible pride
of those who are cruel.

12 Survivors will be harder to find
than the purest gold.

13 I, the LORD All-Powerful—
am terribly angry—
I will make the sky tremble
and the earth shake loose.

14 Everyone will run
to their homelands,
just as hunted deer run,
and sheep scatter
when they have no shepherd.

15 Those who are captured
will be killed by a sword.

16 They will see their children
beaten against rocks,
their homes robbed,
and their wives abused.

17 The Medes can't be bought off
with silver or gold,
and I'm sending them
to attack Babylonia.

18 Their arrows will slaughter
the young men;

no pity will be shown
to babies and children.

The LORD Will Destroy Babylon

19 The city of Babylon
is glorious and powerful,
the pride of the nation.

But it will be like the cities
of Sodom and Gomorrah
after I, the Lord,
destroyed them.

20 No one will live in Babylon.
Even nomads won't camp nearby,
and shepherds won't let
their sheep rest there.

21 Only desert creatures,
hoot owls, and ostriches
will live in its ruins,
and goats[▷] will leap about.

22 Hyenas and wolves will howl
from Babylon's fortresses
and beautiful palaces.
Its time is almost up!

The LORD's People Will Come Home

14 The LORD will have mercy on Israel and will
let them be his chosen people once again.
He will bring them back to their own land,
and foreigners will join them as part of Israel.

2 Other nations will lead them home, and Israel will
make slaves of them in the land that belongs to the
Lord. Israel will rule over those who once governed
and mistreated them.

Death to the King of Babylonia!

3 The LORD will set you free from your sorrow,
suffering, and slavery. 4 Then you will make fun of
the King of Babylonia by singing this song:

That cruel monster is done for!
'He won't attack us again.'

5 The LORD has crushed the power
of those evil kings,

6 who were furious
and never stopped abusing
the people of other nations.

7 Now all the world is at peace;
its people are celebrating
with joyful songs.

8 King of Babylonia,
even the cypress trees
and the cedars of Lebanon
celebrate and say,

- "Since you were put down,
no one comes along
to chop us down."
- ⁹ The world of the dead
eagerly waits for you.
With great excitement,
the spirits of ancient rulers
hear about your coming.
- ¹⁰ Each one of them will say,
"Now you are just as weak
as any of us!
- ¹¹ Your pride and your music
have ended here
in the world of the dead.
Worms are your blanket,
maggots are your bed."
- ¹² You, the bright morning star,
have fallen from the sky!
You brought down other nations;
now you are brought down.
- ¹³ You said to yourself,
"I'll climb to heaven
and place my throne
above the highest stars.
I'll sit there with the gods
far away in the north.
- ¹⁴ I'll be above the clouds,
just like God Most High."
- ¹⁵ But now you are deep
in the world of the dead.
- ¹⁶ Those who see you will stare
and wonder,
"Is this the man
who made the world tremble
and shook up kingdoms?"
- ¹⁷ Did he capture every city
and make earth a desert?
Is he the one who refused
to let prisoners go home?"
- ¹⁸ When kings die, they are buried
in glorious tombs.
- ¹⁹ But you will be left unburied,
just another dead body
lying underfoot
like a broken branch.
You will be one of many
killed in battle and gone down
to the deep rocky pit.
- ²⁰ You won't be buried with kings;
you ruined your country
and murdered your people.

You evil monster!

We hope that your family
will be forgotten forever.

- ²¹ We will slaughter your sons
to make them pay for the crimes
of their ancestors.

They won't take over the world
or build cities
anywhere on this earth.

²² The LORD All-Powerful has promised to attack
Babylonia and destroy everyone there, so that
none of them will ever be remembered again.

²³ The LORD will sweep out the people, and the
land will become a swamp for wild animals.

Assyria Will Be Punished

- ²⁴ The LORD All-Powerful
has made this promise:
Everything I have planned
will happen just as I said.

- ²⁵ I will wipe out every Assyrian
in my country,
and I will crush those
on my mountains.
I will free my people
from slavery
to the Assyrians.

- ²⁶ I have planned this
for the whole world,
and my mighty arm
controls every nation.

- ²⁷ I, the LORD All-Powerful,
have made these plans.
No one can stop me now!

The Philistines Will Be Punished

- ²⁸ This message came from the LORD
in the year King Ahaz died:

- ²⁹ Philistines, don't be happy
just because the rod
that punished you
is broken.

That rod will become
a poisonous snake, and then
a flying fiery dragon.

- ³⁰ The poor and needy will find
pastures for their sheep
and will live in safety.
But I will starve some of you,
and others will be killed.

- 31 Cry and weep in the gates
of your towns,
you Philistines!
Smoke blows in from the north,
and every soldier is ready.
- 32 If a messenger comes
from a distant nation,
you must say:
"The LORD built Zion.
Even the poorest of his people
will find safety there."

Moab Will Be Punished

- 15 This is a message
about Moab:
The towns of Ar and Kir
were destroyed in a night.
Moab is left in ruins!
- 2 "Everyone in Dibon has gone up
to the temple¹ and the shrines
to cry and weep.
All of Moab is crying.
Heads and beards are shaved
because of what happened
at Nebo and Medeba.
- 3 In the towns and at home,
everyone wears sackcloth
and cries loud and long.
- 4 From Heshbon and Elealeh,
weeping is heard in Jahaz;
Moab's warriors scream
while trembling with fear.

Pity Moab

- 5 I pity Moab!
Its people are running to Zoar
and to Eglath-Sheleishiyah.
They cry on their way up
to the town of Luhith;
on the road to Horonaim
they tell of disasters.
- 6 The streams of Nimrim
and the grasslands
have dried up.
Every plant is parched.
- 7 The people of Moab are leaving,
crossing over Willow Creek,
taking everything they own
and have worked for.
- 8 In the towns of Eglaim
and of Beerelim

and everywhere else in Moab
mournful cries are heard.

- 9 The streams near Dimon
are flowing with blood.
But the Lord will bring
even worse trouble to Dimon,[▷]
because all in Moab who escape
will be attacked by lions.

More Troubles for Moab

- 16 Send lambs as gifts
to the ruler of the land.
Send them across the desert
from Sela to Mount Zion.
- 2 The women of Moab
crossing the Arnon River
are like a flock of birds
scattered from their nests.
- 3 Moab's messengers say
to the people of Judah,
"Be kind and help us!
Shade us from the heat
of the noonday sun.
Hide our refugees!
Don't turn them away.
- 4 Let our people live
in your country
and find safety here."
- Moab, your cruel enemies
will disappear;
they will no longer attack
and destroy your land.
- 5 Then a kingdom of love
will be set up,
and someone from David's family
will rule with fairness.
He will do what is right
and quickly bring justice.

Moab's Pride Is Destroyed

- 6 We have heard of Moab's pride.
Its people strut and boast,
but without reason.
- 7 Tell everyone in Moab
to mourn for their nation.
Tell them to cry and weep
for those fancy raisins[▷]
of Kir-Hareseth.
- 8 Vineyards near Heshbon
and Sibmah
have turned brown.

The rulers of nations
used to get drunk
on wine from those vineyards▷
that spread to Jazer,
then across the desert
and beyond the sea.

- 9 Now I mourn like Jazer
for the vineyards
of Sibmah.
I shed tears for Heshbon
and for Elealeh.
There will be no more
harvest celebrations
10 or joyful and happy times,
while bringing in the crops.
Singing and shouting are gone
from the vineyards.
There are no joyful shouts
where grapes were pressed.
God has silenced them all.

- 11 Deep in my heart I hurt
for Moab and Kir-Heres.
12 It's useless for Moab's people
to wear themselves out
by going to their altars
to worship and pray.

13 The LORD has already said all of this about
Moab. 14 Now he says, "The contract of a hired worker
is good for three years, but Moab's glory and great-
ness won't last any longer than that. Only a few of its
people will survive, and they will be left helpless."

Damascus Will Be Punished

- 17** This is a message about Damascus:
Damascus is doomed!
It will end up in ruins.
2 The villages around Aroer
will be deserted,
with only sheep living there
and no one to bother them.
3 Israel▷ will lose its fortresses.
The kingdom of Damascus
will be destroyed;
its survivors will suffer
the same fate as Israel.
The LORD All-Powerful
has promised this.

Sin and Suffering

- 4 When that time comes,

the glorious nation of Israel
will be brought down;
its prosperous people
will be skin and bones.

- 5 Israel will be like wheat fields
in Rephaim Valley
picked clean of grain.
6 It will be like an olive tree
beaten with a stick,
leaving two or three olives
or maybe four or five
on the highest
or most fruitful branches.
The LORD God of Israel
has promised this.

7 At that time the people will turn and trust their
Creator, the holy God of Israel. 8 They have built al-
tars and places for burning incense to their goddess
Asherah, and they have set up sacred poles▷ for
her. But they will stop worshiping at these places.

9 Israel captured powerful cities and chased out
the people who lived there. But these cities will lie in
ruins, covered over with weeds and underbrush.▷

- 10 Israel, you have forgotten
the God who saves you,
the one who is the mighty rock▷
where you find protection.
You plant the finest flowers
to honor a foreign god.
11 The plants may sprout
and blossom
that very same morning,
but it will do you no good,
because you will suffer
endless agony.

God Defends His People

- 12 The nations are a noisy,
thunderous sea.
13 But even if they roar
like a fearsome flood,
God will give the command
to turn them back.
They will be like dust,
or like a tumbleweed
blowing across the hills
in a windstorm.
14 In the evening
their attack is fierce,
but by morning
they are destroyed.

This is what happens to those
who raid and rob us.

Ethiopia Will Be Punished

18 Downstream from Ethiopia▷
lies the country of Egypt,
swarming with insects.▷
2 Egypt sends messengers
up the Nile River
on ships made of reeds.
Send them fast to Ethiopia,
whose people are tall
and have smooth skin.
Their land is divided by rivers;
they are strong and brutal,
feared all over the world.¹

3 Everyone on this earth,
listen with care!
A signal will be given
on the mountains,
and you will hear a trumpet.

4 The LORD said to me,
“I will calmly look down
from my home above—
as calmly as the sun at noon
or clouds in the heat
of harvest season.”

5 Before the blossoms
can turn into grapes,
God will cut off the sprouts
and hack off the branches.

6 Ethiopians will be food
for mountain buzzards
during the summer
and for wild animals
during the winter.

7 Those Ethiopians are tall and their skin is smooth. They are feared all over the world, because they are strong and brutal. But at that time they will come from their land divided by rivers, and they will bring gifts to the LORD All-Powerful, who is worshiped on Mount Zion.

Egypt Will Be Punished

19 This is a message about Egypt:
The LORD comes to Egypt,
riding swiftly on a cloud.
The people are weak from fear.
Their idols tremble
as he approaches and says,

2 “I will punish Egypt
with civil war—
neighbors, cities, and kingdoms
will fight each other.

3 “Egypt will be discouraged
when I confuse their plans.
They will try to get advice
from their idols,
from the spirits of the dead,
and from fortunetellers.

4 I will put the Egyptians
under the power of a cruel,
heartless king.
I, the LORD All-Powerful,
have promised this.”

Trouble along the Nile

5 The Nile River will dry up
and become parched land.

6 Its streams will stink,
Egypt will have no water,
and the reeds and tall grass
will dry up.

7 Fields along the Nile
will be completely barren;
every plant will disappear.

8 Those who fish in the Nile
will be discouraged
and mourn.

9 None of the cloth makers
will know what to do,
and they will ‘turn pale.’¹

10 Weavers will be confused;
paid workers will cry and mourn.

Egypt’s Helpless Leaders

11 The king’s officials in Zoan
are foolish themselves
and give stupid advice.
How can they say to him,
“We are very wise,
and our families go back
to kings of long ago?”

12 Where are those wise men now?
If they can, let them say
what the LORD All-Powerful
intends for Egypt.

13 The royal officials in Zoan
and in Memphis
are foolish and deceived.

The leaders in every state
have given bad advice
to the nation.

¹⁴ The LORD has confused Egypt;
its leaders have made it stagger
and vomit like a drunkard.

¹⁵ No one in Egypt can do a thing,
no matter who they are.

¹⁶ When the LORD All-Powerful punishes Egypt
with his mighty arm, the Egyptians will become ter-
ribly weak and will tremble with fear. ¹⁷ They will be
so terrified of Judah that they will be frightened by
the very mention of its name. This will happen be-
cause of what the LORD All-Powerful is planning
against Egypt.

The LORD Will Bless Egypt, Assyria, and Israel

¹⁸ The time is coming when Hebrew will be spo-
ken in five Egyptian cities, and their people will be-
come followers of the LORD. One of these cities will
be called City of the Sun.▷

¹⁹ In the heart of Egypt an altar will be set up for
the LORD; at its border a shrine will be built to
honor him. ²⁰ These will remind the Egyptians that
the LORD All-Powerful is with them. And when they
are in trouble and ask for help, he will send some-
one to rescue them from their enemies. ²¹ The
LORD will show the Egyptians who he is, and they
will know and worship the LORD. They will bring
him sacrifices and offerings, and they will keep their
promises to him. ²² After the LORD has punished
Egypt, the people will turn to him. Then he will an-
swer their prayers, and the Egyptians will be healed.

²³ At that time a good road will run from Egypt
to Assyria. The Egyptians and the Assyrians will
travel back and forth from Egypt to Assyria, and
they will worship together. ²⁴ Israel will join with
these two countries. They will be a blessing to ev-
eryone on earth, ²⁵ then the LORD All-Powerful will
bless them by saying,

"The Egyptians are my people.
I created the Assyrians
and chose the Israelites."

Isaiah Acts Out the Defeat of Egypt and Ethiopia

20 King Sargon of Assyria gave orders for his
army commander to capture the city of
Ashdod. ² About this same time the LORD
had told me, "Isaiah, take off everything, including

your sandals!" I did this and went around naked and
barefoot ³ for three years.

Then the LORD said:

What Isaiah has done is a warning to Egypt
and Ethiopia.▷ ⁴ Everyone in these two countries
will be led away naked and barefoot by the king
of Assyria. Young or old, they will be taken pris-
oner, and Egypt will be disgraced. ⁵ They will be
confused and frustrated, because they depended
on Ethiopia and bragged about Egypt. ⁶ When
this happens, the people who live along the coast
will say, "Look what happened to them! We ran to
them for safety, hoping they would protect us
from the king of Assyria. But now, there is no es-
cape for us."

The Fall of Babylonia

21 This is a message about
a desert beside the sea:¹▷

Enemies from a hostile nation
attack like a whirlwind
from the Southern Desert.

² What a horrible vision
was shown to me—
a vision of betrayal
and destruction.

Tell Elam and Media
to surround and attack
the Babylonians.

The LORD has sworn to end
the suffering they caused.

³ I'm in terrible pain
like a woman giving birth.
I'm shocked and hurt so much
that I can't hear or see.

⁴ My head spins; I'm horrified!
Early evening, my favorite time,
has become a nightmare.

⁵ In Babylon the high officials
were having a feast.
They were eating and drinking,
when someone shouted,
"Officers, take your places!
Grab your shields."

⁶ The LORD said to me,
"Send guards to find out
what's going on.

⁷ When they see cavalry troops
and columns of soldiers
on donkeys and camels,
tell them to be ready!"

⁸ Then a guard⁸ said,
 "I have stood day and night
 on this watchtower, Lord.
⁹ Now I see column after column
 of cavalry troops."

At once someone shouted,
 "Babylon has fallen!
 Every idol in the city
 lies broken on the ground."

¹⁰ Then I said, "My people,
 you have suffered terribly,
 but I have a message for you
 from the LORD All-Powerful,
 the God of Israel."

How Much Longer?

¹¹ This is a message about Dumah:
 From the country of Seir,
 someone shouts to me,
 "Guard, how much longer
 before daylight?"

¹² From my guard post, I answered,
 "Morning will soon be here,
 but night will return.
 If you want to know more,
 come back later."

¹³ This is a message for Arabs
 who live in the barren desert
 in the region of Dedan:
 You must order your caravans

¹⁴ to bring water for those
 who are thirsty.

You people of Tema
 must bring food
 for the hungry refugees.

¹⁵ They are worn out and weary
 from being chased by enemies
 with swords and arrows.

¹⁶ The Lord said to me:

A year from now the glory of the people of Kedar will all come to an end, just as a worker's contract ends after a year. ¹⁷ Only a few of their warriors will be left with bows and arrows. This is a promise that I, the LORD God of Israel, have made.

Trouble in Vision Valley

22

This is a message
 about Vision Valley:
 Why are you celebrating

on the flat roofs
 of your houses?

² Your city is filled
 with noisy shouts.
 Those who lie drunk
 in your streets
 were not killed in battle.

³ Your leaders ran away,
 but they were captured
 without a fight.
 "No matter how far they ran,
 they were found and caught."

⁴ Then I said, "Leave me alone!
 Let me cry bitter tears.
 My people have been destroyed,
 so don't try to comfort me."

⁵ The LORD All-Powerful
 had chosen a time
 for noisy shouts and confusion
 to fill Vision Valley,
 "and for everyone to beg
 the mountains for help."

⁶ The people of Elam and Kir
 attacked with "chariots"
 and carried shields.

⁷ Your most beautiful valleys
 were covered with chariots;
 your cities were surrounded
 by cavalry troops.

⁸ Judah was left defenseless.

At that time you trusted in the weapons you had stored in Forest Palace. ⁹ You saw the holes in the outer wall of Jerusalem, and you brought water from the lower pool. ¹⁰ You counted the houses in Jerusalem and tore down some of them, so you could get stones to repair the city wall. ¹¹ Then you built a large tank between the walls to store the water. But you refused to trust the God who planned this long ago and made it happen.

A Time To Weep

¹² When all of this happened,
 the LORD All-Powerful told you
 to weep and mourn,
 to shave your heads,
 and wear sackcloth.

¹³ But instead, you celebrated
 by feasting on beef and lamb
 and by drinking wine,
 because you said,

"Let's eat and drink!
Tomorrow we may die."

- ¹⁴ The LORD All-Powerful
has spoken to me
this solemn promise:
"I won't forgive them for this,
not as long as they live."

Selfish Officials Are Doomed

¹⁵ The LORD All-Powerful is sending you with this message for Shebna, the prime minister:

¹⁶ Shebna, what gives you the right to have a tomb carved out of rock in this burial place of royalty? None of your relatives are buried here. ¹⁷ You may be powerful, but the LORD is about to snatch you up and throw you away. ¹⁸ He will roll you into a ball and throw you into a wide open country, where you will die and your chariots will be destroyed. You're a disgrace to those you serve.

¹⁹ The LORD is going to take away your job! ²⁰⁻²¹ He will give your official robes and your authority to his servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah.

Eliakim will be like a father to the people of Jerusalem and to the royal family of Judah. ²² The LORD will put him in charge of the key that belongs to King David's family. No one will be able to unlock what he locks, and no one will be able to lock what he unlocks. ²³ The LORD will make him as firm in his position as a tent peg hammered in the ground, and Eliakim will bring honor to his family.

²⁴ His children and relatives will be supported by him, like pans hanging from a peg on the wall. ²⁵ That peg is fastened firmly now, but someday it will be shaken loose and fall down. Then everything that was hanging on it will be destroyed. This is what the LORD All-Powerful has promised.

The City of Tyre Will Be Punished

23 This is a message
from distant islands
about the city of Tyre:
Cry, you seagoing ships![>]
"Tyre and its houses
lie in ruins."

- ² Mourn in silence,
you shop owners of Sidon,
you people on the coast.
Your sailors crossed oceans,
making your city rich.
³ Your merchants sailed the seas,

making you wealthy by trading
with nation after nation.

- They brought back grain
that grew along the Nile.[>]
⁴ Sidon, you are a mighty fortress
built along the sea.
But you will be disgraced
like a married woman
who never had 'children.'

- ⁵ When Egypt hears about Tyre,
it will tremble.
⁶ All of you along the coast
had better cry and sail
far across the ocean.[>]
⁷ Can this be the happy city
that has stood for centuries?
Its people have spread
to distant lands;
⁸ its merchants were kings
honored all over the world.
Who planned to destroy Tyre?
⁹ The LORD All-Powerful planned it
to bring shame and disgrace
to those who are honored
by everyone on earth.
¹⁰ 'People of Tyre,[>]
your harbor is destroyed!
You will have to become farmers
just like the Egyptians.'

Tyre Will Be Forgotten

- ¹¹ The LORD's hand has reached
across the sea,
upsetting the nations.
He has given a command
to destroy fortresses
in the land of Canaan.
¹² The LORD has said
to the people of Sidon,
"Your celebrating is over—
you are crushed.
Even if you escape to Cyprus,
you won't find peace."

¹³ "Look what the Assyrians have done to
Babylonia! They have attacked, destroying every
palace in the land. Now wild animals live among
the ruins." ¹⁴ Not a fortress will be left standing, so
tell all the seagoing ships[>] to mourn.

¹⁵ The city of Tyre will be forgotten for 70 years,
which is the lifetime of a king. Then Tyre will be like
that evil woman in the song:

16 You're gone and forgotten,
you evil woman!
So strut through the town,
singing and playing
your favorite tune
to be remembered again.

17 At the end of those 70 years, the LORD will let Tyre get back into business. The city will be like a woman who sells her body to everyone of every nation on earth, 18 but none of what is earned will be kept in the city. That money will belong to the LORD, and it will be used to buy more than enough food and good clothes for those who worship the LORD.

The Earth Will Be Punished

24 The LORD is going to twist the earth out of shape and turn it into a desert. Everyone will be scattered, 2 including ordinary people and priests, slaves and slave owners, buyers and sellers, lenders and borrowers, the rich and the poor. 3 The earth will be stripped bare and left that way. This is what the LORD has promised.

4 The earth wilts away;
'its mighty leaders melt
to nothing.'

5 The earth is polluted
because its people
disobeyed the laws of God,
breaking their agreement
that was to last forever.

6 The earth is under a curse;
its people are dying out
because of their sins.

7 Grapevines have dried up:
wine is almost gone—
mournful sounds are heard
instead of joyful shouts.

8 No one plays tambourines
or stringed instruments;
all noisy celebrating
has come to an end.

9 They no longer sing
as they drink their wine,
and it tastes sour.

10 Towns are crushed and in chaos;
houses are locked tight.

11 Happy times have disappeared
from the earth,

and people shout in the streets,
"We're out of wine!"

12 Cities are destroyed;
their gates are torn down.

13 Nations will be stripped bare,
like olive trees or vineyards
after the harvest season.

Praise the God of Justice

14 People in the west shout;
they joyfully praise
the majesty of the LORD.

15 And so, everyone in the east
and those on the islands
should praise the LORD,
the God of Israel.

16 From all over the world
songs of praise are heard
for the God of justice.▷

But I feel awful,
terribly miserable.
Can anyone be trusted?
So many are treacherous!

There's No Escape

17 Terror, traps, and pits
are waiting for everyone.

18 If you are terrified and run,
you will fall into a pit;
if you crawl out of the pit,
you will get caught in a trap.

The sky has split apart
like a window thrown open.

The foundations of the earth
have been shaken;

19 the earth is shattered,
ripped to pieces.

20 It staggers and shakes
like a drunkard
or a hut in a windstorm.
It is burdened down with sin;
the earth will fall,
never again to get up.

21 On that day the LORD
will punish
the powers
in the heavens
and the kings of the earth.

22 He will put them in a pit
and keep them prisoner.
Then later on,
he will punish them.

- 23 The moon and sun will both
be embarrassed and ashamed.
The LORD All-Powerful will rule
on Mount Zion in Jerusalem,
where he will show its rulers
his wonderful glory.

A Prayer of Thanks to God

25

- You, LORD, are my God!
I will praise you
for doing the wonderful things
you had planned and promised
since ancient times.
- 2 You have destroyed the fortress
of our enemies,
leaving their city in ruins.
Nothing in that foreign city
will ever be rebuilt.
- 3 Now strong and cruel nations
will fear and honor you.
- 4 You have been a place of safety
for the poor and needy
in times of trouble.
Brutal enemies pounded us
like a heavy rain
or the heat of the sun at noon,
but you were our shelter.
- 5 Those wild foreigners struck
like scorching desert heat.
But you were like a cloud,
protecting us from the sun.
You kept our enemies from singing
songs of victory.

The LORD Has Saved Us

- 6 On this mountain
the LORD All-Powerful
will prepare for all nations
a feast of the finest foods.
Choice wines and the best meats
will be served.
- 7 Here the LORD will strip away
the burial clothes
that cover the nations.
- 8 The LORD All-Powerful
will destroy the power of death
and wipe away all tears.
No longer will his people
be insulted everywhere.
The LORD has spoken!
- 9 At that time, people will say,

"The LORD has saved us!
Let's celebrate.

- We waited and hoped –
now our God is here."
- 10 The powerful arm of the LORD
will protect this mountain.
- The Moabites will be put down
and trampled on like straw
in a pit of manure.
- 11 They will struggle to get out,
but God will humiliate them
no matter how hard they try.
- 12 The walls of their fortresses
will be knocked down
and scattered in the dirt.

A Song of Victory

26

- The time is coming
when the people of Judah
will sing this song:
'Our city is protected.
The LORD is our fortress,
and he gives us victory.
- 2 Open the city gates
for a law-abiding nation
that is faithful to God.
- 3 The LORD gives perfect peace
to those whose faith is firm.
- 4 So always trust the LORD
because he is forever
our mighty rock.▷
- 5 God has put down 'our enemies
in their mountain city'
and rubbed it in the dirt.
- 6 Now the poor and abused
stomp all over that city."

The LORD Can Be Trusted

- 7 Our LORD, you always do right,
and you make the path smooth
for those who obey you.
- 8 You are the one we trust
to bring about justice;
above all else we want
your name to be honored.
- 9 Throughout the night,
my heart searches for you,
because your decisions
show everyone on this earth
how to live right.
- 10 Even when the wicked

- are treated with mercy
 in this land of justice,
 they do wrong and are blind
 to your glory, our LORD.
- 11 Your hand is raised and ready
 to punish them,
 but they don't see it.
 Put them to shame!
 Show how much you care for us
 and throw them into the fire
 intended for your enemies.
- 12 You will give us peace, LORD,
 because everything we have done
 was by your power.
- 13 Others have ruled over us
 besides you, our LORD God,
 but we obey only you.
- 14 Those enemies are now dead
 and can never live again.
 You have punished them—
 they are destroyed,
 completely forgotten.
- 15 Our nation has grown
 because of you, our LORD.
 We have more land than before,
 and you are honored.

The LORD Gives Life to the Dead

- 16 "When you punished our people,
 they turned and prayed
 to you, our LORD."¹
- 17 Because of what you did to us,
 we suffered like a woman
 about to give birth.
- 18 But instead of having a child,
 our terrible pain
 produced only wind.
 We have won no victories,
 and we have no descendants
 to take over the earth.
- 19 Your people will rise to life!
 Tell them to leave their graves
 and celebrate with shouts.
 You refresh the earth
 like morning dew;
 you give life to the dead.
- 20 Go inside and lock the doors,
 my people.
 Hide there for a little while,
 until the LORD
 is no longer angry.

The Earth and the Sea Will Be Punished

- 21 The LORD will come out
 to punish everyone on earth
 for their sins.
 And when he does,
 those who did violent crimes
 will be known and punished.
- 27 On that day, Leviathan,
 the sea monster,
 will squirm and try to escape,
 but the LORD will kill him
 with a cruel, sharp sword.

Protection and Forgiveness

The LORD said:

- 2 At that time you must sing
 about a fruitful vineyard.
- 3 I, the LORD, will protect it
 and always keep it watered.
 I will guard it day and night
 to keep it from harm.
- 4 I am no longer angry.
 But if it produces thorns,
 I will go to war against it
 and burn it to the ground.
- 5 Yet if the vineyard depends
 on me for protection,
 it will become my friend
 and be at peace with me.
- 6 Someday Israel will take root
 like a vine.
 It will blossom and bear fruit
 that covers the earth.
- 7 I, the LORD, didn't punish and kill
 the people of Israel
 as fiercely as I punished
 and killed their enemies.
- 8 "I carefully measured out
 Israel's punishment"¹
 and sent the scorching heat
 to chase them far away.
- 9 There's only one way
 that Israel's sin and guilt
 can be completely forgiven:
 They must crush the stones
 of every pagan altar
 and place of worship.

The LORD Will Bring His People Together

- 10 Fortress cities are left
 like a desert
 where no one lives.

Cattle walk through the ruins,
stripping the trees bare.

- 11 When broken branches
fall to the ground,
women pick them up
to feed the fire.
But these people are so stupid
that the God who created them
will show them no mercy.

12 The time is coming when the LORD will shake
the land between the Euphrates River and the border
of Egypt, and one by one he will bring all of his
people together. 13 A loud trumpet will be heard.
Then the people of Israel who were dragged away
to Assyria and Egypt will return to worship the LORD
on his holy mountain in Jerusalem.

Samaria Will Be Punished

28 The city of Samaria
above a fertile valley
is in for trouble!
Its leaders are drunkards,
who stuff themselves
with food and wine.
But they will be like flowers
that dry up and wilt.

2 Only the Lord is strong
and powerful!
His mighty hand
will strike them down
with the force of a hailstorm
or a mighty whirlwind
or an overwhelming flood.

3 Every drunkard in Ephraim
takes pride in Samaria,
but it will be crushed.

4 Samaria above a fertile valley
will quickly lose its glory.
It will be gobbled down
like the first ripe fig
at harvest season.

5 When this time comes,
the LORD All-Powerful
will be a glorious crown
for his people who survive.

6 He will see that justice rules
and that his people are able
to defend their cities.

Corrupt Leaders Will Be Punished

7 Priests and prophets stumble
because they are drunk.
Their minds are too confused
to receive God's messages
or give honest decisions.

8 Their tables are covered,
completely covered,
with their stinking vomit.

9 "You drunken leaders
are like babies!
How can you possibly understand
or teach the LORD's message?"

10 You don't even listen—
all you hear is senseless sound
after senseless sound.¹

11 So, the Lord will speak
to his people
in strange sounds
and foreign languages.

12 He promised you
perfect peace and rest,
but you refused to listen.

13 "Now his message to you
will be senseless sound
after senseless sound.¹
Then you will fall backwards,
injured and trapped.

False Security Is Fatal

14 You rulers of Jerusalem
do nothing but sneer;
now you must listen
to what the LORD says.

15 Do you think you have
an agreement with death
and the world of the dead?
Why do you trust in your lies
to keep you safe from danger
and the mighty flood?

16 And so the LORD says,
"I'm laying a firm foundation
for the city of Zion.
It's a valuable cornerstone
proven to be trustworthy;
no one who trusts it
will ever be disappointed.

17 Justice and fairness
will be the measuring lines
that help me build."

- Hailstones and floods
will destroy and wash away
your shelter of lies.
- 18 Your agreement with death
and the world of the dead
will be broken.
Then angry, roaring waves
will sweep over you.
- 19 Morning, noon, and night
an overwhelming flood
will wash you away.
The terrible things that happen
will teach you this lesson:
- 20 Your bed is too short,
your blanket too skimpy.
- 21 The LORD will fiercely attack
as he did at Mount Perazim
and in Gibeon Valley.
But this time the LORD
will do something surprising,
not what you expect.
- 22 So you had better stop sneering
or you will be in worse shape
than ever before.
I heard the LORD All-Powerful
threaten the whole country
with destruction.

All Wisdom Comes from the LORD

- 23 Pay close attention
to what I am saying.
- 24 Farmers don't just plow
and break up the ground.
- 25 When a field is ready,
they scatter the seeds
of dill and cumin;
they plant the seeds
of wheat and barley
in the proper places.
- 26 They learn this from their God.
- 27 After dill and cumin
have been harvested,
the stalks are pounded,
not run over with a wagon.
- 28 Wheat and barley are pounded,
but not beaten to pulp;
they are run over with a wagon,
but not ground to dust.
- 29 This wonderful knowledge comes
from the LORD All-Powerful,
who has such great wisdom.

Jerusalem Will Suffer

The LORD said:

- 29 Jerusalem, city of David,
'the place of my altar,'¹▷
you are in for trouble!
Celebrate your festivals
year after year.
- 2 I will still make you suffer,
and your people will cry
'when I make an altar of you.'
- 3 I will surround you and prepare
to attack 'from all sides.'¹▷
- 4 From deep in the earth,
you will call out for help
with only a faint whisper.
- 5 Then your cruel enemies
will suddenly be swept away
like dust in a windstorm.
- 6 I, the LORD All-Powerful,
will come to your rescue
with a thundering earthquake
and a fiery whirlwind.
- 7 Every brutal nation
that attacks Jerusalem
and makes it suffer
will disappear like a dream
when night is over.
- 8 Those nations that attack
Mount Zion
will suffer from hunger
and thirst.
They will dream of food and drink
but wake up weary and hungry
and thirsty as ever.

Prophets Who Fool Themselves

- 9 Be shocked and stunned,
you prophets!
Refuse to see.
Get drunk and stagger,
but not from wine.
- 10 The LORD has made you drowsy;
he put you into a deep sleep
and covered your head.
- 11 Now his message is like a sealed letter to you.
Some of you say, "We can't read it, because it's
sealed."¹² Others say, "We can't read it, because we
don't know how to read."¹³
- 13 The Lord has said:
"These people praise me
with their words,

- but they never really
think about me.
They worship me by repeating
rules made up by humans.
- 14 So once again I will do things
that shock and amaze them,
and I will destroy the wisdom
of those who claim to know
and understand."
- 15 You are in for trouble,
if you try to hide your plans
from the LORD!
Or if you think what you do
in the dark can't be seen.
- 16 You have it all backwards.
A clay dish doesn't say
to the potter,
"You didn't make me.
You don't even know how."

Hope for the Future

- 17 Soon the forest of Lebanon
will become a field with crops,
thick as a forest.▷
- 18 The deaf will be able to hear
whatever is read to them;
the blind will be freed
from a life of darkness.
- 19 The poor and the needy
will celebrate and shout
because of the LORD,
the holy God of Israel.
- 20 All who are cruel and arrogant
will be gone forever.
Those who live by crime
will disappear,
21 together with everyone
who tells lies in court
and keeps innocent people
from getting a fair trial.
- 22 The LORD who rescued Abraham
has this to say
about Jacob's descendants:
"They will no longer
be ashamed and disgraced.
- 23 When they see how great
I have made their nation,
they will praise and honor me,
the holy God of Israel.
- 24 Everyone who is confused
will understand,

and all who have complained
will obey my teaching."

Don't Expect Help from Egypt

- 30** This is the LORD's message
for his rebellious people:
"You follow your own plans
instead of mine;
you make treaties
without asking me,
and you keep on sinning.
- 2 You trust Egypt for protection.
So you refuse my advice
and send messengers to Egypt
to beg their king for help.
- 3 "You will be disappointed,
completely disgraced
for trusting Egypt.
- 4 The king's power reaches
from the city of Zoan
as far south as Hanes.▷
- 5 But Egypt can't protect you,
and to trust that nation
is useless and foolish."
- 6 This is a message
about the animals
of the Southern Desert:
"You people carry treasures
on donkeys and camels.
You travel to a feeble nation
through a troublesome desert
filled with lions
and flying fiery dragons.
- 7 Egypt can't help you!
That's why I call that nation
'a helpless monster.'"

Israel Refuses To Listen

- 8 The LORD told me to write down his message
for his people, so that it would be there forever.
- 9 They have turned against the LORD and can't be
trusted. They have refused his teaching 10 and have
said to his messengers and prophets:
Don't tell us what God has shown you and
don't preach the truth. Just say what we want
to hear, even if it's false. 11 Stop telling us what
God has said! We don't want to hear any more
about the holy God of Israel.

- 12 Now this is the answer
of the holy God of Israel:

"You rejected my message,
and you trust in violence
and lies.

- 13 This sin is like a crack
that makes a high wall
quickly crumble 14 and shatter
like a crushed bowl.
There's not a piece left
big enough to carry hot coals
or to dip out water."

Trust the LORD

- 15 The holy LORD God of Israel
had told all of you,
'I will keep you safe
if you turn back to me
and calm down.
I will make you strong
if you quietly trust me."

Then you stubbornly 16 said,
'No! We will safely escape
on speedy horses."

But those who chase you
will be even faster.

- 17 As few as five of them,
or even one, will be enough
to chase a thousand of you.
Finally, all that will be left
will be a few survivors
as lonely as a flag pole
on a barren hill.

The LORD Will Show Mercy

- 18 The LORD God is waiting
to show how kind he is
and to have pity on you.
The LORD always does right;
he blesses those who trust him.

19 People of Jerusalem, you don't need to cry
anymore. The Lord is kind, and as soon as he hears
your cries for help, he will come. 20 The Lord has
given you trouble and sorrow as your food and
drink. But now you will again see the Lord, your
teacher, and he will guide you. 21 Whether you turn
to the right or to the left, you will hear a voice say-
ing, "This is the road! Now follow it." 22 Then you
will treat your idols of silver and gold like garbage;
you will throw them away like filthy rags.

23 The Lord will send rain to water the seeds you
have planted—your fields will produce more crops

than you need, and your cattle will graze in open
pastures. 24 Even the oxen and donkeys that plow
your fields will be fed the finest grain.

25 On that day people will be slaughtered and
towers destroyed, but streams of water will flow
from high hills and towering mountains. 26 Then
the LORD will bandage his people's injuries and
heal the wounds he has caused. The moon will
shine as bright as the sun, and the sun will shine
seven times brighter than usual. It will be like the
light of seven days all at once.

Assyria Will Be Punished

- 27 The LORD is coming
from far away
'with his fiery anger
and thick clouds of smoke.'
His angry words flame up
like a destructive fire;

28 he breathes out a flood
that comes up to the neck.
He sifts the nations
and destroys them.

Then he puts a bridle
in every foreigner's mouth
and leads them to doom.

29 The LORD's people will sing as they do when
they celebrate a religious festival at night. The LORD
is Israel's mighty rock,¹ and his people will be as
happy as they are when they follow the sound of
flutes to the mountain where he is worshiped.

30 The LORD will get furious. His fearsome voice
will be heard, his arm will be seen ready to strike,
and his anger will be like a destructive fire, followed
by thunderstorms and hailstones. 31 When the
Assyrians hear the LORD's voice and see him striking
with his iron rod, they will be terrified. 32 He will at-
tack them in battle, and each time he strikes them, it
will be to the music of tambourines and harps.

33 Long ago the LORD got a place ready for burn-
ing the body of the dead king.² The place for the
fire is deep and wide, the wood is piled high, and
the LORD will start the fire by breathing out flaming
sulfur.

Don't Trust the Power of Egypt

31 You are in for trouble
if you go to Egypt for help,
or if you depend on
an army of chariots
or a powerful cavalry.

Instead you should depend on
and trust the holy LORD God
of Israel.

- ²The LORD isn't stupid!
He does what he promises,
and he can bring doom.
If you are cruel yourself,
or help those who are evil,
you will be destroyed.
- ³The Egyptians are mere humans.
They aren't God.
Their horses are made of flesh;
they can't live forever.
When the LORD shows his power,
he will destroy the Egyptians
and all who depend on them.
Together they will fall.
- ⁴The LORD All-Powerful
said to me,
"I will roar and attack
like a fearless lion
not frightened by the shouts
of shepherds trying to protect
their sheep.
That's how I will come down
and fight on Mount Zion.
- ⁵I, the LORD All-Powerful,
will protect Jerusalem
like a mother bird circling
over her nest."

Come Back to the LORD

- ⁶People of Israel, come back!
You have completely turned
from the LORD.
- ⁷The time is coming
when you will throw away
your idols of silver and gold,
made by your sinful hands.
- ⁸The Assyrians will be killed,
but not by the swords
of humans.
Their young men will try
to escape,
but they will be captured
and forced into slavery.
- ⁹Their fortress[>] will fall
when terror strikes;
their army officers
will be frightened
and run from the battle.

This is what the LORD has said,
the LORD whose fiery furnace
is built on Mount Zion.

Justice Will Rule

32

- A king and his leaders
will rule with justice.
- ²They will be a place of safety
from stormy winds,
a stream in the desert,
and a rock that gives shade
from the heat of the sun.
- ³Then everyone who has eyes
will open them and see,
and those who have ears
will pay attention.
- ⁴All who are impatient
will take time to think;
everyone who stutters
will talk clearly.
- ⁵Fools will no longer
be highly respected,
and crooks won't be given
positions of honor.
- ⁶Fools talk foolishness.
They always make plans
to do sinful things,
to lie about the LORD,
to let the hungry starve,
and to keep water from those
who are thirsty.
- ⁷Cruel people tell lies –
they do evil things,
and make cruel plans
to destroy the poor and needy,
even when they beg
for justice.
- ⁸But helpful people
can always be trusted
to make helpful plans.

Punishment for the Women of Jerusalem

- ⁹Listen to what I say,
you women who are carefree
and careless!
- ¹⁰You may not have worries now,
but in about a year,
the grape harvest will fail,
and you will tremble.
- ¹¹Shake and shudder,
you women without a care!

- Strip off your clothes—
put on sackcloth.
- 12 Slap your breasts in sorrow
because of what happened
to the fruitful fields
and vineyards,
- 13 and to the happy homes
in Jerusalem.
The land of my people
is covered with thorns.
- 14 The palace will be deserted,
the crowded city empty.
Fortresses and towers
will forever become
playgrounds for wild donkeys
and pastures for sheep.

God's Spirit Makes the Difference

- 15 When the Spirit is given to us
from heaven,
deserts will become orchards
thick as fertile forests.
- 16 Honesty and justice
will prosper there,
- 17 and justice will produce
lasting peace and security.
- 18 You, the LORD's people,
will live in peace,
calm and secure,
- 19 even if hailstones flatten
forests and cities.
- 20 You will have God's blessing,
as you plant your crops
beside streams,
while your donkeys and cattle
roam freely about.

Jerusalem Will Be Safe

- 33** You defeated my people.
Now you're in for trouble!
You've never been destroyed,
but you will be destroyed;
you've never been betrayed,
but you will be betrayed.
When you have finished
destroying and betraying,
you will be destroyed
and betrayed in return.
- 2 Please, LORD, be kind to us!
We depend on you.
Make us strong each morning,

- and come to save us
when we are in trouble.
- 3 Nations scatter when you roar
and show your greatness.¹
- 4 We attack our enemies
like swarms of locusts;
we take everything
that belongs to them.¹
- 5 You, LORD, are above all others,
and you live in the heavens.
You have brought justice
and fairness to Jerusalem;
- 6 you are the foundation
on which we stand today.
You always save us and give
true wisdom and knowledge.
¹Nothing means more to us¹
than obeying you.

The LORD Will Do Something

- 7 Listen! Our bravest soldiers
are running through the streets,
screaming for help.▷
Our messengers hoped for peace,
but came home crying.
- 8 No one travels anymore;
every road is empty.
Treaties are broken,
and no respect is shown
to any who keep promises.▷
- 9 Fields are dry and barren;
Mount Lebanon wilts
with shame.
Sharon Valley is a desert;
the forests of Bashan and Carmel
have lost their leaves.
- 10 But the LORD says,
"Now I will do something
and be greatly praised.
- 11 Your deeds are straw
that will be set on fire
by your very own breath.
- 12 You will be burned to ashes
like thorns in a fire.
- 13 Everyone, both far and near,
come look at what I have done.
See my mighty power!"

Punishment and Rewards

- 14 Those terrible sinners
on Mount Zion tremble
as they ask in fear,

"How can we possibly live
where a raging fire
never stops burning?"

- 15 But there will be rewards
for those who live right
and tell the truth,
for those who refuse
to take money by force
or accept bribes,
for all who hate murder
and violent crimes.
- 16 They will live in a fortress
high on a rocky cliff,
where they will have food
and plenty of water.

The LORD Is Our King

- 17 With your own eyes
you will see the glorious King;
you will see his kingdom
reaching far and wide.
- 18 Then you will ask yourself,
"Where are those officials
who terrified us and forced us
to pay such heavy taxes?"
- 19 You will never again have to see
the proud people who spoke
a strange and foreign language
you could not understand.
- 20 Look to Mount Zion
where we celebrate
our religious festivals.
You will see Jerusalem,
secure as a tent with pegs
that cannot be pulled up
and fastened with ropes
that can never be broken.
- 21 Our wonderful LORD
will be with us!
There will be deep rivers
and wide streams
safe from enemy ships.

The LORD Is Our Judge

- 22 The LORD is our judge
and our ruler;
the LORD is our king
and will keep us safe.
- 23 But your nation is a ship
with its rigging loose,
its mast shaky,
and its sail not spread.

Someday even you that are lame
will take everything you want
from your enemies.

- 24 The LORD will forgive your sins,
and none of you will say,
"I feel sick."

The Nations Will Be Judged

- 34 Everyone of every nation,
the entire earth,
and all of its creatures,
come here and listen!
- 2 The LORD is terribly angry
with the nations;
he has condemned them
to be slaughtered.
- 3 Their dead bodies will be left
to rot and stink;
their blood will flow
down the mountains.
- 4 Each star will disappear—
the sky will roll up
like a scroll.
Everything in the sky
will dry up and wilt
like leaves on a vine
or fruit on a tree.

Trouble for Edom

- 5 After the sword of the LORD
has done what it wants
to the skies above,^b
it will come down on Edom,
the nation that the LORD
has doomed for destruction.
- 6 The sword of the LORD
is covered with blood
from lambs and goats,
together with fat
from kidneys of rams.
This is because the LORD
will slaughter many people
and make a sacrifice of them
in the city of Bozrah
and everywhere else
in Edom.
- 7 Edom's leaders are wild oxen.
They are powerful bulls,
but they will die
with the others.
Their country will be soaked
with their blood,

and its soil made fertile
with their fat.

- 8 The LORD has chosen
the year and the day,
when he will take revenge
and come to Zion's defense.
- 9 Edom's streams will turn into tar
and its soil into sulfur –
then the whole country
will go up in flames.
- 10 It will burn night and day
and never stop smoking.
Edom will be a desert,
generation after generation;
no one will ever travel
through that land.
- 11 'Owls, hawks, and wild animals'
will make it their home.
God will leave it in ruins,
merely a pile of rocks.

The End of Edom

- 12 Edom will be called
"Kingdom of Nothing."
Its rulers will also be nothing.
- 13 Its palaces and fortresses
will be covered with thorns;
only wolves and ostriches
will make their home there.
- 14 Wildcats and hyenas
will hunt together,
demons will scream to demons,
and creatures of the night
will live among the ruins.
- 15 'Owls will nest there
to raise their young
among its shadows,'
while families of buzzards
circle around.
- 16 In *The Book of the LORD*
you can search and find
where it is written,
"The LORD brought together
all of his creatures
by the power of his Spirit.
Not one is missing."
- 17 The LORD has decided
where they each should live;
they will be there forever,
generation after generation.

God's Splendor Will Be Seen

- 35 Thirsty deserts will be glad;
barren lands will celebrate
and blossom with flowers.
- 2 Deserts will bloom everywhere
and sing joyful songs.
They will be as majestic
as Mount Lebanon,
as glorious as Mount Carmel
or Sharon Valley.
Everyone will see
the wonderful splendor
of the LORD our God.

God Changes Everything

- *3 Here is a message for all
who are weak, trembling,
and worried:
- 4 "Cheer up! Don't be afraid.
Your God is coming
to punish your enemies.
God will take revenge on them
and rescue you."
- 5 The blind will see,
and the ears of the deaf
will be healed.
- 6 Those who were lame
will leap around like deer;
tongues once silent
will begin to shout.
Water will rush
through the desert.
- 7 Scorching sand
will turn into a lake,
and thirsty ground
will flow with fountains.
Grass will grow in wetlands,
'where packs of wild dogs
once made their home.'

God's Sacred Highway

- 8 A good road will be there,
and it will be named
"God's Sacred Highway."
It will be for God's people;
no one unfit to worship God
will walk on that road.
And no fools can travel
on that highway.▷
- 9 No lions or other wild animals
will come near that road;

only those the LORD has saved
will travel there.

- ¹⁰The people the LORD has rescued
will come back singing
as they enter Zion.
Happiness will be a crown
they will always wear.
They will celebrate and shout
because all sorrows and worries
will be gone far away.

The Assyrians Surround Jerusalem

36 Hezekiah had been king of Judah for 14 years when King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded the country and captured every walled city ² except Jerusalem. The Assyrian king ordered his army commander to leave the city of Lachish and to take a large army to Jerusalem.

The commander went there and stood on the road near the cloth makers' shops along the canal from the upper pool. ³ Three of the king's highest officials came out of Jerusalem to meet him. One of them was Hilkiah's son Eliakim, who was the prime minister. The other two were Shebna, assistant to the prime minister, and Joah son of Asaph, keeper of the government records.

⁴ The Assyrian commander told them:

I have a message for Hezekiah from the great king of Assyria. Ask Hezekiah why he feels so sure of himself. ⁵ Does he think he can plan and win a war with nothing but words? Who is going to help him, now that he has turned against the king of Assyria? ⁶ Is he depending on Egypt and its king? That's the same as leaning on a broken stick, and it will go right through his hand.

⁷ Is Hezekiah now depending on the LORD, your God? Didn't Hezekiah tear down all except one of the LORD's altars and places of worship? Didn't he tell the people of Jerusalem and Judah to worship at that one place?

⁸ The king of Assyria wants to make a bet with you people! He will give you 2,000 horses, if you have enough troops to ride them. ⁹ How could you even defeat our lowest ranking officer, when you have to depend on Egypt for chariots and cavalry? ¹⁰ Don't forget that it was the LORD who sent me here with orders to destroy your nation!

¹¹ Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said, "Sir, we don't want the people listening from the city wall to

understand what you are saying. So please speak to us in Aramaic instead of Hebrew."

¹² The Assyrian army commander answered, "My king sent me to speak to everyone, not just to you leaders. These people will soon have to eat their own body waste and drink their own urine! And so will the three of you!"

¹³ Then, in a voice loud enough for everyone to hear, he shouted out in Hebrew:

Listen to what the great king of Assyria says! ¹⁴ Don't be fooled by Hezekiah. He can't save you. ¹⁵ Don't trust him when he tells you that the LORD will protect you from the king of Assyria. ¹⁶ Stop listening to Hezekiah. Pay attention to my king. Surrender to him. He will let you keep your own vineyards, fig trees, and cisterns ¹⁷ for a while. Then he will come and take you away to a country just like yours, where you can plant vineyards and raise your own grain.

¹⁸ Hezekiah claims the LORD will save you. But don't be fooled by him. Were any other gods able to defend their land against the king of Assyria? ¹⁹ What happened to the gods of Hamath, Arpad, and Sepharvaim? Were the gods of Samaria able to protect their land against the Assyrian forces? ²⁰ None of these gods kept their people safe from the king of Assyria. Do you think the LORD, your God, can do any better?

²¹⁻²² Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah had been warned by King Hezekiah not to answer the Assyrian commander. So they tore their clothes in sorrow and reported to Hezekiah everything the commander had said.

Hezekiah Asks Isaiah for Advice

37 As soon as Hezekiah heard the news, he tore off his clothes in sorrow and put on sackcloth. Then he went into the temple of the LORD. ² He told Prime Minister Eliakim, Assistant Prime Minister Shebna, and the senior priests to dress in sackcloth and tell me:

³ Isaiah, these are difficult and disgraceful times. Our nation is like a woman too weak to give birth, when it's time for her baby to be born. ⁴ Please pray for those of us who are left alive. The king of Assyria sent his army commander to insult the living God. Perhaps the LORD heard what he said and will do something, if you will pray.

⁵ When these leaders came to me, ⁶ I told them that the LORD had this message for Hezekiah:

I am the LORD. Don't worry about the insulting things that have been said about me by these messengers from the king of Assyria. ⁷I will upset him with rumors about what's happening in his own country. He will go back, and there I will make him die a violent death.

⁸Meanwhile the commander of the Assyrian forces heard that his king had left the town of Lachish and was now attacking Libnah. So he went there.

⁹About this same time, the king of Assyria learned that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia[>] was on his way to attack him. Then the king of Assyria sent some messengers with this note for Hezekiah:

¹⁰Don't trust your God or be fooled by his promise to defend Jerusalem against me.

¹¹You have heard how we Assyrian kings have completely wiped out other nations. What makes you feel so safe? ¹²The Assyrian kings before me destroyed the towns of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and everyone from Eden who lived in Telassar. What good did their gods do them? ¹³The kings of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah have all disappeared.

Hezekiah Prays

¹⁴After Hezekiah had read the note from the king of Assyria, he took it to the temple and spread it out for the LORD to see. ¹⁵Then he prayed:

¹⁶LORD God All-Powerful of Israel, your throne is above the winged creatures. You created the heavens and the earth, and you alone rule the kingdoms of this world.

¹⁷Just look and see how Sennacherib has insulted you, the living God.

¹⁸It is true, our LORD, that Assyrian kings have turned nations into deserts. ¹⁹They destroyed the idols of wood and stone that the people of those nations had made and worshiped. ²⁰But you are our LORD and our God! We ask you to keep us safe from the Assyrian king. Then everyone in every kingdom on earth will know that you are the only LORD.

Isaiah Gives the LORD's Answer to Hezekiah

²¹⁻²²I went to Hezekiah and told him that the LORD God of Israel had said:

'Hezekiah, you prayed to me about King Sennacherib of Assyria.' Now this is what I say to that king:

The people of Jerusalem hate and make fun of you; they laugh behind your back.

²³Sennacherib, you cursed, shouted, and sneered at me, the holy God of Israel.

²⁴You let your officials insult me, the Lord.

And here is what you have said about yourself, 'I led my chariots to the highest heights of Lebanon's mountains.

I went deep into its forest, cutting down the best cedar and cypress trees.

²⁵I dried up every stream in the land of Egypt, and I drank water from wells I had dug.'

²⁶Sennacherib, now listen to me, the LORD.

I planned all of this long ago. And you don't even know that I alone am the one who decided that you would do these things.

I let you make ruins of fortified cities.

²⁷Their people became weak, terribly confused.

They were like wild flowers or like tender young grass growing on a flat roof or like a field of grain before it matures.[>]

²⁸I know all about you, even how fiercely angry you are with me.

²⁹I have seen your pride and the tremendous hatred you have for me.

Now I will put a hook in your nose, a bit in your mouth, then I will send you back to where you came from.

³⁰Hezekiah, I will tell you what's going to happen. This year you will eat crops that grow on their own, and the next year you will eat

whatever springs up where those crops grew. But the third year, you will plant grain and vineyards, and you will eat what you harvest.

³¹ Those who survive in Judah will be like a vine that puts down deep roots and bears fruit. ³² I, the LORD All-Powerful, will see to it that some who live in Jerusalem will survive.

³³ I promise that the king of Assyria won't get into Jerusalem, or shoot an arrow into the city, or even surround it and prepare to attack. ³⁴ As surely as I am the LORD, he will return by the way he came and will never enter Jerusalem.

³⁵ I will protect it for the sake of my own honor and because of the promise I made to my servant David.

The Death of King Sennacherib

³⁶ The LORD sent an angel to the camp of the Assyrians, and he killed 185,000 of them all in one night. The next morning, the camp was full of dead bodies. ³⁷ After this, King Sennacherib went back to Assyria and lived in the city of Nineveh. ³⁸ One day he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, when his sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, killed him with their swords. They escaped to the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon became king.

Hezekiah Gets Sick and Almost Dies

38 About this time, Hezekiah got sick and was almost dead. So I went in and told him, "The LORD says you won't ever get well. You are going to die, and so you had better start doing what needs to be done."

² Hezekiah turned toward the wall and prayed, ³ "Don't forget that I have been faithful to you, LORD. I have obeyed you with all my heart, and I do whatever you say is right." After this, he cried hard.

⁴ Then the LORD sent me ⁵ with this message for Hezekiah:

I am the LORD God, who was worshiped by your ancestor David. I heard you pray, and I saw you cry. I will let you live 15 years more, ⁶ while I protect you and your city from the king of Assyria.

⁷ Now I will prove to you that I will keep my promise. ⁸ "Do you see the shadow made by the setting sun on the stairway built for King Ahaz? I will make the shadow go back ten steps."¹

Then the shadow went back ten steps.

King Hezekiah's Song of Praise

⁹ This is what Hezekiah wrote after he got well:

¹⁰ I thought I would die during my best years and stay as a prisoner forever in the world of the dead.

¹¹ I thought I would never again see you, my LORD, or any of the people who live on this earth.

¹² My life was taken from me like the tent that a shepherd pulls up and moves.

You cut me off like thread from a weaver's loom; you make a wreck of me day and night.

¹³ "Until morning came, I thought you would crush my bones just like a hungry lion; both night and day you make a wreck of me."¹

¹⁴ "I cry like a swallow; I mourn like a dove. My eyes are red from looking to you, LORD. I am terribly abused. Please come and help me."¹

¹⁵ "There's nothing I can say in answer to you, since you are the one who has done this to me."¹ My life has turned sour; I will limp until I die.

¹⁶ "Your words and your deeds bring life to everyone, including me."¹

Please make me healthy and strong again.

¹⁷ It was for my own good that I had such hard times. But your love protected me from doom in the deep pit, and you turned your eyes away from my sins.

¹⁸ No one in the world of the dead can thank you or praise you; none of those in the deep pit can hope for you to show them how faithful you are.

¹⁹ Only the living can thank you, as I am doing today.

Each generation tells the next
'about your faithfulness.'

- ²⁰ You, LORD, will save me,
and every day that we live
we will sing in your temple
to the music
of stringed instruments.

Isaiah's Advice to Hezekiah

²¹ I had told King Hezekiah's servants to put some mashed figs on the king's open sore, and he would get well. ²² Then Hezekiah asked for proof that he would again worship in the LORD's temple.

Isaiah Speaks the LORD's Message to Hezekiah

39 Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan, was now king of Babylonia. And when he learned that Hezekiah was well, he sent messengers with letters and a gift for him. ² Hezekiah welcomed the messengers and showed them all the silver, the gold, the spices, and the fine oils that were in his storehouse. He even showed them where he kept his weapons. Nothing in his palace or in his entire kingdom was kept hidden from them.

³ I asked Hezekiah, "Where did these men come from? What did they want?"

"They came all the way from Babylonia," Hezekiah answered.

⁴ "What did you show them?" I asked.

Hezekiah answered, "I showed them everything in my kingdom."

⁵ Then I told Hezekiah:

I have a message for you from the LORD All-Powerful. ⁶ One day everything you and your ancestors have stored up will be taken to Babylonia. The LORD has promised that nothing will be left. ⁷ Some of your own sons will be taken to Babylonia, where they will be disgraced and made to serve in the king's palace.

⁸ Hezekiah thought, "At least our nation will be at peace for a while." So he told me, "The message you brought from the LORD is good."

Encourage God's People

40 Our God has said:
'Encourage my people!
Give them comfort.

- ² Speak kindly to Jerusalem
and announce:

Your slavery is past;
your punishment is over.
I, the LORD, made you pay
double for your sins."

- ³ Someone is shouting:
"Clear a path in the desert!
Make a straight road
for the LORD our God.
⁴ Fill in the valleys;
flatten every hill
and mountain.
Level the rough
and rugged ground.
⁵ Then the glory of the LORD
will appear for all to see.
The LORD has promised this!"
⁶ Someone told me to shout,
and I asked,
"What should I shout?"
We humans are merely grass,
and we last no longer
than wild flowers.
⁷ At the LORD's command,
flowers and grass disappear,
and so do we.
⁸ Flowers and grass fade away,
but what our God has said
will never change.

Your God Is Here!

- ⁹ There is good news
for the city of Zion.
Shout it as loud as you can▷
from the highest mountain.
Don't be afraid to shout
to the towns of Judah,
"Your God is here!"
¹⁰ Look! The powerful LORD God
is coming to rule
with his mighty arm.
He brings with him
what he has taken in war,
and he rewards his people.
¹¹ The LORD cares for his nation,
just as shepherds care
for their flocks.
He carries the lambs
in his arms,
while gently leading
the mother sheep.

Who Compares with God?

- 12 Did any of you measure
the ocean by yourself
or stretch out the sky
with your own hands?
Did you put the soil
of the earth in a bucket
or weigh the hills and mountains
on balance scales?
- 13 Has anyone told the LORD
what he must do
or given him advice?
- 14 Did the LORD ask anyone
to teach him wisdom
and justice?
Who gave him knowledge
and understanding?
- 15 To the LORD, all nations
are merely a drop in a bucket
or dust on balance scales;
all of the islands
are but a handful of sand.
- 16 The cattle
on Lebanon's mountains
would not be enough to offer
as a sacrifice to God,
and the trees would not
be enough for the fire.
- 17 God thinks of the nations
as far less than nothing.
- 18 Who compares with God?
Is anything like him?
- 19 Is an idol at all like God?
It is made of bronze
with a thin layer of gold,
and decorated with silver.
- 20 Or special wood may be chosen
because it doesn't rot—
then skilled hands
take care to make an idol
that won't fall on its face.

God Rules the Whole Earth

- 21 Don't you know?
Haven't you heard?
Isn't it clear that God
created the world?>
- 22 God is the one who rules
the whole earth,
and we that live here
are merely insects.

He spread out the heavens
like a curtain or an open tent.

- 23 God brings down rulers
and turns them into nothing.
- 24 They are like flowers
freshly sprung up
and starting to grow.
But when God blows on them,
they wilt and are carried off
like straw in a storm.
- 25 The holy God asks,
"Who compares with me?
Is anyone my equal?"
- 26 Look at the evening sky!
Who created the stars?
Who gave them each a name?
Who leads them like an army?
The LORD is so powerful
that none of the stars
are ever missing.

The LORD Gives Strength

- 27 You people of Israel, say,
"God pays no attention to us!
He doesn't care if we
are treated unjustly."
But how can you say that?
- 28 Don't you know?
Haven't you heard?
The LORD is the eternal God,
Creator of the earth.
He never gets weary or tired;
his wisdom cannot be measured.
- 29 The LORD gives strength
to those who are weary.
- 30 Even young people get tired,
then stumble and fall.
- 31 But those who trust the LORD
will find new strength.
They will be strong like eagles
soaring upward on wings;
they will walk and run
without getting tired.

The LORD Controls Human Events

- 41** Be silent and listen,
every island in the sea.
Have courage and come near,
every one of you nations.
Let's settle this matter!

- 2 Who appointed this ruler
from the east?
‘Who puts nations and kings
in his power?’
His sword and his arrows
turn them to dust
blown by the wind.
- 3 He goes after them so quickly
that his feet
barely touch the ground –
he doesn’t even get hurt.
- 4 Who makes these things happen?
Who controls human events?
I do! I am the LORD.
I was there at the beginning;
I will be there at the end.
- 5 Islands and foreign nations
saw what I did and trembled
as they came near.

What Can Idols Do?

- 6 Worshipers of idols
comfort each other,
saying, ‘Don’t worry!’
- 7 Woodcarvers, goldsmiths,
‘and other workers’
encourage one another and say,
‘We’ve done a great job!’
Then they nail the idol down,
so it won’t fall over.

The LORD’s Chosen Servant

- 8 Israel, you are my servant.
I chose you, the family
of my friend Abraham.
- 9 From far across the earth
I brought you here and said,
‘You are my chosen servant.
I haven’t forgotten you.’
- 10 Don’t be afraid. I am with you.
Don’t tremble with fear.
I am your God.
I will make you strong,
as I protect you with my arm
and give you victories.
- 11 Everyone who hates you
will be terribly disgraced;
those who attack
will vanish into thin air.
- 12 You will look around
for those brutal enemies,

but you won’t find them
because they will be gone.

- 13 I am the LORD your God.
I am holding your hand,
so don’t be afraid.
I am here to help you.
- 14 People of Israel, don’t worry,
though others may say,
‘Israel is only a worm!’
I am the holy God of Israel,
who saves and protects you.
- 15 I will let you be like a log
covered with sharp spikes.
You will grind and crush
every mountain and hill
until they turn to dust.
- 16 A strong wind will scatter them
in all directions.
Then you will celebrate
and praise me, your LORD,
the holy God of Israel.

The LORD Helps the Poor

- 17 When the poor and needy
are dying of thirst
and cannot find water,
I, the LORD God of Israel,
will come to their rescue.
I won’t forget them.
- 18 I will make rivers flow
on mountain peaks.
I will send streams
to fill the valleys.
Dry and barren land
will flow with springs
and become a lake.
- 19 I will fill the desert
with all kinds of trees –
cedars, acacias, and myrtles;
olive and cypress trees;
fir trees and pines.
- 20 Everyone will see this
and know that I,
the holy LORD God of Israel,
created it all.

Idols Are Useless

- 21 I am the LORD,
the King of Israel!
Come argue your case with me.
Present your evidence.

- 22 'Come near me, you idols.¹
Tell us about the past,
and we will think about it.
Tell us about the future,
so we will know
what is going to happen.
- 23 Prove that you are gods
by making your predictions
come true.
Do something good or evil,
so we can be amazed
and terrified.▷
- 24 You idols are nothing,
and you are 'powerless.'²
To worship you
would be disgusting.
- 25 I, the LORD, appointed a ruler
in the north;
now he comes from the east
to honor my name.
He 'tramples' kings like mud,
as potters trample clay.
- 26 Did any of you idols predict
what would happen?
Did any of you get it right?
None of you told about this
or even spoke a word.
- 27 I was the first to tell
the people of Jerusalem,
"Look, it's happening!"³
I was the one who announced
this good news to Zion.
- 28 None of these idols
are able to give advice
or answer questions.
- 29 They are 'nothing,'⁴
and they can do nothing—
they are less
than a passing breeze.

The LORD's Servant

42

- Here is my servant!
I have made him strong.
He is my chosen one;
I am pleased with him.
I have given him my Spirit,
and he will bring justice
to the nations.
- 2 He won't shout or yell
or call out in the streets.
- 3 He won't break off a bent reed
or put out a dying flame,

- but he will make sure
that justice is done.
- 4 He won't quit or give up
until he brings justice
everywhere on earth,
and people in foreign nations
long for his teaching.
- 5 I am the LORD God.
I created the heavens
like an open tent above.
I made the earth and everything
that grows on it.
I am the source of life
for all who live on this earth,
so listen to what I say.
- 6 I chose you to bring justice,
and I am here at your side.
'I selected and sent you'⁵
to bring light
and my promise of hope
to the nations.
- 7 You will give sight
to the blind;
you will set prisoners free
from dark dungeons.
- 8 My name is the LORD!
I won't let idols or humans
share my glory and praise.
- 9 Everything has happened
just as I said it would;
now I will announce
what will happen next.

Sing Praises to the LORD

- 10 Tell the whole world to sing
a new song to the LORD!
Tell those who sail the ocean
and those who live far away
to join in the praise.
- 11 Tell the tribes of the desert
and everyone in the mountains▷
to celebrate and sing.
- 12 Let them announce
his praises everywhere.
- 13 The LORD is marching out
like an angry soldier,
shouting with all his might
while attacking his enemies.

The LORD Will Help His People

- 14 For a long time, I, the LORD,
have held my temper;

- now I will scream and groan
like a woman giving birth.
- 15 I will destroy the mountains
and what grows on them;
I will dry up rivers and ponds.
- 16 I will lead the blind on roads
they have never known;
I will guide them on paths
they have never traveled.
Their road is dark and rough,
but I will give light
to keep them from stumbling.
This is my solemn promise.
- 17 Everyone who worships idols
as though they were gods
will be terribly ashamed.

God's People Won't Obey

- 18 You people are deaf and blind,
but the LORD commands you
to listen and to see.
- 19 No one is as blind or deaf
as his messenger,
his chosen servant,
20 who sees and hears so much,
but pays no attention.
- 21 'The LORD always does right,
and so he wanted his Law
to be greatly praised.'
- 22 But his people were trapped
and imprisoned in holes
with no one to rescue them.
All they owned had been taken,
and no one was willing
to give it back.
- 23 Why won't his people
ever learn to listen?
- 24 Israel sinned and refused
to obey the LORD
or follow his instructions.
So the LORD let them be robbed
of everything they owned.
- 25 He was furious with them
and punished their nation
with the fires of war.
Still they paid no attention.
They didn't even care
when they were surrounded
and scorched by flames.

The LORD Has Rescued His People

- 43 Descendants of Jacob,
I, the LORD, created you
and formed your nation.
Israel, don't be afraid.
I have rescued you.
I have called you by name;
now you belong to me.
- 2 When you cross deep rivers,
I will be with you,
and you won't drown.
When you walk through fire,
you won't be burned
or scorched by the flames.
- 3 I am the LORD, your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
the God who saves you.
I gave up Egypt, Ethiopia,[▷]
and the region of Seba
in exchange for you.
- 4 To me, you are very dear,
and I love you.
That's why I gave up nations
and people to rescue you.
- 5 Don't be afraid! I am with you.
From both east and west
I will bring you together.
- 6 I will say to the north
and to the south,
'Free my sons and daughters!
Let them return
from distant lands.
- 7 They are my people—
I created each of them
to bring honor to me."

The LORD Alone Is God

The LORD said:

- 8 Bring my people together.
They have eyes and ears,
but they can't see or hear.
- 9 Tell everyone of every nation
to gather around.
None of them can honestly say,
"We told you so!"
If someone heard them say this,
then tell us about it now.
- 10 My people, you are my witnesses
and my chosen servant.
I want you to know me,

to trust me, and understand
that I alone am God.
I have always been God;
there can be no others.

- 11 I alone am the LORD;
only I can rescue you.
12 I promised to save you,
and I kept my promise.
You are my witnesses
that no other god did this.
I, the LORD, have spoken.
13 I am God now and forever.
No one can snatch you from me
or stand in my way.

The LORD Will Prepare the Way

- 14 I, the LORD, will rescue you!
I am Israel's holy God,
and this is my promise:
For your sake, I will send
an army against Babylon
to drag its people away,
crying as they go.▷
15 I am the LORD, your holy God,
Israel's Creator and King.
16 I am the one who cut a path
through the mighty ocean.
17 I sent an army to chase you
with chariots and horses;
now they lie dead,
unable to move.
They are like an oil lamp
with the flame snuffed out.

Forget the Past

The LORD said:

- 18 Forget what happened long ago!
Don't think about the past.
19 I am creating something new.
There it is! Do you see it?
I have put roads in deserts,
streams▷ in thirsty lands.
20 Every wild animal honors me,
even jackals and owls.
I provide water in deserts—
streams in thirsty lands
for my chosen people.
21 I made them my own nation,
so they would praise me.
22 I, the LORD, said to Israel:

- You have become weary,
but not from worshipping me.
23 You have not honored me
by sacrificing sheep
or other animals.
And I have not burdened you
with demands for sacrifices
or sweet-smelling incense.
24 You have not brought
delicious spices for me
or given me the best part
of your sacrificed animals.
Instead, you burden me down
with your terrible sins.
25 But I wipe away your sins
because of who I am.
And so, I will forget
the wrongs you have done.
26 Meet me in court!
State your case and prove
that you are right.
27 Your earliest ancestor
and all of your leaders
rebelled against me.
28 That's why I don't allow
your priests to serve me;
I let Israel be destroyed
and your people disgraced.

The LORD's Promise to Israel

- 44** People of Israel,
I have chosen you
as my servant.
2 I am your Creator.
You were in my care
even before you were born.
Israel, don't be terrified!
You are my chosen servant,
my very favorite.▷
3 I will bless the thirsty land
by sending streams of water;
I will bless your descendants
by giving them my Spirit.
4 They will spring up 'like grass'
or like willow trees
near flowing streams.
5 They will worship me
and become my people.
They will write my name
on the back of their hands.

- 6 I am the LORD All-Powerful,
the first and the last,
the one and only God.
Israel, I have rescued you!
I am your King.
- 7 Can anyone compare with me?
If so, let them speak up
and tell me now.
‘Let them say what has happened
since I made my nation
long ago,
and let them tell
what is going to happen.’¹
- 8 Don’t tremble with fear!
Didn’t I tell you long ago?
Didn’t you hear me?
I alone am God—
no one else is a mighty rock.▷

Idols Can’t Do a Thing

The LORD said:

- 9 Those people who make idols
are nothing themselves,
and the idols they treasure
are just as worthless.
Worshippers of idols are blind,
stupid, and foolish.
- 10 Why make an idol or an image
that can’t do a thing?
- 11 Everyone who makes idols
and all who worship them
are mere humans,
who will end up
sadly disappointed.
Let them face me in court
and be terrified.

Idols and Firewood

- 12 A metalworker shapes an idol
‘by using a hammer’
and heat from the fire.
In his powerful hand
he holds a hammer,
as he pounds the metal
into the proper shape.
But he gets hungry and thirsty
and loses his strength.
- 13 Some woodcarver measures
a piece of wood,
then draws an outline.
The idol is carefully carved
with each detail exact.

- At last it looks like a person
and is placed in a temple.
- 14 Either cedar, cypress, oak,
or any tree from the forest
may be chosen.
Or even a pine tree planted
by the woodcarver
and watered by the rain.
- 15 Some of the wood is used
to make a fire for heating
or for cooking.
One piece is made into an idol,
then the woodcarver bows down
and worships it.
- 16 He enjoys the warm fire
and the meat that was roasted
over the burning coals.
- 17 Afterwards, he bows down
to worship the wooden idol.
‘Protect me!’ he says.
‘You are my god.’

18 Those who worship idols are stupid and blind! 19 They don’t have enough sense to say to themselves, ‘I made a fire with half of the wood and cooked my bread and meat on it. Then I made something worthless with the other half. Why worship a block of wood?’

20 ‘How can anyone be stupid enough to trust something that can be burned to ashes?’ No one can save themselves like that. Don’t they realize that the idols they hold in their hands are not really gods?

The LORD Won’t Forget His People

- 21 People of Israel,
you are my servant,
so remember all of this.
Israel, I created you,
and you are my servant.
‘I won’t forget you.’
- 22 Turn back to me!
I have rescued you
and swept away your sins
as though they were clouds.

Sing Praises to the LORD

- 23 Tell the heavens and the earth
to start singing!
Tell the mountains
and every tree in the forest
to join in the song!

The LORD has rescued his people;
now they will worship him.

The LORD Created Everything

- ²⁴ Israel, I am your LORD.
I am your source of life,
and I have rescued you.
I created everything
from the sky above
to the earth below.
- ²⁵ I make liars of false prophets
and fools of fortunetellers.
I take human wisdom
and turn it into nonsense.
- ²⁶ I will make the message
of my prophets come true.
They are saying, "Jerusalem
will be filled with people,
and the LORD will rebuild
the towns of Judah."
- ²⁷ I am the one who commands
the sea and its streams
to run dry.
- ²⁸ I am also the one who says,
"Cyrus will lead my people
and obey my orders.
Jerusalem and the temple
will be rebuilt."

Cyrus Obeys the LORD's Commands

45

The LORD said to Cyrus,
his chosen one:

- I have taken hold
of your right hand
to help you capture nations
and remove kings from power.
City gates will open for you;
not one will stay closed.
- ² As I lead you,
I will level mountains[▷]
and break the iron bars
on bronze gates of cities.
- ³ I will give you treasures
hidden in dark
and secret places.
Then you will know that I,
the LORD God of Israel,
have called you by name.
- ⁴ Cyrus, you don't even know me!
'But I have called you by name
and highly honored you'

because of Israel,
my chosen servant.

- ⁵ Only I am the LORD!
There are no other gods.
I have made you strong,
though you don't know me.
- ⁶ Now everyone from east to west
will learn that I am the LORD.
No other gods are real.
- ⁷ I create light and darkness,
happiness and sorrow.
I, the LORD, do all of this.
- ⁸ Tell the heavens
to send down justice
like showers of rain.
'Prepare the earth
for my saving power
to sprout and produce justice
that I, the LORD, create.'

The LORD's Mighty Power

The LORD said:

- ⁹ Israel, you have no right
to argue with your Creator.
You are merely a clay pot
shaped by a potter.
The clay doesn't ask,
'Why did you make me this way?
Where are the handles?'
- ¹⁰ Children don't have the right
to demand of their parents,
'What have you done
to make us what we are?'
- ¹¹ I am the LORD, the Creator,
the holy God of Israel.
Do you dare question me
about my own nation
or about what I have done?
- ¹² I created the world
and covered it with people;
I stretched out the sky
and filled it with stars.
- ¹³ I have done the right thing
by placing Cyrus in power,
and I will make the roads easy
for him to follow.
I am the LORD All-Powerful!
Cyrus will rebuild my city
and set my people free
without being paid a thing.
I, the LORD, have spoken.

The LORD Alone Can Save

- ¹⁴ My people, I, the LORD, promise
that the riches of Egypt
and the treasures of Ethiopia[>]
will belong to you.
You will force into slavery
those tall people of Seba.
They will bow down and say,
"The only true God is with you;
there are no other gods."
¹⁵ People of Israel,
your God is a mystery,
though he alone can save.
¹⁶ Anyone who makes idols
will be confused
and terribly disgraced.
¹⁷ But Israel, I, the LORD,
will always keep you safe
and free from shame.

Everyone Is Invited

- ¹⁸ The LORD alone is God!
He created the heavens
and made a world
where people can live,
instead of creating
an empty desert.
The LORD alone is God;
there are no others.
¹⁹ The LORD did not speak
in a dark secret place
or command Jacob's descendants
to search for him in vain.
The LORD speaks the truth,
and this is what he says
²⁰ to every survivor
from every nation:
"Gather around me!
Learn how senseless it is
to worship wooden idols
or pray to helpless gods."
²¹ "Why don't you get together
and meet me in court?
Didn't I tell you long ago
what would happen?
I am the only God!
There are no others.
I bring about justice,
and have the power to save."
²² I invite the whole world
to turn to me and be saved.

I alone am God!

- No others are real.
²³ I have made a solemn promise,
one that won't be broken:
Everyone will bow down
and worship me.
²⁴ They will admit that I alone
can bring about justice.
Everyone who is angry with me
will be terribly ashamed
and will turn to me.
²⁵ I, the LORD, will give
victory and great honor
to the people of Israel."

Babylonia's Gods Are Helpless

The LORD said:

- 46** The gods Bel and Nebo
are down on their knees,
¹ as wooden images of them
are carried away
on weary animals.
² They are down on their knees
to rescue the heavy load,
but the images are still taken
to a foreign country.
³ You survivors in Israel,
listen to me, the LORD.
Since the day you were born,
I have carried you along.
⁴ I will still be the same
when you are old and gray,
and I will take care of you.
I created you. I will carry you
and always keep you safe.
⁵ Can anyone compare with me?
Is anyone my equal?
⁶ Some people hire a goldsmith
and give silver and gold
to be formed into an idol
for them to worship.
⁷ They carry the idol
on their shoulders,
then put it on a stand,
but it cannot move.
They call out to the idol
when they are in trouble,
but it doesn't answer,
and it cannot help.
⁸ "Now keep this in mind,"

you sinful people.
And don't ever forget it.

The LORD Alone Is God

- ⁹ I alone am God!
There are no other gods;
no one is like me.
Think about what happened
many years ago.
- ¹⁰ From the very beginning,
I told what would happen
long before it took place.
I kept my word ¹¹ and brought
someone from a distant land
to do what I wanted.
He attacked from the east,
like a hawk swooping down.
Now I will keep my promise
and do what I planned.
- ¹² You people are stubborn
and far from being safe,
so listen to me.
- ¹³ I will soon come to save you.
I am not far away
and will waste no time;
I take pride in Israel
and will save Jerusalem.

Babylon Will Fall

The LORD said:

- 47** City of Babylon,
You are delicate
and untouched,
but that will change.
Surrender your royal power
and sit in the dirt.
- ² Start grinding grain!
Take off your veil.
Strip off your fancy clothes
and cross over rivers.
- ³ You will suffer the shame
of going naked,
because I will take revenge,
and no one can escape.▷
- ⁴ I am the LORD All-Powerful,
the holy God of Israel.
I am their Savior.
- ⁵ Babylon, be silent!
Sit in the dark.
No longer will nations
accept you as their queen.
- ⁶ I was angry with my people.
So I let you take their land
and bring disgrace on them.
You showed them no mercy,
but were especially cruel
to those who were old.
- ⁷ You thought that you
would be queen forever.
You didn't care what you did;
it never entered your mind
that you might get caught.
- ⁸ You think that you alone
are all-powerful,
that you won't be a widow
or lose your children.
All you care about is pleasure,
but listen to what I say.
- ⁹ Your magic powers and charms
will suddenly fail,
then you will be a widow
and lose your children.
- ¹⁰ You hid behind evil
like a shield and said,
"No one can see me!"
You were fooled by your wisdom
and your knowledge;
you felt sure that you alone
were in full control.
- ¹¹ But without warning,
disaster will strike—
and your magic charms
won't help at all.
- ¹² Keep using your magic powers
and your charms
as you have always done.
Maybe—just maybe—
you will frighten somebody!
- ¹³ You have worn yourself out,
asking for advice
from those who study the stars
and tell the future
month after month.
Go ask them how to be saved
from what will happen.
- ¹⁴ People who trust the stars
are as helpless as straw
in a flaming fire.
No one can even keep warm,▷
sitting by a fire
that feeds only on straw.

15 These are the fortunetellers
you have done business with
all of your life.
But they don't know
where they are going,
and they can't save you.

The LORD Corrects His People

48

People of Israel,
you come from Jacob's family
and the tribe[▷] of Judah.
You claim to worship me,
the LORD God of Israel,
but you are lying.
2 You call Jerusalem your home
and say you depend on me,
the LORD All-Powerful,
the God of Israel.
3 Long ago I announced
what was going to be,
then without warning,
I made it happen.
4 I knew you were stubborn
and hardheaded.
5 And I told you these things,
so that when they happened
you would not say,
"The idols we worship did this."
6 You heard what I said,
and you have seen it happen.
Now admit that it's true!
I will show you secrets
you have never known.
7 Today I am doing something new,
something you cannot say
you have heard before.
8 You have never been willing
to listen to what I say;
from the moment of your birth,
I knew you would rebel.

The LORD Warns Israel

9 I, the LORD, am true to myself;
I will be praised for not punishing
and destroying you.
10 I tested you in hard times
just as silver is refined
in a heated furnace.¹
11 I did this because of who I am.
'I refuse to be dishonored'
or share my praise
with any other god.

12 Israel, my chosen people,
listen to me.
I alone am the LORD,
the first and the last.
13 With my own hand
I created the earth
and stretched out the sky.
They obey my every command.

The LORD Speaks to the Nations

14 Gather around me, all of you!
Listen to what I say.
Did any of your idols
predict this would happen?
Did they say that my friend
would do what I want done
to Babylonian?²
15 I was the one who chose him.
I have brought him this far,
and he will be successful.
16 Come closer and listen!
I have never kept secret
the things I have said,
and I was here
before time began.

It Is Best To Obey the LORD

By the power of his Spirit
the LORD God has sent me
17 with this message:
People of Israel,
I am the holy LORD God,
the one who rescues you.
For your own good,
I teach you, and I lead you
along the right path.
18 How I wish that you
had obeyed my commands!
Your success and good fortune
would then have overflowed
like a flooding river.
19 Your nation would be blessed
with more people
than there are grains of sand
along the seashore.
And I would never have let
your country be destroyed.
20 Now leave Babylon!
Celebrate as you go.
Be happy and shout
for everyone to hear,

"The LORD has rescued
his servant Israel!

- 21 He led us through the desert
and made water flow from a rock
to satisfy our thirst.
22 But the LORD has promised
that none who are evil
will live in peace."

The Work of the LORD's Servant

- 49** Everyone, listen,
even you foreign nations
across the sea.
The LORD chose me
and gave me a name
before I was born.
2 He made my words pierce
like a sharp sword
or a pointed arrow;
he kept me safely hidden
in the palm of his hand.
3 The LORD said to me,
"Israel, you are my servant;
and because of you
I will be highly honored."
4 I said to myself,
"I'm completely worn out;
my time has been wasted.
But I did it for the LORD God,
and he will reward me."
5 Even before I was born,
the LORD God chose me
to serve him and to lead back
the people of Israel.
So the LORD has honored me
and made me strong.
6 Now the LORD says to me,
"It isn't enough for you
to be merely my servant.
You must do more than lead back
survivors from the tribes
of Israel.
I have placed you here as a light
for other nations;
you must take my saving power
to everyone on earth."

The LORD Will Rescue His People

- 7 Israel, I am the holy LORD God,
the one who rescues you.

"You are slaves of rulers
and of a nation
who despises you."

Now this is what I promise:
Kings and rulers will honor you
by kneeling at your feet.
You can trust me! I am your LORD,
the holy God of Israel,
and you are my chosen ones.

The LORD Will Lead His People Home

- 8 This is what the LORD says:
I will answer your prayers
because I have set a time
when I will help
by coming to save you.
I have chosen you
to take 'my promise of hope
to other nations.'
You will rebuild the country
from its ruins,
then people will come
and settle there.
9 You will set prisoners free
from dark dungeons
to see the light of day.
On their way home,
they will find plenty to eat,
even on barren hills.
10 They won't go hungry
or get thirsty;
they won't be bothered
by the scorching sun
or hot desert winds.
I will be merciful
while leading them along
to streams of water.
11 I will level the mountains
and make roads.
12 Then my people will return
from distant lands
in the north and the west
and from the city of Syene.▷

The LORD's Mercy

- 13 Tell the heavens and the earth
to celebrate and sing;
command every mountain
to join in the song.
The LORD's people have suffered,
but he has shown mercy
and given them comfort.

- 14 The people of Zion said,
"The LORD has turned away
and forgotten us."
- 15 The LORD answered,
"Could a mother forget a child
who nurses at her breast?
Could she fail to love an infant
who came from her own body?
Even if a mother could forget,
I will never forget you."
- 16 A picture of your city
is drawn on my hand.
You are always in my thoughts!
- 17 "Your city will be built faster
than it was destroyed" —
those who attacked it
will retreat and leave.
- 18 Look around! You will see
your people coming home.
As surely as I live,
I, the LORD, promise
that your city with its people
will be as lovely as a bride
wearing her jewelry."

Jerusalem's Bright Future

- 19 Jerusalem is now in ruins!
Nothing is left of the city.
But it will be rebuilt
and soon overcrowded;
its cruel enemies
will be gone far away.
- 20 Jerusalem is a woman
whose children were born
while she was in deep sorrow
over the loss of her husband.
Now those children
will come and seek room
in the crowded city,
- 21 and Jerusalem will ask,
"Am I really their mother?
How could I have given birth
when I was still mourning
in a foreign land?
Who raised these children?
Where have they come from?"
- 22 The LORD God says:
"I will soon give a signal
for the nations

- to return your sons
and your daughters
to the arms of Jerusalem.
- 23 The kings and queens
of those nations
where they were raised
will come and bow down.
They will take care of you
just like a slave
taking care of a child.
Then you will know
that I am the LORD.
You won't be disappointed
if you trust me."

The LORD Is on Our Side

- 24 Is it possible to rescue victims
from someone strong
and cruel?>
- 25 But the LORD has promised
to fight on our side
and to rescue our children
from those strong
and violent enemies.
- 26 He will make those cruel people
dine on their own flesh
and get drunk from drinking
their own blood.
Then everyone will know
that the LORD is our Savior;
the powerful God of Israel
has rescued his people.

The LORD's Power To Punish

- 50** The LORD says, "Children,
I didn't divorce your mother
or sell you to pay debts;
I divorced her and sold you
because of your sins.
- 2 I came and called out,
but you didn't answer.
Have I lost my power
to rescue and save?
At my command oceans and rivers
turn into deserts;
fish rot and stink
for lack of water.
- 3 I make the sky turn dark
like the sackcloth
you wear at funerals."

God's Servant Must Suffer

- 4 The LORD God gives me
the right words
to encourage the weary.
Each morning he awakens me
eager to learn his teaching;
- 5 he made me willing to listen
and not rebel or run away.
- 6 I let them beat my back
and pull out my beard.
I didn't turn aside
when they insulted me
and spit in my face.
- 7 But the LORD God keeps me
from being disgraced.
So I refuse to give up,
because I know
God will never let me down.
- 8 My protector is nearby;
no one can stand here
to accuse me of wrong.
- 9 The LORD God will help me
and prove I am innocent.
My accusers will wear out
like moth-eaten clothes.
- 10 None of you respect the LORD
or obey his servant.
You walk in the dark
instead of the light;
you don't trust the name
of the LORD your God.¹
- 11 Go ahead and walk in the light
of the fires you have set.¹
But with his own hand,
the LORD will punish you
and make you suffer.

The LORD Will Bring Comfort

- 51 If you want to do right
and obey the LORD,
follow Abraham's example.
He was the rock from which
you were chipped.
- 2 God chose Abraham and Sarah
to be your ancestors.
The LORD blessed Abraham,
and from that one man
came many descendants.
- 3 Though Zion is in ruins,
the LORD will bring comfort,
and the city will be as lovely

as the garden of Eden
that he provided.
Then Zion will celebrate;
it will be thankful
and sing joyful songs.

The LORD's Victory Will Last

- 4 The LORD says:
You are my people and nation!
So pay attention to me.
My teaching will cause justice
to shine like a light
for every nation.
- 5 Those who live across the sea
are eagerly waiting
for me to rescue them.
I am strong and ready;
soon I will come to save
and to rule all nations.
- 6 Look closely at the sky!
Stare at the earth.
The sky will vanish like smoke;
the earth will wear out
like clothes.
Everyone on this earth
will die like flies.
But my victory will last;
my saving power never ends.
- 7 If you want to do right
and to obey my teaching
with all your heart,
then pay close attention.
Don't be discouraged
when others insult you
and say hurtful things.
- 8 They will be eaten away
like a moth-eaten coat.
But my victory will last;
my saving power
will never end.

A Prayer for the LORD's Help

- 9 Wake up! Do something, LORD.
Be strong and ready.
Wake up! Do what you did
for our people long ago.
Didn't you chop up
Rahab the monster?
- 10 Didn't you dry up the deep sea
and make a road for your people
to follow safely across?

11 Now those you have rescued
will return to Jerusalem,
singing on their way.
They will be crowned
with great happiness,
never again to be burdened
with sadness and sorrow.

The LORD Gives Hope

12 I am the LORD, the one
who encourages you.
Why are you afraid
of mere humans?
They dry up and die like grass.

13 I spread out the heavens
and laid foundations
for the earth.
But you have forgotten me,
your LORD and Creator.
All day long you were afraid
of those who were angry
and hoped to abuse you.
Where are they now?

14 Everyone crying out in pain
will be quickly set free;
they will be rescued
from the power of death
and never go hungry.

15 I will help them
because I am your God,
the LORD All-Powerful,
who makes the ocean roar.

16 I have told you what to say,
and I will keep you safe
in the palm of my hand.
I spread out the heavens
and laid foundations
for the earth.
Now I say, "Jerusalem,
your people are mine."

A Warning to Jerusalem

17 Jerusalem, wake up! Stand up!
You've drunk too much
from the cup filled
with the LORD's anger.
You have swallowed every drop,
and you can't walk straight.

18 Not one of your many children
is there to guide you
or to offer a helping hand.

19 You have been destroyed
by war and by famine;
'I cannot comfort you.'
20 The LORD your God is angry,
and on every street corner
your children lie helpless,
like deer trapped in nets.

21 You are in trouble and drunk,
but not from wine.
So pay close attention
22 to the LORD your God,
who defends you and says,
'I have taken from your hands
the cup filled with my anger
that made you drunk.
You will never be forced
to drink it again.
23 Instead I will give it
to your brutal enemies,
who treated you like dirt
and walked all over you.'

Jerusalem Can Celebrate

52 Jerusalem, wake up!
Stand up and be strong.
Holy city of Zion,
dress in your best clothes.
Those foreigners who ruined
your sacred city
won't bother you again.
2 Zion, rise from the dirt!
Free yourself from the rope
around your neck.

Suffering Will End

3 The LORD says:
My people, you were sold,
but not for money;
now you will be set free,
but not for a payment.
4 Long ago you went to Egypt
where you lived
as foreigners.
Then Assyria was cruel to you,
5 and now another nation
has taken you prisoner
for no reason at all.
Your leaders 'groan with pain,'
and day after day
my own name is cursed.

6 My people, you will learn
who I am and who is speaking
because I am here.

A Message of Hope for Jerusalem

- 7 What a beautiful sight!
On the mountains a messenger
announces to Jerusalem,
“Good news! You’re saved.
There will be peace.
Your God is now King.”
- 8 Everyone on guard duty,
sing and celebrate!
Look! You can see the LORD
returning to Zion.
- 9 Jerusalem, rise from the ruins!
Join in the singing.
The LORD has given comfort
to his people;
he comes to your rescue.
- 10 The LORD has shown all nations
his mighty strength;
now everyone will see
the saving power of our God.

A Command To Leave Babylon

- 11 Leave the city of Babylon!
Don’t touch anything filthy.
Wash yourselves. Be ready
to carry back everything sacred
that belongs to the LORD.
- 12 You won’t need to run.
No one is chasing you.
The LORD God of Israel
will lead and protect you
from enemy attacks.

The Suffering Servant

- 13 The LORD says:
My servant will succeed!
He will be given great praise
and the highest honors.
- 14 “Many were horrified
at what happened to him.▷
But everyone who saw him
was even more horrified
because he suffered until
he no longer looked human.”
- 15 My servant will make
nations worthy to worship me;▷
“kings will be silent
as they bow in wonder.”

They will see and think about
things they have never seen
or thought about before.

What God’s Servant Did for Us

53

- Has anyone believed us
or seen the mighty power
of the LORD in action?
- 2 Like a young plant or a root
that sprouts in dry ground,
the servant grew up
obeying the LORD.
He wasn’t some handsome king.
Nothing about the way he looked
made him attractive to us.
- 3 He was hated and rejected;
his life was filled with sorrow
and terrible suffering.
No one wanted to look at him.
We despised him and said,
“He is a nobody!”
- 4 He suffered and endured
great pain for us,
but we thought his suffering
was punishment from God.
- 5 He was wounded and crushed
because of our sins;
by taking our punishment,
he made us completely well.
- 6 All of us were like sheep
that had wandered off.
We had each gone our own way,
but the LORD gave him
the punishment we deserved.
- 7 He was painfully abused,
but he did not complain.
He was silent like a lamb
being led to the butcher,
as quiet as a sheep
having its wool cut off.
- 8 He was condemned to death
without a fair trial.
Who could have imagined
what would happen to him?
His life was taken away
because of the sinful things
my people▷ had done.
- 9 He wasn’t dishonest or violent,
“but he was buried in a tomb
of cruel and rich people.”

- 10 The LORD decided his servant
would suffer as a sacrifice
to take away the sin
and guilt of others.
Now the servant will live
to see his own descendants.¹
He did everything
the LORD had planned.
- 11 By suffering, the servant
will learn the true meaning
of obeying the LORD.
Although he is innocent,
he will take the punishment
for the sins of others,
so that many of them
will no longer be guilty.
- 12 The LORD will reward him
with honor and power
for sacrificing his life.
Others thought he was a sinner,
but he suffered for our sins
and asked God to forgive us.

A Promise of the LORD's Protection

54

- Sing and shout,
even though you have never
had children!
The LORD has promised that you
will have more children
than someone married
for a long time.
- 2 Make your tents larger!
Spread out the tent pegs;
fasten them firmly.
- 3 You and your descendants
will take over the land
of other nations.
You will settle in towns
that are now in ruins.
- 4 Don't be afraid or ashamed
and don't be discouraged.
You won't be disappointed.
Forget how sinful you were
when you were young;
stop feeling ashamed
for being left a widow.
- 5 The LORD All-Powerful,
the Holy God of Israel,
rules all the earth.
He is your Creator and husband,
and he will rescue you.

- 6 You were like a young wife,
brokenhearted and crying
because her husband
had divorced her.
But the LORD your God says,
"I am taking you back!
7 I rejected you for a while,
but with love and tenderness
I will embrace you again.
8 For a while, I turned away
in furious anger.
Now I will have mercy
and love you forever!
I, your protector and LORD,
make this promise."

The LORD Promises Lasting Peace

- 9 I once promised Noah that I
would never again destroy
the earth by a flood.
Now I have promised that I
will never again get angry
and punish you.
- 10 Every mountain and hill
may disappear.
But I will always be kind
and merciful to you;
I won't break my agreement
to give your nation peace.

The New Jerusalem

- 11 Jerusalem, you are sad
and discouraged,
tossed around in a storm.
But I, the LORD,
will rebuild your city
"with precious stones;"
for your foundation
I will use blue sapphires.
- 12 Your "fortresses"
will be built of rubies,
your gates of jewels,
and your walls of gems.
- 13 I will teach your children
and make them successful.
- 14 You will be built on fairness
with no fears of injustice;
every one of your worries
will be taken far from you.
- 15 I will never send anyone
to attack your city,

and you will make prisoners
of those who do attack.

¹⁶ Don't forget that I created
metalworkers who make weapons
over burning coals.

I also created armies
that can bring destruction.

¹⁷ Weapons made to attack you
won't be successful;
words spoken against you
won't hurt at all.

My servants, Jerusalem is yours!
I, the LORD, promise
to bless you with victory.

The LORD's Invitation

55

If you are thirsty,
come and drink water!
If you don't have any money,
come, eat what you want!

Drink wine and milk
without paying a cent.

² Why waste your money
on what really isn't food?
Why work hard for something
that doesn't satisfy?

Listen carefully to me,
and you will enjoy
the very best foods.

³ Pay close attention!
Come to me and live.

I will promise you
the eternal love and loyalty
that I promised David.

⁴ I made him the leader and ruler
of the nations;
he was my witness to them.

⁵ You will call out to nations
you have never known.
And they have never known you,
but they will come running
because I am the LORD,
the holy God of Israel,
and I have honored you.

God's Words Are Powerful

⁶ Turn to the LORD!
He can still be found.
Call out to God! He is near.

⁷ Give up your crooked ways
and your evil thoughts.
Return to the LORD our God.

He will be merciful
and forgive your sins.

⁸ The LORD says:
"My thoughts and my ways
are not like yours.

⁹ Just as the heavens
are higher than the earth,
my thoughts and my ways
are higher than yours.

¹⁰ "Rain and snow fall from the sky.
But they don't return
without watering the earth
that produces seeds to plant
and grain to eat.

¹¹ That's how it is with my words.
They don't return to me
without doing everything
I send them to do."

God's People Will Celebrate

¹² When you are set free,
you will celebrate
and travel home in peace.
Mountains and hills will sing
as you pass by,
and trees will clap.

¹³ Cypress and myrtle trees
will grow in fields
once covered by thorns.
And then those trees will stand
as a lasting witness
to the glory of the LORD.

All Nations Will Be Part of God's People

56

The LORD said:
Be honest and fair!
Soon I will come to save you;
my saving power will be seen
everywhere on earth.

² I will bless everyone
who respects the Sabbath
and refuses to do wrong.

³ Foreigners who worship me
must not say,
"The LORD won't let us
be part of his people."
Men who are unable
to become fathers
must no longer say,
"We are dried-up trees."

- 4 To them, I, the LORD, say:
Respect the Sabbath,
obey me completely,
and keep our agreement.
- 5 Then I will set up monuments
in my temple with your names
written on them.
This will be much better
than having children,
because these monuments
will stand there forever.
- 6 Foreigners will follow me.
They will love me and worship
in my name;
they will respect the Sabbath
and keep our agreement.
- 7 I will bring them
to my holy mountain,
where they will celebrate
in my house of worship.
Their sacrifices and offerings
will always be welcome
on my altar.
Then my house will be known
as a house of worship
for all nations.
- 8 I, the LORD, promise
to bring together my people
who were taken away,
and let them join the others.

God Promises To Punish Israel's Leaders

- 9 Come from the forest,
you wild animals!
Attack and gobble down
your victims.
- 10 You leaders of Israel
should be watchdogs,
protecting my people.
But you can't see a thing,
and you never warn them.
Dozing and daydreaming
are all you ever do.
- 11 You stupid leaders are a pack
of hungry and greedy dogs
that never get enough.
You are shepherds
who mistreat your own sheep
for selfish gain.
- 12 You say to each other,

"Let's drink till we're drunk!
Tomorrow we'll do it again.
We'll really enjoy ourselves."

God's Faithful People Suffer

- 57 God's faithful people
are dragged off and killed,
and no one even cares.
"Evil sweeps them away,
2 but in death they find peace
for obeying God."

The LORD Condemns Idolatry

- 3 You people are unfaithful!
You go to fortunetellers,
and you worship idols.
Now pay close attention!
- 4 Who are you making fun of?
Who are you sneering at?
Look how your sins
have made fools of you.
- 5 All you think about is sex
under those green trees
where idols are worshiped.
You sacrifice your children
on altars built in valleys
under rocky slopes.
- 6 "You have chosen to worship
idols made of stone;"
you have given them offerings
of wine and grain.
Should I be pleased?
- 7 You have spread out your beds
on the tops of high mountains,
where you sacrifice to idols.
- 8 "Even in your homes
you have placed pagan symbols
all around your huge beds.
Yes, you have rejected me,
sold yourselves to your lovers,
and gone to bed with them."
- 9 You smear on olive oil
and all kinds of perfume
to worship the god Molech.▷
You even seek advice
from spirits of the dead.
- 10 Though you tired yourself out
by running after idols,
you refused to stop.
Your desires were so strong
that they kept you going.

- 11 Did you forget about me
and become unfaithful
because you were more afraid
of someone else?
Have I been silent 'so long'
that you no longer fear me?
- 12 You think you're so good,
but I'll point out the truth.
- 13 Ask your idols to save you
when you are in trouble.
Be careful though—
it takes only a faint breath
to blow them over.
But if you come to me
for protection,
this land and my holy mountain
will always belong to you.

The LORD Helps the Helpless

- 14 The LORD says,
"Clear the road!
Get it ready for my people."
- 15 Our holy God lives forever
in the highest heavens,
and this is what he says:
Though I live high above
in the holy place,
I am here to help those
who are humble
and depend only on me.
- 16 My people, I won't stay angry
and keep on accusing you.
After all, I am your Creator.
I don't want you to give up
in complete despair.
- 17 Your greed made me furious.
That's why I punished you
and refused to be found,
while you kept returning
to your old sinful ways.
- 18 I know what you are like!
But I will heal you, lead you,
and give you comfort,
'until those who are mourning'
start singing my praises.'
- 19 No matter where you are,
I, the LORD, will 'heal you'
and give you peace.
- 20 The wicked are a restless sea
tossing up mud.

- 21 But I, the LORD, have promised
that none who are evil
will live in peace.

True Religion

58

- Shout the message!
Don't hold back.
Say to my people Israel:
You've sinned! You've turned
against the LORD.
- 2 Day after day, you worship him
and seem eager to learn
his teachings.
You act like a nation
that wants to do right
by obeying his laws.
You ask him about justice,
and say you enjoy
worshiping the LORD.
- 3 You wonder why the LORD
pays no attention
when you go without eating
and act humble.
But on those same days
that you give up eating,
'you think only of yourselves'
and abuse your workers.
- 4 You even get angry
and ready to fight.
No wonder God won't listen
to your prayers!
- 5 Do you think the LORD
wants you to give up eating
and to act as humble
as a bent-over bush?
Or to dress in sackcloth
and sit in ashes?
Is this really what he wants
on a day of worship?
- 6 I'll tell you
what it really means
to worship the LORD.
Remove the chains of prisoners
who are chained unjustly.
Free those who are abused!
- 7 Share your food with everyone
who is hungry;
share your home
with the poor and homeless.
Give clothes to those in need;
don't turn away your relatives.

8 Then your light will shine
like the dawning sun, and you
will quickly be healed.
Your honesty^g will protect you
as you advance,
and the glory of the LORD
will defend you from behind.
9 When you beg the LORD for help,
he will answer, "Here I am!"

Don't mistreat others
or falsely accuse them
or say something cruel.

10 Give your food to the hungry
and care for the homeless.
Then your light will shine
in the dark;
your darkest hour will be
like the noonday sun.

11 The LORD will always guide you
and provide good things to eat
when you are in the desert.
He will make you healthy.
You will be like a garden
that has plenty of water
or like a stream
that never runs dry.

12 You will rebuild those houses
left in ruins for years;
you will be known
as a builder and repairer
of city walls and streets.

13 But first, you must start
respecting the Sabbath
as a joyful day of worship.
You must stop doing and saying
whatever you please
on this special day.

14 Then you will truly enjoy
knowing the LORD.
He will let you rule
from the highest mountains
and bless you with the land
of your ancestor Jacob.
The LORD has spoken!

2 Your sins are the roadblock
between you and your God.
That's why he doesn't answer
your prayers
or let you see his face.

3 Your talk is filled with lies
and plans for violence;
every finger on your hands
is covered with blood.

4 You falsely accuse others
and tell lies in court;
sin and trouble are the names
of your children.

5 You eat the deadly eggs
of poisonous snakes,
and more snakes crawl out
from the eggs left to hatch.

You weave spider webs,
6 but you can't make clothes
with those webs
or hide behind them.

You're sinful and brutal.

7 You hurry off to do wrong
or murder innocent victims.
All you think about is sin;
you leave ruin and destruction
wherever you go.

8 You don't know how
to live in peace
or to be fair with others.
The roads you make are crooked;
your followers cannot find peace.

The People Confess Their Sins

9 No one has come to defend us
or to bring about justice.
We hoped for a day of sunshine,
but all we found
was a dark, gloomy night.

10 We feel our way along,
as if we were blind;
we stumble at noon,
as if it were night.
'We can see no better
than someone dead.'

11 We growl like bears
and mourn like doves.
We hope for justice and victory,
but they escape us.

12 How often have we sinned

Social Injustice Is Condemned

59

The LORD hasn't lost
his powerful strength;
he can still hear
and answer prayers.

- and turned against you,
the LORD God?
Our sins condemn us!
We have done wrong.
- 13 We have rebelled and refused
to follow you.
Our hearts were deceitful,
and so we lied;
we planned to abuse others
and turn our backs on you.
- 14 Injustice is everywhere;
justice seems far away.
Truth is chased out of court;
honesty is shoved aside.
- 15 Everyone tells lies;
those who turn from crime
end up ruined.

The LORD Will Rescue His People

- When the LORD noticed
that justice had disappeared,
he became very displeased.
- 16 It disgusted him even more
to learn that no one
would do a thing about it.
So with his own powerful arm,
he won victories for truth.
- 17 Justice was the LORD's armor;
saving power was his helmet;
anger and revenge
were his clothes.
- 18 Now the LORD will get furious
and do to his enemies,
both near and far,
what they did to his people.
- 19 He will attack like a flood
in a mighty windstorm.
Nations in the west and the east
will then honor and praise
his wonderful name.
- 20 The LORD has promised to rescue
the city of Zion
and Jacob's descendants
who turn from sin.
- 21 The LORD says: "My people,
I promise to give you my Spirit
and my message.
These will be my gifts to you
and your families forever.
I, the LORD, have spoken."

A New Day for Jerusalem

- 60 Jerusalem, stand up! Shine!
Your new day is dawning.
The glory of the LORD
shines brightly on you.
- 2 The earth and its people
are covered with darkness,
but the glory of the LORD
is shining upon you.
- 3 Nations and kings
will come to the light
of your dawning day.

Crowds Are Coming to Jerusalem

The LORD said:

- 4 Open your eyes! Look around!
Crowds are coming.
Your sons are on their way
from distant lands;
your daughters are being carried
like little children.
- 5 When you see this,
your faces will glow;
your hearts will pound
and 'swell with pride.'
Treasures from across the sea
and the wealth of nations
will be brought to you.
- 6 Your country will be covered
with caravans of young camels
from Midian and Ephah.
The people of Sheba
will bring gold and spices
in praise of me, the LORD.
- 7 Every sheep of Kedar
will come to you;
rams from Nebaioth
will be yours as well.
I will accept them as offerings
and bring honor to my temple.
- 8 What is that sailing by
like clouds
or like doves flying home?
- 9 'On those distant islands
your people are waiting
for me, the LORD.'
Seagoing ships[▷] lead the way
to bring them home
with their silver and gold.
I, the holy LORD God of Israel,
do this to honor your people,
so they will honor me.

Jerusalem Will Be Rebuilt

The LORD said:

¹⁰ Jerusalem, your city walls
will be rebuilt by foreigners;
their rulers will become
your slaves.

I punished you in my anger;
now I will be kind
and treat you with mercy.

¹¹ Your gates will be open
day and night
to let the rulers of nations
lead their people to you
with all their treasures.

¹² Any nation or kingdom
that refuses to serve you
will be wiped out.

¹³ Wood from Lebanon's best trees
will be brought to you –
the pines, the firs,
and the cypress trees.
It will be used in my temple
to make beautiful the place
where I rest my feet.

¹⁴ The descendants of enemies
who hated and mistreated you
will kneel at your feet.
They will say, "You are Zion,
the city of the LORD,
the holy God of Israel."

¹⁵ You were hated and deserted,
rejected by everyone.
But I will make you beautiful,
a city to be proud of
for all time to come.

¹⁶ You will drain the wealth
of kings and foreign nations.
You will know that I,
the mighty LORD God of Israel,
have saved and rescued you.

¹⁷ I will bring bronze and iron
in place of wood and stone;
in place of bronze and iron,
I will bring gold and silver.
I will appoint peace and justice
as your rulers and leaders.

¹⁸ Violence, destruction, and ruin
will never again be heard of
within your borders.

"Victory" will be the name
you give to your walls;
"Praise" will be the name
you give to your gates.

¹⁹ You won't need the light
of the sun or the moon.

I, the LORD your God,
will be your eternal light
and bring you honor.

²⁰ Your sun will never set
or your moon go down.

I, the LORD, will be
your everlasting light,
and your days of sorrow
will come to an end.

²¹ Your people will live right
and always own the land;
they are the trees I planted
to bring praise to me.

²² Even the smallest family
will be a powerful nation.
I am the LORD,
and when the time comes,
I will quickly do all this.

The Good News of Victory

61 The Spirit of the LORD God
has taken control of me!
The LORD has chosen and sent me
to tell the oppressed
the good news,
to heal the brokenhearted,
and to announce freedom
for prisoners and captives.

² This is the year
when the LORD God
will show kindness to us
and punish our enemies.

The LORD has sent me
to comfort those who mourn,
³ especially in Jerusalem.
He sent me to give them flowers
in place of their sorrow,
olive oil in place of tears,
and joyous praise
in place of broken hearts.
They will be called
"Trees of Justice,"
planted by the LORD
to honor his name.

- 4 Then they will rebuild cities
that have been in ruins
for many generations.
- 5 They will hire foreigners
to take care of their sheep
and their vineyards.
- 6 But they themselves will be
priests and servants
of the LORD our God.
The treasures of the nations
will belong to them,
'and they will be famous.'
- 7 They were terribly insulted
and horribly mistreated;
now they will be greatly blessed
and joyful forever.

The LORD Loves Justice

- 8 I, the LORD, love justice!
'But I hate robbery
and injustice.'
My people, I solemnly promise
to reward you
with an eternal agreement.
- 9 Your descendants will be known
in every nation.
All who see them will realize
that they have been blessed,
by me, the LORD.

Celebrate and Shout

- 10 I celebrate and shout
because of my LORD God.
His saving power and justice
are the very clothes I wear.
They are more beautiful
than the jewelry worn
by a bride or a groom.
- 11 The LORD will bring about
justice and praise
in every nation on earth,
like flowers blooming
in a garden.

Jerusalem Will Be Saved

- 62** Jerusalem, I will speak up
for your good.
I will never be silent
till you are safe and secure,
sparkling like a flame.
- 2 Your great victory will be seen
by every nation and king;

- the LORD will even give you
a new name.
- 3 You will be a glorious crown,
a royal headband,
for the LORD your God.
- 4 Your name will no longer be
'Deserted and Childless,'
but 'Happily Married.'
You will please the LORD;
your country
will be his bride.
- 5 'Your people will take the land,'
just as a young man
takes a bride.
The LORD will be pleased
because of you,
just as a husband is pleased
with his bride.
- 6 Jerusalem, on your walls
I have stationed guards,
whose duty it is
to speak out day and night,
without resting.
They must remind the LORD
and not let him rest
till he makes Jerusalem strong
and famous everywhere.
- 8 The LORD has given his word
and made this promise:
'Never again will I give
to your enemies
the grain and grapes
for which you struggled.'
- 9 As surely as you harvest
your grain and grapes,
you will eat your bread
with thankful hearts,
and you will drink your wine
in my temple."
- 10 People of Jerusalem,
open your gates!
Repair the road to the city
and clear it of stones;
raise a banner to help
the nations find their way.
- 11 Here is what the LORD has said
for all the earth to hear:
'Soon I will come to save
the city of Zion,
and to reward you.

¹² Then you will be called,
 'The LORD's Own People,
 The Ones He Rescued!'
 Your city will be known
 as a good place to live
 and a city full of people."

The LORD's Victory over the Nations

63 Who is this coming
 from Bozrah in Edom
 with clothes stained red?
 Who is this hero marching
 in his glorious uniform?

"It's me, the LORD!
 I have won the battle,
 and I can save you!"

² What are those red spots?
 Your clothes look stained
 from trampling on grapes.

³ I alone stomped the grapes!
 None of the nations helped.
 I stomped nations in my anger
 and stained my clothes
 with their blood.

⁴ I did this because I wanted
 to take revenge—
 the time had come
 to rescue my people.

⁵ No one was there to help me
 or to give support;
 my mighty arm won the battle,
 strengthened by my anger.

⁶ In my fury I stomped on nations
 and made them drunk;
 their blood poured out
 everywhere on earth."

The LORD's Goodness to His People

⁷ I will tell about the kind deeds
 the LORD has done.
 They deserve praise!
 The LORD has shown mercy
 to the people of Israel;
 he has been kind and good.

⁸ The LORD rescued his people,
 and said, "They are mine.
 They won't betray me."

⁹ "It troubled the LORD
 to see them¹ in trouble,
 and his angel saved them.

The LORD was truly merciful,
 so he rescued his people.
 He took them in his arms
 and carried them all those years.

¹⁰ Then the LORD's people
 turned against him and made
 his Holy Spirit sad.
 So he became their enemy
 and attacked them.

¹¹ "But his people remembered
 what had happened
 during the time of Moses.¹
 Didn't the LORD² bring them
 and their leaders
 safely through the sea?
 Didn't he³ give them
 his Holy Spirit?"

¹² The glorious power of the LORD
 marched beside Moses.
 The LORD will be praised forever
 for dividing the sea.

¹³ He led his people across
 like horses running wild
 without stumbling.

¹⁴ "His Spirit gave them rest,
 just as cattle find rest
 when led into a valley.¹
 The name of the LORD was praised
 for doing these things.

A Prayer for Mercy and Help

¹⁵ Please, LORD, look down
 from your holy and glorious
 home in the heavens
 and see what's going on.
 Have you lost interest?
 Where is your power?
 Show that you care about us²
 and have mercy!

¹⁶ Our ancestors Abraham and Jacob
 have both rejected us.
 But you are still our Father;
 you have been our protector
 since ancient times.

¹⁷ Why did you make us turn away
 from you, our LORD?
 Why did you make us want
 to disobey you?
 Please change your mind!
 We are your servants,
 your very own people.

18 'For a little while,
your temple belonged to us;¹
and now our enemies
have torn it down.

19 We act as though you
had never ruled us
or called us your people.

64 Rip the heavens apart!
Come down, LORD;
make the mountains tremble.

2 'Be a spark that starts a fire
causing water to boil.'
Then your enemies will know
who you are;
all nations will tremble
because you are nearby.

3 Your fearsome deeds
have completely amazed us;
even the mountains shake
when you come down.

4 You are the only God
ever seen or heard of
who works miracles
for his followers.

5 'You help all who gladly obey
and do what you want,
but sin makes you angry.
Only by your help
can we ever be saved.'

6 We are unfit to worship you;
each of our good deeds
is merely a filthy rag.
We dry up like leaves;
our sins are storm winds
sweeping us away.

7 No one worships in your name
or remains faithful.
You have turned your back on us
'and let our sins melt us away.'

8 You, LORD, are our Father.
We are nothing but clay,
but you are the potter
who molded us.

9 Don't be so furious
or keep our sins
in your thoughts forever!
Remember that all of us
are your people.

10 Every one of your towns
has turned into a desert,
especially Jerusalem.

11 Zion's glorious and holy temple
where our ancestors praised you
has been destroyed by fire.

Our beautiful buildings
are now a pile of ruins.

12 When you see these things,
how can you just sit there
and make us suffer more?

The LORD Will Punish the Guilty

65 I, the LORD, was ready
to answer even those
who were not asking
and to be found by those
who were not searching.
To a nation that 'refused
to worship me,'
I said, 'Here I am!'

2 All day long I have reached out
to stubborn and sinful people
going their own way.

3 They keep making me angry
by sneering at me,
while offering sacrifices
to idols in gardens
and burning incense
to them on bricks.

4 They spend their nights
hiding in burial caves;
they eat the meat of pigs,
cooked in sauces
made of stuff unfit to eat.

5 And then they say to others,
'Don't come near us!
We're dedicated to God.'
Such people are like smoke,
irritating my nose all day.

6 I have written this down;
I won't keep silent.
I'll pay them back
just as their sins deserve.

7 I, the LORD, will make them pay
for their sins and for those
of their ancestors—
they have disgraced me
by burning incense
on mountains.

8 Here is what the LORD says:
A cluster of grapes
that produces wine
is worth keeping!

- So, because of my servants,
I won't destroy everyone.
- 9 I have chosen the people
of Israel and Judah,
and I will bless them
with many descendants.
They will settle here
in this land of mountains,
and it will be theirs.
- 10 My people will worship me.
Then the coastlands of Sharon
and the land as far
as Achor Valley
will turn into pastureland
where cattle and sheep
will feed and rest.
- 11 What will I, the LORD, do
if any of you reject me
and my holy mountain?
What will happen to you
for offering food and wine
to the gods you call
"Good Luck" and "Fate"?
- 12 Your luck will end!
I will see to it that you
are slaughtered with swords.
You refused to answer
when I called out;
you paid no attention
to my instructions.
Instead, you did what I hated,
knowing it was wrong.
- 13 I, the LORD God, will give
food and drink to my servants,
and they will celebrate.
But all of you sinners
will go hungry and thirsty,
overcome with disgrace.
- 14 My servants will laugh and sing,
but you will be sad
and cry out in pain.
- 15 I, the LORD God, promise
to see that you are killed
and that my chosen servants use
your names as curse words.
'But I will give new names
to my servants.'
- 16 I am God! I can be trusted.
Your past troubles are gone;
I no longer think of them.
When you pray for someone

to receive a blessing,
or when you make a promise,
you must do it in my name.
I alone am the God
who can be trusted.

The LORD's New Creation

- 17 I am creating new heavens
and a new earth;
everything of the past
will be forgotten.
- 18 Celebrate and be glad forever!
I am creating a Jerusalem,
full of happy people.
- 19 I will celebrate with Jerusalem
and all of its people;
there will be no more crying
or sorrow in that city.
- 20 No child will die in infancy;
everyone will live
to a ripe old age.
Anyone a hundred years old
will be considered young,
and to die younger than that
will be considered a curse.
- 21 My people will live
in the houses they build;
they will enjoy grapes
from their own vineyards.
- 22 No one will take away
their homes or vineyards.
My chosen people will live
to be as old as trees,
and they will enjoy
what they have earned.
- 23 Their work won't be wasted,
and their children won't die
of dreadful diseases.
I will bless their children
and their grandchildren.
- 24 I will answer their prayers
before they finish praying.
- 25 Wolves and lambs
will graze together;
lions and oxen
will feed on straw.
Snakes will eat only dirt!
They won't bite or harm anyone
on my holy mountain.
I, the LORD, have spoken!

True Worship

66

The LORD said:

Heaven is my throne;
the earth is my footstool.What kind of house
could you build for me?
In what place will I rest?2 I have made everything;
'that's how it all came to be.'
I, the LORD, have spoken.The people I treasure most
are the humble—
they depend only on me
and tremble when I speak.3 You sacrifice oxen to me,
and you commit murder;
you sacrifice lambs to me
and dogs to other gods;
you offer grain to me
and pigs' blood to idols;
you burn incense to me
and praise your idols.▷You have made your own choice
to do these disgusting things
that you enjoy so much.4 You refused to answer
when I called out;
you paid no attention
to my instructions.
Instead, you did what I hated,
knowing it was wrong.
Now I will 'punish' you
in a way you dread the most.**The LORD Will Help Jerusalem**5 If you tremble
when the LORD speaks,
listen to what he says:
"Some of your own people hate
and reject you because of me.They make fun and say,
'Let the LORD show his power!
Let us see him
make you truly happy.'¹But those who say these things
will be terribly ashamed."6 Do you hear that noise
in the city and those shouts
coming from the temple?
It is the LORD shouting
as he punishes his enemies.7 Have you ever heard of a woman
who gave birth to a child
before having labor pains?8 Who ever heard of such a thing
or imagined it could happen?Can a nation be born in a day
or come to life in a second?Jerusalem is like a mother
who gave birth to her children
as soon as she was in labor.9 The LORD is the one
who makes birth possible.
And he will see that Zion
has many more children.
The LORD has spoken.10 If you love Jerusalem,
celebrate and shout!
If you were in sorrow
because of the city,
you can now be glad.11 She will nurse and comfort you,
just like your own mother,
until you are satisfied.
You will fully enjoy
her wonderful glory.12 The LORD has promised:
'I will flood Jerusalem
with the wealth of nations
and make the city prosper.
Zion will nurse you at her breast,
carry you in her arms,
and hold you in her lap.13 I will comfort you there
like a mother
comforting her child."14 When you see this happen,
you will celebrate;
your strength will return
faster than grass can sprout.
Then everyone will know
that the LORD is present
with his servants,
but he is angry
with his enemies.15 The LORD will come down
like a whirlwind
with his flaming chariots.
He will be terribly furious
and punish his enemies
with fire.

¹⁶ The LORD's fiery sword
will bring justice
everywhere on this earth
and execute many people.

A Threat and a Promise

¹⁷ Some of you get yourselves ready and go to a garden to worship a foreign goddess.¹ You eat the meat of pigs, lizards, and mice. But I, the LORD, will destroy you for this.

¹⁸ I know everything you do and think! The time has now come³ to bring together the people of every language and nation and to show them my glory ¹⁹ by proving what I can do.¹ I will send the survivors to Tarshish, Pul,² Lud, Meshech,² Tubal, Javan, and to the distant islands. I will send them to announce my wonderful glory to nations that have never heard about me.

Notes

*An asterisk preceding a verse number in a poetic passage of this book indicates that the contents of two or more verses have been joined together and rearranged beginning with the verse so marked.

Phrases enclosed in half square superscript brackets (¹) are those that are difficult to translate from the original Hebrew with great certainty. Consequently, the English rendering given should be understood as only one possible way of translating such texts.

- ▷ **1.1 message:** Or "vision."
- ▷ **1.17 and help those in need:** Or "and punish cruel people."
- ▷ **1.27 by showing justice:** Or "by my saving power."
- ▷ **1.31 Your ... idols:** Or "Your wealth will be like dry wood, set on fire by its owners."
- ▷ **2.1 message:** Or "vision."
- ▷ **2.16 seagoing ships:** The Hebrew text has "ships of Tarshish."
- ▷ **3.4 babies:** Or "worthless nobodies."
- ▷ **5.25 is ready ... again:** Or "hasn't given up on you yet."
- ▷ **7.1 went ... had planned:** Or "attacked Jerusalem, but could not capture it."
- ▷ **7.14 virgin:** Or "young woman." In this context the difficult Hebrew word did not imply a virgin birth. However, in the Greek translation made about 200 B.C. and used by the early Christians, the word *parthenos* had a double meaning. While the translator took it to mean "young woman," Matthew understood it to mean "virgin" and quoted the passage (Matthew 1.23) because it was the appropriate description of Mary, the mother of Jesus.
- ▷ **9.3 stronger:** Or "happy" or "larger."
- ▷ **9.12 so ... them:** Or "but he hasn't given up on them yet."
- ▷ **20 They will bring your relatives from the nations as an offering to me, the LORD.** They will come on horses, chariots, wagons, mules, and 'camels' to Jerusalem, my holy mountain. It will be like the people of Israel bringing the right offering to my temple. ²¹ I promise that some of them will be priests and others will be helpers in my temple. I, the LORD, have spoken.
- ▷ **22 I also promise that you will always have descendants and will never be forgotten, just as the new heavens and the new earth that I create will last forever.** ²³ On the first day of each month and on each Sabbath, everyone will worship me. I, the LORD, have spoken.
- ▷ **24 My people will go out and look at the dead bodies of those who turned against me.** The worms there never die, the fire never stops burning, and the sight of those bodies will be disgusting to everyone.
- ▷ **9.17 and kept ... against him:** Or "but even though they had turned against him, he still had not given up on them."
- ▷ **10.4 and he ... yet:** Or "but he hasn't given up on you yet!"
- ▷ **10.23 on this earth:** Or "in this land."
- ▷ **10.25 punish ... crimes:** Or "completely destroy them."
- ▷ **11.1 David's family:** Hebrew "Jesse's family."
- ▷ **11.10 David's descendants:** Hebrew "Jesse's descendants."
- ▷ **11.11 Ethiopia:** The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **11.11 land along the coast:** Or "islands."
- ▷ **12.2 strength:** Or "song."
- ▷ **13.1 message:** Or "vision."
- ▷ **13.21 goats:** Or "demons."
- ▷ **15.9 Dimon ... Dimon:** The Standard Hebrew Text; the Dead Sea Scrolls and one ancient translation have *Dibon ... Dibon*.
- ▷ **16.7 fancy raisins:** The Hebrew text has "faisin-cakes."
- ▷ **16.8 The rulers ... vineyards:** Or "The rulers of nations have destroyed those vineyards."
- ▷ **17.3 Israel:** The Hebrew text has "Ephraim."
- ▷ **17.8 sacred poles:** Or "trees."
- ▷ **17.9 covered ... underbrush:** Hebrew; one ancient translation "like the cities of the Hivites and the Amorites."

- ▷ **17.10** *mighty rock*: The Hebrew text has "rock."
- ▷ **18.1** *Ethiopia*: The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **18.1** *insects*: Or "sailing ships."
- ▷ **19.18** *City of the Sun*: Some manuscripts of the Standard Hebrew Text, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and one ancient translation; most manuscripts of the Standard Hebrew Text have "City of Destruction."
- ▷ **20.3** *Ethiopia*: The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **21.1** *This ... sea*: The prophet may be speaking of Babylonia as a desert, because of the terrible punishment God will bring on it. The southern part of Babylonia on the Persian Gulf was sometimes called "the land beside the sea."
- ▷ **21.8** *guard*: The Dead Sea Scrolls and one ancient translation; the Standard Hebrew Text has "lion."
- ▷ **23.1** *seagoing ships*: The Hebrew text has "ships of Tarshish."
- ▷ **23.3** *along the Nile*: The Hebrew text has "grain of Shihor, the harvest of the Nile."
- ▷ **23.6** *far across the ocean*: The Hebrew text has "to Tarshish."
- ▷ **23.10** *People of Tyre*: The Hebrew text has "the people of Tarshish."
- ▷ **23.14** *seagoing ships*: The Hebrew text has "ships of Tarshish."
- ▷ **24.16** *God of justice*: Or "people who do right."
- ▷ **26.4** *mighty rock*: The Hebrew text has "rock."
- ▷ **29.1** *the place of my altar*: One possible meaning for "ariel, ariel" of the Hebrew text. In Hebrew "ariel" can mean "God's hero" or "God's lion" or "God's altar."
- ▷ **29.3** *from all sides*: One ancient translation has "like David."
- ▷ **29.17** *with ... forest*: Or "and Mount Carmel will be covered with forests."
- ▷ **30.4** *Zoan ... Hanes*: Or "Your messengers have reached the city of Zoan and gone as far as Hanes." Zoan was in northeast Egypt; Hanes was to the south.
- ▷ **30.29** *mighty rock*: The Hebrew text has "rock."
- ▷ **30.33** *burning ... king*: Or "sacrificing the king" or "sacrificing to Molech."
- ▷ **31.9** *fortress*: The Hebrew text has "rock."
- ▷ **33.7** *Listen ... help*: Or "The LORD heard our shouts and will come to help us."
- ▷ **33.8** *to any ... promises*: The Dead Sea Scrolls; the Standard Hebrew Text "to those in the cities."
- ▷ **34.5** *has done ... above*: The Standard Hebrew Text; the Dead Sea Scrolls "appears in the skies above."
- ▷ **35.8** *And ... highway*: Or "And not even a fool can miss that highway."
- ▷ **37.9** *Ethiopia*: The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **37.27** *tender young grass ... matures*: The Standard Hebrew Text; the Dead Sea Scrolls and some Hebrew manuscripts "tender young grass, growing on a flat roof and scorched by the heat."
- ▷ **40.9** *There ... can*: Or "City of Jerusalem, you have good news. Shout it as loud as you can."
- ▷ **40.13** *the LORD*: Or "the LORD's Spirit."
- ▷ **40.21** *Isn't ... world*: Or "Hasn't it been clear since the time of creation?"
- ▷ **41.23** *and terrified*: Or "when we see it."
- ▷ **42.11** *desert ... mountains*: The Hebrew text includes the place names of Kedar in the desert and Sela in the mountains.
- ▷ **43.3** *Ethiopia*: The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **43.14** *crying as they go*: Or "In their glorious ships."
- ▷ **43.19** *streams*: The Standard Hebrew Text; the Dead Sea Scrolls "paths."
- ▷ **44.2** *my very favorite*: Or "Jeshurun."
- ▷ **44.8** *mighty rock*: The Hebrew text has "rock."
- ▷ **45.2** *mountains*: The Dead Sea Scrolls and one ancient translation; the Standard Hebrew Text "rising waves."
- ▷ **45.14** *Ethiopia*: The Hebrew text has "Cush."
- ▷ **47.3** *escape*: Or "oppose me."
- ▷ **47.14** *keep warm*: Or "cook food."
- ▷ **48.1** *tribe*: Hebrew "waters."
- ▷ **49.12** *Syene*: The Dead Sea Scrolls; the Standard Hebrew Text "Sinim."
- ▷ **49.24** *cruel*: The Dead Sea Scrolls and two ancient translations; the Standard Hebrew Text "good."
- ▷ **52.14** *him*: One ancient translation; Hebrew "you."
- ▷ **52.15** *My ... me*: Hebrew; one ancient translation "The nations will be amazed at him."
- ▷ **53.8** *my people*: Or "his people."
- ▷ **57.9** *the god Molech*: Or "the king."
- ▷ **58.8** *honesty*: Or "honest leader."
- ▷ **60.9** *Seagoing ships*: The Hebrew text has "ships of Tarshish."
- ▷ **63.11** *the LORD*: Or "Moses."
- ▷ **63.11** *he*: Or "Moses."
- ▷ **63.15** *us*: Hebrew "me."
- ▷ **66.3** *You sacrifice oxen ... idols*: Or "Sacrificing oxen to me is the same as murder; sacrificing lambs to me is the same as sacrificing dogs to other gods; offering grain to me is the same as offering pigs' blood to idols; and burning incense to me is the same as praising idols."
- ▷ **66.19** *Puf*: Hebrew; one ancient translation "Put."
- ▷ **66.19** *Meshech*: One ancient translation; Hebrew "those who use bows and arrows."