EDIFIED EDITION

Isaiah

A modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures

66	1,292	Old	23
chapters	verses	Testament	book of 66

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Edified Edition (EDE): a modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, in everyday British English. www.edifiededition.com

Numbered notes follow each chapter.

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Chapter 1

Isaiah 1 opens the vision of Isaiah son of Amoz with the LORD's charge against Judah. His children have rebelled; even an ox knows its owner, but Israel does not know Him. The land lies desolate, and only a few survivors keep it from being like Sodom. The LORD rejects their sacrifices, feasts and prayers, for their hands are full of blood, and calls them to wash themselves, seek justice and defend the fatherless and the widow. Though their sins are scarlet, they can become white as snow. The faithful city has become a prostitute, but the LORD will purge her, and Zion will be redeemed with justice, while rebels perish.

[1]This is the vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw about Judah and Jerusalem during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.[1]

[2]Listen, heavens, and give ear, earth, for the LORD has spoken: I raised children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against Me.

[3]The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's manger, but Israel does not know; My people do not understand.

[4]Woe to the sinful nation, a people weighed down with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children who act corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD; they have despised the Holy One of Israel; they have turned their backs on Him.

[5]Why do you want to be beaten again? Why do you persist in rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint.

[6]From the sole of the foot to the head there is no soundness in it, only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil.

[7]Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire; foreigners devour your land before your eyes, and it lies desolate as when overthrown by strangers.

[8]Daughter Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard, like a hut in a cucumber field, like a city under siege.

[9]If the LORD of Armies had not left us a few survivors, we would have become like Sodom and been made like Gomorrah.[2]

[10]Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

[11]What are your many sacrifices to Me? says the LORD. I have had more than enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I take no delight in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats.

[12]When you come to appear before Me, who asked this of you, this trampling of My courts?

[13]Stop bringing worthless offerings; your incense is detestable to Me. New Moons, Sabbaths and the calling of assemblies: I cannot bear wickedness together with solemn gatherings.

[14]Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing them.

[15]When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood.

[16]Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of My sight; stop doing evil.

[17]Learn to do good; seek justice; correct the oppressor; defend the fatherless; plead the widow's cause.

18 Come, let us argue it out, says the LORD. Though your sins are scarlet, they can become white as snow; though they are deep red, they can become like wool.

19 If you are willing and obey, you will eat the good things of the land;

20 but if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

21 See how the faithful city has turned prostitute! Once she was full of justice, and righteousness made its home in her, but now there are murderers.

22 Your silver has become dross, your choice wine is diluted with water.

23 Your rulers are rebels and companions of thieves; everyone loves a bribe and chases after gifts. They do not defend the fatherless, and the widow's case never comes before them.

24 So the Lord, the LORD of Armies, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: Ah, I will take relief from My adversaries and repay My enemies.

25 I will turn My hand against you; I will smelt away your dross as with lye and remove all your impurities.

26 I will restore your judges as at the first and your counsellors as at the beginning. After that you will be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City.

27 Zion will be redeemed with justice, and those in her who repent, with righteousness.

28 But rebels and sinners will be broken together, and those who forsake the LORD will perish.

29 For you will be ashamed of the oaks you delighted in, and you will blush for the gardens you chose.

30 You will be like an oak whose leaves are withering, like a garden without water.

31 The strong man will become tinder, and his work a spark; both will burn together, with no one to quench them.

1 Isaiah prophesied from about 740 to 700 BC.

2 Quoted in Romans 9:29, which follows the Greek: 'left us offspring'.

Chapter 2

Isaiah 2 sees the last days, when the mountain of the LORD's house will be raised above all mountains and the nations will stream to it to learn His ways. He will judge between them, and they will beat their swords into ploughshares. But now Jacob's house is full of foreign practices, wealth and idols, so the LORD of Armies has a day against everything proud and lofty. People will flee into the rocks from His majesty and throw their idols to the moles and bats, for the LORD alone will be exalted.

1 These are the things Isaiah son of Amoz saw about Judah and Jerusalem.

2 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's house will be established as the highest of the mountains and raised above the hills, and all the nations will stream to it.[1]

3 Many peoples will come and say, "Come, we will go up to the LORD's mountain, to the house of Jacob's God, so that He may teach us His ways and we may walk in His paths." For instruction will go out from Zion, the LORD's word from Jerusalem.

4 He will judge between the nations and settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.

5 Come, house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

6 For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of practices from the east and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines, and they strike hands with the children of foreigners.

7 Their land is full of silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is full of horses, and there is no end to their chariots.

8 Their land is full of idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.

9 So mankind is humbled and each person brought low; do not forgive them!

10 Go into the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the LORD and the splendour of His

majesty.[2]

11 The proud look of mankind will be humbled, and human arrogance brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.

12 For the LORD of Armies has a day against all the proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up, and it will be brought low;

13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, tall and lofty, and against all the oaks of Bashan;

14 against all the high mountains and against all the lofty hills;

15 against every high tower and against every fortified wall;

16 against all the ships of Tarshish and against all the fine vessels.

17 The pride of mankind will be humbled, and human arrogance brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,

18 and the idols will utterly pass away.

19 People will go into caves in the rocks and holes in the ground, from the terror of the LORD and the splendour of His majesty, when He rises to shake the earth.

20 In that day people will throw away to the moles and the bats their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship,

21 to go into the crevices of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from the terror of the LORD and the splendour of His majesty, when He rises to shake the earth.

22 Stop trusting in mankind, who has only a breath in his nostrils. Of what account is he?

1 Verses 2–4 are found also in Micah 4:1–3.

2 Compare 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

Chapter 3

Isaiah 3 announces that the Lord GOD of Armies is taking away from Jerusalem and Judah every support: bread and water, warriors, judges, prophets and elders. Boys will rule, the people will oppress one another, and no one will want to lead a heap of ruins. Jerusalem has stumbled because its words and deeds defy the LORD, and they parade their sin like Sodom. The LORD stands to judge the elders who have plundered the poor. The proud daughters of Zion, with all their finery, will be stripped bare, and the city will mourn.

1 For see, the Lord, the LORD of Armies, is taking away from Jerusalem and Judah both supply and support: every supply of bread and every supply of water,

2 the warrior and the soldier, the judge and the prophet, the diviner and the elder,

3 the captain of fifty and the man of rank, the counsellor, the skilled craftsman and the expert in charms.

4 I will make boys their princes, and the whims of children will rule over them.

5 The people will oppress one another, each man his neighbour; the young will be insolent to the old, and the despised to the honourable.

6 A man will take hold of his brother in his father's house and say, "You have a cloak; be our leader, and take charge of this heap of ruins!"

7 But in that day he will cry out, "I am no healer; there is neither bread nor cloak in my house. You shall not make me leader of the people."

8 For Jerusalem has stumbled and Judah has fallen, because their speech and their deeds are against the LORD, defying His glorious presence.

9 The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them, for they have brought disaster on themselves!

10 Tell the righteous that it will go well with them, for they will eat the fruit of their deeds.

11 Woe to the wicked! It will go badly with him, for what his hands have done will be done to him.

12 My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. My people, your guides lead you astray and confuse the course of your paths.[1]

13 The LORD takes His place to contend; He stands to judge the peoples.

14 The LORD enters into judgement with the elders and princes of His people: It is you who have devoured the vineyard; the plunder taken from the poor is in your houses.

15 What do you mean by crushing My people and
grinding the faces of the poor? declares the Lord
GOD of Armies.

16 The LORD says: Because the daughters of Zion
are haughty and walk with necks outstretched and
seductive eyes, tripping along with mincing steps
and jingling their ankles,

17 the Lord will strike the heads of the daughters
of Zion with scabs, and the LORD will lay bare
their foreheads.

18 In that day the Lord will take away their finery:
the anklets, headbands and crescents,

19 the earrings, bracelets and veils,

20 the headdresses, ankle chains, sashes, perfume
bottles and amulets,

21 the signet rings and nose rings,

22 the festal robes, mantles, cloaks and purses,

23 the mirrors, linen garments, turbans and shawls.

24 Instead of perfume there will be rottenness;
instead of a sash, a rope; instead of well-dressed
hair, baldness; instead of a fine robe, a wrapping
of sackcloth; branding instead of beauty.

25 Your men will fall by the sword, and your
warriors in battle.

26 Her gates will lament and mourn; destitute, she
will sit on the ground.

1 The Greek has ‘creditors’ for ‘women’, with a slight change to the Hebrew.

Chapter 4

Isaiah 4 continues the picture of that day: so many men will have fallen that seven women will take hold of one man. Then the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and those left in Zion will be called holy once the Lord has washed away the city’s filth by a spirit of judgement and burning. Over Mount Zion He will create a cloud by day and a flaming fire by night, a canopy and shelter from heat and storm.

1 In that day seven women will take hold of one
man and say, “We will eat our own bread and wear
our own clothes; only let us be called by your
name. Take away our disgrace.”

2 In that day the Branch of the LORD will be
beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land
will be the pride and splendour of the survivors of
Israel.[1]

3 Whoever is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem
will be called holy, everyone recorded for life in
Jerusalem,

4 when the Lord has washed away the filth of the
daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of
Jerusalem from her midst by a spirit of judgement
and a spirit of burning.

5 Then the LORD will create over the whole site of
Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by
day and smoke, and the glow of a flaming fire by
night; over all the glory there will be a canopy.

6 It will be a shelter for shade by day from the
heat, and a refuge and hiding place from the
storm and the rain.

1 Compare Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12.

Chapter 5

Isaiah 5 begins with the song of the vineyard. The prophet’s friend did everything for his vineyard, but it yielded only wild grapes, so he will let it be trampled and turned into a wasteland. The vineyard is Israel: the LORD looked for justice but saw bloodshed. Six woes follow, on those who seize house after house, who chase strong drink, who mock God’s plan, who call evil good, who are wise in their own eyes, and who take bribes. The LORD’s hand is stretched out against them, and He whistles for a distant nation that will come swiftly, roaring like a lion.

1 Let me sing for my beloved a song of my loved
one about his vineyard: My beloved had a
vineyard on a fertile hillside.

2 He dug it up, cleared it of stones and planted it
with choice vines. He built a watchtower in it and
hewed out a winepress as well. He waited for it to
yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

3 So now, you who live in Jerusalem and you men
of Judah, decide between Me and My vineyard.

4 What more could have been done for My
vineyard than I have done for it? Why, when I
waited for it to yield grapes, did it yield wild
grapes?

5 So let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I
will remove its hedge so that it is eaten up, and
tear down its wall so that it is trodden underfoot.

6 I will make it a wasteland; it will not be pruned
or hoed, and briers and thorns will grow up. I will
command the clouds to send no rain on it.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of Armies is the
house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the plant
He delighted in. He looked for justice, but saw
bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard a cry of
distress.[1]

8 Woe to those who join house to house and add
field to field until there is no room left, and you
live alone in the land!

9 The LORD of Armies has sworn in my hearing:
Surely many houses will become desolate, great
and fine houses without anyone living in them.

10 For ten acres of vineyard will yield only one
bath, and a homer of seed only an ephah.[2]

11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning to
run after strong drink, who stay up late at night
till wine inflames them!

12 They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute
and wine at their feasts, but they do not regard
the deeds of the LORD or see the work of His
hands.

13 Therefore My people go into exile for lack of
knowledge; their nobles die of hunger, and their
multitudes are parched with thirst.

14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged its appetite and
opened its mouth beyond measure, and down go
Jerusalem's nobles and her crowds, her uproar
and all who revel in her.

15 Mankind is humbled and each person brought
low, and the eyes of the proud are brought low.

16 But the LORD of Armies is exalted in justice, and
the holy God shows Himself holy in righteousness.

17 Then lambs will feed there as if in their own
meadow, and strangers will eat in the ruins left by
the rich.

18 Woe to those who drag guilt along with cords of
falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes,

19 who say, "Let Him hurry; let Him hasten His
work so that we may see it. Let the plan of the
Holy One of Israel come near and arrive, so that
we may know it!"

20 Woe to those who name evil good and good evil,
who turn darkness into light and light into
darkness, who turn bitter into sweet and sweet
into bitter!

21 Woe to those who think themselves wise and
count themselves shrewd!

22 Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine
and champions at mixing strong drink,

23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe and deprive the
innocent of their rights!

24 Therefore, as tongues of fire consume stubble
and dry grass sinks down in the flame, so their
root will rot and their blossom blow away like
dust, for they have rejected the instruction of the
LORD of Armies and despised the word of the
Holy One of Israel.

25 Therefore the LORD's anger burns against His
people; He has stretched out His hand against
them and struck them. The mountains quake, and
their corpses lie like refuse in the streets. Yet for
all this His anger has not turned away, and His
hand is still stretched out.[3]

26 He raises a signal to the nations far away and
whistles for them from the ends of the earth, and
look, they come, swiftly and speedily!

27 None of them is weary or stumbles; none
slumbers or sleeps; not a belt is loose at the waist,
not a sandal strap broken.

28 Their arrows are sharp, all their bows are bent;
their horses' hooves seem like flint, and their
chariot wheels like a whirlwind.

29 Their roar is like a lioness; they roar like young
lions; they growl and seize their prey and carry it
off, with no one to rescue.

30 In that day they will growl over it like the
roaring of the sea. If one looks at the land, there is
darkness and distress, and the light is darkened
by its clouds.

1 In Hebrew 'justice' and 'bloodshed', 'righteousness' and 'cry', sound alike.

2 Hebrew 'ten yokes', the land ten pairs of oxen can plough in a day. A bath is about 22 litres (5 gallons); a homer about 220 litres (6 bushels), and an ephah a tenth of that.

3 This refrain returns at 9:12, 17, 21 and 10:4.

Chapter 6

Isaiah 6 tells how, in the year King Uzziah died, Isaiah saw the Lord enthroned in the temple, with seraphim calling to one another, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Armies." Isaiah cried out that he was ruined, a man of unclean lips, but a seraph touched his mouth with a live coal from the altar, and his guilt was taken away. When the Lord asked whom He should send, Isaiah answered, "Here I am. Send me!" He was sent to a people who would hear but not understand, until the land lay desolate, leaving only a stump; but the holy seed is its stump.

1 In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a lofty and exalted throne, and the hem of His robe filled the temple.[1]

2 Seraphim stood above Him, each with six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.[2]

3 And they called to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Armies; His glory fills all the earth."

4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then I said, "Woe is me! I am ruined, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Armies."

6 One of the seraphim flew to me holding a glowing coal, which he had taken from the altar with tongs.

7 He touched my mouth with it and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."

8 Then I heard the Lord's voice asking, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for Us?" And I answered, "Here I am. Send me!"

9 He said, "Go and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

10 Dull the heart of this people, stop up their ears and close their eyes, or they may see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts, and turn back and be healed."[3]

11 Then I said, "How long, Lord?" He answered, "Until cities lie in ruins without inhabitant, houses without people, and the land is utterly desolate,

12 until the LORD has sent everyone far away and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

13 And though a tenth remains in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump."

1 About 740 BC. Compare John 12:41.

2 'Seraphim' probably means 'burning ones'.

3 Verses 9–10 are quoted, mostly from the Greek, in Matthew 13:14–15; Mark 4:12; John 12:40; Acts 28:26–27.

Chapter 7

Isaiah 7 tells how, when Aram and Israel came against Jerusalem in the days of Ahaz, the king's heart shook like trees in the wind. The LORD sent Isaiah and his son Shear-jashub to tell Ahaz to keep calm, for the plot of these two smouldering stubs would not stand; if he did not stand firm in faith, he would not stand at all. When Ahaz refused to ask for a sign, Isaiah gave one: the virgin will bear a son and call him Immanuel, and before the boy is grown the two kings will be gone. But the LORD will also bring the king of Assyria, who will shave the land like a hired razor, until it is overgrown with briers and thorns.

1 In the days of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not conquer it.[1]

2 When the house of David was told, "Aram has allied itself with Ephraim," the hearts of Ahaz and his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

3 Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, on the road to the Launderer's Field.[2]

4 Say to him, 'Be careful and keep calm. Do not be afraid, and do not lose heart because of these two smouldering stubs of firewood, because of the

fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah.

5 Aram, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has plotted evil against you.

6 They plan to invade Judah, terrify it, break into it for themselves and set up the son of Tabeel as king in it.

7 This is what the Lord GOD says: It will not stand; it will not happen.

8 For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people.

9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all.'"[3]

10 Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz:

11 "Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the depths of Sheol or in the heights above."

12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test."

13 Then Isaiah said, "Listen now, house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men, that you must try the patience of my God too?

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Look, the virgin will be with child and will bear a son, and she will call him Immanuel.[4]

15 He will eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse evil and choose good.

16 For before the boy knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land of the two kings you dread will be deserted.

17 The LORD will bring on you, on your people and on your father's house days such as have not come since Ephraim broke away from Judah: He will bring the king of Assyria."

18 In that day the LORD will whistle for the flies at the far streams of Egypt and for the bees in the land of Assyria.

19 They will all come and settle in the steep ravines and the clefts of the rocks, on all the thornbushes and all the water holes.

20 In that day the Lord will shave with a razor hired from beyond the River, the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the legs, and it will sweep away the beard as well.

21 In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep,

22 and because of the abundance of milk they give, he will eat curds; for everyone left in the land will eat curds and honey.

23 In that day every place where there were a thousand vines worth a thousand pieces of silver will be given over to briers and thorns.

24 People will go there with bow and arrows, for all the land will be briers and thorns.

25 As for all the hills once tilled with the hoe, you will not go there for fear of briers and thorns; they will become a place where cattle are turned loose and sheep tread.

1 About 734 BC; compare 2 Kings 16:5.

2 The name means 'a remnant will return'.

3 In Hebrew 'stand firm in faith' and 'stand' are the same word.

4 The Hebrew word means a young woman of age to marry; the Greek has 'virgin', and Matthew 1:23 quotes it of the birth of Jesus. Immanuel means 'God with us'.

Chapter 8

Isaiah 8 tells how the prophet's second son is named Maher-shalal-hash-baz, meaning quick to the plunder, for before he can speak, Assyria will carry off the wealth of Damascus and Samaria. Because the people rejected the gentle waters of Shiloah, the River, the king of Assyria, will flood Judah up to the neck. Yet the nations' plans will fail, for God is with us. The LORD warns Isaiah not to fear what the people fear: the LORD of Armies alone is to be feared, a sanctuary but also a stone that makes both houses of Israel stumble. Isaiah seals his teaching among his disciples and waits for the LORD, while those who consult the dead are driven into darkness.

1 The LORD said to me, "Take a large tablet and write on it in ordinary letters: Maher-shalal-hash-baz."[1]

2 And I took faithful witnesses to attest it for me, Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah.

3 Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. And the LORD said to me, “Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz,

4 for before the boy knows how to say ‘My father’ or ‘My mother’, the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried off by the king of Assyria.”

5 The LORD spoke to me again:

6 “Because this people has rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah and rejoices over Rezin and the son of Remaliah,

7 therefore the Lord will bring up against them the great, rushing waters of the River, the king of Assyria in all his splendour; it will overflow all its channels and spill over all its banks.

8 It will sweep on into Judah, overflowing and passing through, reaching up to the neck; its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.”

9 Be shattered, you peoples, and be terrified! Listen, all you distant lands! Prepare for battle, and be terrified; prepare for battle, and be terrified!

10 Devise a plan, but it will be thwarted; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

11 For the LORD spoke to me with His strong hand on me and warned me not to walk in the way of this people:

12 “Do not call conspiracy everything this people calls conspiracy; do not fear what they fear or be in dread of it.

13 The LORD of Armies is the One you are to regard as holy; He is the One you are to fear; He is the One you are to dread.[2]

14 He will be a sanctuary, but for both houses of Israel a stone that makes them stumble and a rock that makes them fall, a trap and a snare for the people of Jerusalem.[3]

15 Many of them will stumble; they will fall and be broken; they will be snared and captured.”

16 Bind up the testimony; seal the instruction among my disciples.

17 I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; I will put my trust in Him.

18 Here am I and the children the LORD has given me; we are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of Armies, who dwells on Mount Zion.[4]

19 When people say to you, “Consult the mediums and the spiritists, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people consult their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?

20 To the instruction and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no dawn.

21 They will pass through the land, hard pressed and hungry; when they are famished, they will be enraged and will curse their king and their God, and turn their faces upward.

22 Then they will look to the earth and see only distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be thrust into thick darkness.

1 The name means ‘quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil’.

2 Compare 1 Peter 3:14–15.

3 Quoted with 28:16 in Romans 9:33, and in 1 Peter 2:8.

4 Verses 17–18 are quoted, from the Greek, in Hebrews 2:13.

Chapter 9

Isaiah 9 turns from gloom to light. Galilee of the nations, once humbled, will see a great light; the yoke of the oppressor will be broken as on the day of Midian, and the boots of battle burned. For a child has been born, a son given, who will rule on David’s throne with justice and righteousness for ever, named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Then the word against Israel resumes: in their pride they would rebuild with cedar, but the LORD has raised up their enemies, cut off their leaders, and let them devour one another, and still His hand is stretched out.

1 Yet there will be no more gloom for her who was in distress. In the past He humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future He will make glorious the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.[1]

2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

3 You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy; they rejoice before You as people rejoice at

harvest, as they are glad when dividing the plunder.[2]

4 For You have shattered the yoke that burdened them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, as on the day of Midian.

5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in the tumult, and every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire.

6 For a child has been born to us, a son given to us; the rule will rest on His shoulders, and He will be named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 There will be no end to the growth of His rule and of peace, on David's throne and over his kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from now on and for ever. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

8 The Lord has sent a word against Jacob, and it has fallen on Israel.

9 All the people will know it, Ephraim and those who live in Samaria, who say in pride and arrogance of heart,

10 "The bricks have fallen, but we will rebuild with dressed stone; the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place."

11 So the LORD has raised up Rezin's foes against them and stirred up their enemies,

12 Aram from the east and the Philistines from the west, and they have devoured Israel with open mouth. Yet for all this His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

13 But the people have not turned to Him who struck them, nor have they sought the LORD of Armies.

14 So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed, in a single day.

15 The head is the elder, the man of standing; the tail is the prophet who teaches falsehood.

16 Those who guide this people mislead them, and those who are guided are swallowed up.

17 Therefore the Lord takes no pleasure in their young men and has no compassion on their fatherless and widows, for everyone is godless and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly. Yet for all this His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

18 For wickedness blazes like fire, devouring briers and thorns; it kindles the forest thickets, and they go up in billowing smoke.

19 Through the wrath of the LORD of Armies the land is scorched, and the people are like fuel for the fire; no one spares his brother.

20 They snatch on the right, yet are still hungry; they devour on the left, yet are not satisfied. Each devours the flesh of his own arm,

21 Manasseh devours Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh; together they turn against Judah. Yet for all this His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

1 In Hebrew this verse is 8:23, and 9:2–21 are 9:1–20. Verses 1–2 are quoted in Matthew 4:15–16.

2 So the spoken Hebrew; the written text has 'You have not increased its joy'.

Chapter 10

Isaiah 10 pronounces woe on those who make unjust laws and rob the poor. Then the LORD calls Assyria the rod of His anger, sent against a godless nation, though the king of Assyria means only to destroy and boasts that his own strength has done it all. Can the axe boast over the one who swings it? The LORD will burn up Assyria's glory, and a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God. The people of Zion need not fear, for His anger will soon turn against Assyria. The chapter ends with the enemy marching on Jerusalem, town by town, until the LORD fells him like a forest.

1 Woe to those who make unjust laws and to those who keep writing oppressive decrees,

2 to deprive the poor of justice and rob the afflicted among My people of their rights, making widows their plunder and preying on the fatherless!

3 What will you do on the day of punishment, when ruin comes from afar? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth?

4 Nothing remains but to crouch among the prisoners or fall among the slain. Yet for all this His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

5 Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger! The staff in their hands is My fury.

6 I send him against a godless nation, I command
him against the people of My wrath, to seize
plunder and carry off spoil and to trample them
like mud in the streets.

7 But this is not what he intends; this is not what
he has in mind. His purpose is to destroy and to
cut off many nations.

8 For he says, “Are not my commanders all kings?

9 Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like
Arpad, and Samaria like Damascus?

10 As my hand seized the kingdoms of the idols,
whose carved images surpassed those of
Jerusalem and Samaria,

11 shall I not do to Jerusalem and her images as I
did to Samaria and her idols?”

12 When the Lord has finished all His work on
Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, He will punish the
fruit of the king of Assyria’s arrogant heart and
the pride of his haughty eyes.[1]

13 For he says, “I did it by my own strength and by
my own wisdom, for I am clever. I erased the
borders between peoples and looted their stores;
like a bull I toppled those who sat enthroned.

14 My hand found the wealth of the peoples like a
nest; as one gathers abandoned eggs, I gathered
all the earth, and not one flapped a wing or
opened its mouth to chirp.”

15 Does the axe boast over the one who chops with
it, or the saw exalt itself over the one who wields
it? As if a rod should wield the one who lifts it, or
a staff should lift the one who is not wood!

16 Therefore the Lord, the LORD of Armies, will
send a wasting disease among his stout warriors,
and under his glory a fire will be kindled like a
burning flame.

17 The Light of Israel will become a fire, and his
Holy One a flame; it will burn and devour his
thorns and briers in a single day.

18 The glory of his forest and his fruitful land He
will destroy, both soul and body, as when a sick
man wastes away.

19 The trees left in his forest will be so few that a
child could write them down.

20 In that day the remnant of Israel and the
survivors of the house of Jacob will no longer lean
on the one who struck them, but will truly lean on
the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

21 A remnant will return, what is left of Jacob, to
the Mighty God.[2]

22 For though your people Israel are as many as
the sand by the sea, only a remnant will return. A
destruction has been decreed, overflowing with
righteousness.

23 For the Lord GOD of Armies will carry out the
destruction decreed, in the midst of all the land.[3]

24 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD of Armies
says: My people who live in Zion, do not be afraid
of Assyria, though he strikes you with a rod and
lifts his staff against you as Egypt did.

25 For in a very little while My indignation will
come to an end, and My anger will turn to their
destruction.

26 The LORD of Armies will wield a whip against
him, as when He struck Midian at the rock of
Oreb; His staff will be over the sea, and He will lift
it as He did in Egypt.

27 In that day his burden will be lifted from your
shoulders and his yoke from your neck; the yoke
will be broken because of fatness.[4]

28 He has reached Aiath and passed through
Migron; he leaves his baggage at Michmash.

29 They have crossed the pass; at Geba they lodge
for the night. Ramah trembles; Gibeah of Saul has
fled.

30 Cry aloud, daughter of Gallim! Listen, Laishah!
Poor Anathoth!

31 Madmenah is in flight; the people of Gebim take
refuge.

32 This very day he will halt at Nob; he will shake
his fist at the mount of daughter Zion, the hill of
Jerusalem.

33 See, the Lord, the LORD of Armies, will lop off
the boughs with terrifying power; the tall trees
will be felled, and the lofty brought low.

34 He will hack down the forest thickets with iron,
and Lebanon will fall before the Mighty One.

1 Hebrew ‘I will punish’.

2 ‘A remnant will return’ is the name of Isaiah’s son in 7:3.

3 Verses 22–23 are quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 9:27–28.

4 The meaning of the last line is uncertain.

Chapter 11

Isaiah 11 foretells a shoot from the stump of Jesse, on whom the Spirit of the LORD will rest with wisdom, counsel, might and the fear of the LORD. He will judge the poor with righteousness and slay the wicked with the breath of His lips. In His reign wolf and lamb will live together and a small child will lead them, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. The root of Jesse will be a signal to the nations, and the Lord will gather the scattered remnant of Israel and Judah from the four corners of the earth, making a highway for them as at the exodus.

1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.[1]
2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him: a Spirit
that gives wisdom and insight, counsel and
strength, knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
3 His delight will be in the fear of the LORD. He
will not judge by what His eyes see or decide by
what His ears hear,
4 He will judge the needy with righteousness and
give fair decisions for the lowly of the land; His
word will be a rod that strikes the earth, and the
breath of His lips will put the wicked to death.
5 Righteousness will be the belt round His waist,
and faithfulness the sash round His hips.
6 Wolf and lamb will live together, leopard and
young goat will rest side by side, calf and young
lion and yearling together, with a small child to
lead them.
7 Cow and bear will feed together, their young will
rest side by side, and the lion will eat straw as
cattle do.
8 The infant will play by the cobra's hole, and the
weaned child will put his hand into the viper's
nest.
9 They will not harm or destroy on all My holy
mountain, for the earth will be full of the
knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the
sea.
10 In that day the root of Jesse will stand as a
signal for the peoples; the nations will seek Him,
and His resting place will be glorious.[2]
11 In that day the Lord will reach out His hand a
second time to recover the remnant of His people
who are left, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush,
Elam, Shinar, Hamath and the coastlands of the
sea.
12 He will raise a signal for the nations and gather
the exiles of Israel; He will assemble the scattered
people of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
13 Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's
enemies will be cut off; Ephraim will not envy
Judah, and Judah will not harass Ephraim.
14 They will swoop down on the slopes of the
Philistines to the west; together they will plunder
the people of the east. Edom and Moab will be in
their grasp, and the Ammonites will obey them.
15 The LORD will dry up the tongue of the Sea of
Egypt and wave His hand over the River with His
scorching wind; He will split it into seven streams
so that people can cross in sandals.
16 There will be a highway for the remnant of His
people who are left from Assyria, as there was for
Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.

1 Jesse was the father of David (1 Samuel 16). Here and in 9:6–7 pronouns for the coming King are capitalised.
2 Quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 15:12.

Chapter 12

Isaiah 12 is a song of thanks for that day. The LORD's anger has turned away and He comforts His people. God is their salvation; they will trust and not be afraid, for the LORD is their strength and song. With joy they will draw water from the wells of salvation, give thanks, make His deeds known among the nations, and shout for joy, for the Holy One of Israel is great among them.

1 On that day you will say: I thank You, LORD. You
were angry with me, but Your anger has turned
away and You have comforted me.
2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be
afraid, for the LORD, the LORD Himself, is my
strength and my song, and He has become my
salvation.[1]
3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of
salvation.

4 And on that day you will say: Give thanks to the LORD and call on His name; tell the peoples what He has done; declare that His name is exalted.

5 Sing praise to the LORD, for He has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great among you is the Holy One of Israel.

1 The last line echoes Exodus 15:2.

Chapter 13

Isaiah 13 begins the oracles against the nations with Babylon. The LORD of Armies musters an army from distant lands; the day of the LORD is near, cruel and full of wrath, when sun, moon and stars will be darkened and people will flee like hunted gazelles. He is stirring up the Medes, who care nothing for silver or gold. Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, will be overthrown like Sodom and Gomorrah and never be lived in again; only wild creatures will haunt its palaces.

1 An oracle concerning Babylon, which Isaiah son of Amoz saw.[1]

2 On a bare hill raise a signal; shout to them; wave your hand for them to enter the gates of the nobles.

3 I Myself have commanded My consecrated ones; I have summoned My warriors to carry out My anger, those who exult in My triumph.

4 Listen, a noise on the mountains, like that of a great multitude! Listen, an uproar of kingdoms, of nations gathering together! The LORD of Armies is mustering an army for battle.

5 They come from a distant land, from the ends of the heavens, the LORD and the weapons of His wrath, to destroy the whole earth.

6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.[2]

7 Therefore all hands will go limp, and every human heart will melt.

8 They will be terrified; pangs and anguish will seize them; they will writhe like a woman in labour. They will stare aghast at one another, their faces aflame.

9 See, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the earth a desolation and destroy its sinners from it.

10 The stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shed its light.[3]

11 I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their guilt; I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant and humble the haughtiness of tyrants.

12 I will make people scarcer than fine gold, and mankind than the gold of Ophir.

13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken from its place at the wrath of the LORD of Armies, in the day of His fierce anger.

14 Like a hunted gazelle, like sheep with no one to gather them, each will turn to his own people, each will flee to his own land.

15 Whoever is found will be thrust through, and whoever is caught will fall by the sword.

16 Before their eyes their little ones will be dashed in pieces; their homes will be looted and their wives violated.

17 See, I am stirring up the Medes against them, who have no regard for silver and no delight in gold.

18 Their bows will strike down the young men; they will have no pity on the fruit of the womb, and their eyes will not spare children.

19 Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the proud splendour of the Chaldeans, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah.

20 It will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, and no shepherds will rest their flocks there.

21 But desert creatures will lie down there, and its houses will be full of howling creatures; ostriches will live there, and wild goats will leap about.

22 Hyenas will howl in its fortresses and jackals in its luxurious palaces. Its time is close at hand, and its days will not be prolonged.

1 Chapters 13–23 are oracles concerning the nations.

2 In Hebrew ‘destruction’ and ‘the Almighty’ sound alike.

3 Compare Matthew 24:29.

Chapter 14

Isaiah 14 promises that the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and bring them home. Then Israel will taunt the king of Babylon: the oppressor is ended, the earth is at rest, and Sheol rouses the dead kings to greet him. He who said he would ascend to heaven and make himself like the Most High, the Day Star, son of the dawn, is brought down to the pit and cast out of his grave. The LORD has also sworn to break Assyria in His land, for no one can thwart His purpose. Finally, Philistia must not rejoice that the rod that struck her is broken, for worse is coming, while the LORD has founded Zion as a refuge for His afflicted people.

1 For the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel and settle them in their own land; foreigners will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.

2 Peoples will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as male and female servants in the LORD's land. They will take captive those who took them captive and rule over their oppressors.

3 On the day the LORD gives you rest from your suffering and turmoil and from the hard labour forced on you,

4 you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon: How the oppressor has come to an end! How his fury has ended!

5 The LORD has broken the rod of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers,

6 that struck the peoples in wrath with unceasing blows and ruled the nations in anger with relentless persecution.

7 All the earth is at rest and at peace; they break out into singing.

8 Even the cypresses and the cedars of Lebanon rejoice over you: "Since you were laid low, no woodcutter comes up against us."

9 Sheol below is stirred up to meet you when you come; it rouses the spirits of the dead to greet you, all who were leaders of the earth; it makes all the kings of the nations rise from their thrones.

10 All of them will answer and say to you, "You too have become as weak as we are; you have become like us!"

11 Your pomp has been brought down to Sheol, with the music of your harps; maggots are spread out beneath you, and worms cover you.

12 How you have fallen from heaven, Day Star, son of the dawn! How you have been cut down to the earth, you who laid the nations low![1]

13 In your heart you said, "I will climb up to heaven; I will set my throne higher than God's stars; I will sit enthroned on the mountain of assembly, far away in the north.

14 I will rise above the tops of the clouds and be like the Most High."

15 But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit.

16 All who see you will gaze and wonder at you: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble,

17 who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who would not let his prisoners go home?"

18 All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb.

19 But you are cast out of your grave like a rejected branch, covered with the slain, those pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones of the pit, like a corpse trampled underfoot.

20 You will not join them in burial, for you have destroyed your land and killed your people. May the offspring of evildoers never be named again!

21 Prepare a place to slaughter his sons for the guilt of their fathers, so that they may not rise and possess the earth and fill the world with cities.

22 I will rise up against them, declares the LORD of Armies, and cut off from Babylon name and remnant, offspring and descendants, declares the LORD.

23 I will make it a possession for hedgehogs and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction, declares the LORD of Armies.

24 The LORD of Armies has sworn: As I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand:

25 to break Assyria in My land and trample him on My mountains. His yoke will be removed from them, and his burden from their shoulders.

26 This is the purpose planned for the whole earth, and this is the hand stretched out over all the nations.

27 For the LORD of Armies has planned, and who
can thwart Him? His hand is stretched out, and
who can turn it back?

28 In the year King Ahaz died this oracle came:

29 Do not rejoice, all you Philistines, that the rod
that struck you is broken, for from the serpent's
root a viper will come, and its fruit will be a flying
fiery serpent.

30 The firstborn of the poor will graze, and the
needy will lie down in safety, but I will kill your
root with famine, and it will slay your remnant.

31 Wail, O gate! Cry out, O city! Melt away, all you
Philistines! For smoke comes from the north, and
there is no straggler in its ranks.

32 What answer shall be given to the messengers of
the nation? That the LORD has founded Zion, and
in her the afflicted of His people will find refuge.

1 Hebrew 'Helel', the morning star; the Latin has 'Lucifer'. The taunt is against the king of Babylon (verse 4).

Chapter 15

Isaiah 15 is a lament over Moab. Its cities Ar and Kir are destroyed in a night, and the people go up to their high places to weep, heads shaved and dressed in sackcloth. The prophet's own heart cries out for Moab as its fugitives flee south to Zoar. The waters of Nimrim are dried up, and the cry goes round all Moab's borders; even the waters of Dimon run with blood, and more is still to come.

1 An oracle concerning Moab: Ar of Moab is laid
waste in a night and destroyed; Kir of Moab is laid
waste in a night and destroyed.[1]

2 Dibon goes up to its temple, to its high places to
weep; Moab wails over Nebo and over Medeba.
Every head is shaved bald, every beard cut off.

3 In its streets they wear sackcloth; on its rooftops
and in its squares everyone wails, streaming with
tears.

4 Heshbon and Elealeh cry out; their voice is heard
as far as Jahaz. So the armed men of Moab cry
out; their souls tremble.

5 My heart cries out for Moab; its fugitives flee as
far as Zoar, to Eglath-shelishiyah. They go up the
ascent of Luhith weeping; on the road to
Horonaim they raise a cry over their ruin.

6 The waters of Nimrim are desolate; the grass is
withered, the vegetation gone, nothing green is
left.

7 So they carry away the wealth they have gained
and stored up across the Brook of the Willows.

8 Their cry has gone round the borders of Moab;
their wailing reaches to Eglaim, their wailing to
Beer-elim.

9 The waters of Dimon are full of blood, yet I will
bring still more on Dimon: a lion against the
fugitives of Moab and against the remnant of the
land.[2]

1 Chapters 15–16 are close in places to Jeremiah 48.

2 Dimon is probably Dibon (verse 2), spelt to sound like the Hebrew for 'blood'.

Chapter 16

Isaiah 16 continues the oracle on Moab. Moab's daughters flutter like birds at the fords of the Arnon, and they plead with Judah to shelter their outcasts. When the oppressor is gone, a throne will be established in loyal kindness in the tent of David. But Moab's pride is famous, so Moab wails, and the prophet weeps for the ruined vines of Sibmah and the silenced harvest. Moab's prayers at its high places will not help it, and within three years its glory will be brought low.

1 Send lambs to the ruler of the land, from Sela
through the wilderness to the mount of daughter
Zion.[1]

2 Like fluttering birds pushed from the nest, so are
the daughters of Moab at the fords of the Arnon.

3 "Give counsel; make a decision. Make your shade
like night at the height of noon; hide the outcasts;
do not betray the fugitive.

4 Let the outcasts of Moab stay with you; be a
refuge for them from the destroyer." When the
oppressor is no more and destruction has ceased,

and the one who tramples has vanished from the land,

5 then a throne will be established in loyal kindness, and on it will sit in faithfulness, in the tent of David, a judge who seeks justice and is swift to do what is right.

6 We have heard of Moab's pride, how very proud he is, his arrogance, his pride and his insolence; his boasts are empty.

7 Therefore Moab wails; everyone wails for Moab. Mourn, utterly stricken, for the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth.

8 For the fields of Heshbon wither, and the vines of Sibmah, whose clusters once laid low the lords of the nations; they reached as far as Jazer and spread into the desert; their shoots spread out and crossed the sea.

9 So I weep with the weeping of Jazer for the vines of Sibmah; I drench you with my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh, for the shouts over your summer fruit and your harvest have ceased.

10 Joy and gladness are taken from the orchards; in the vineyards no one sings or shouts; no one treads out wine in the presses; I have put an end to the shouting.

11 So my heart moans for Moab like a lyre, and my inmost being for Kir-hareseth.

12 When Moab appears at the high place, he only wears himself out; when he comes to his sanctuary to pray, it will do him no good.

13 This is the word the LORD spoke concerning Moab in the past.

14 But now the LORD has spoken: In three years, counted as exactly as a labourer counts the years of his hire, the glory of Moab with all its crowds will be scorned, and those left will be few and of no account.[2]

1 The meaning of the Hebrew of this verse is uncertain; Moab once paid tribute in lambs (2 Kings 3:4).

2 That is, exactly three years, as a worker counts the days of his contract.

Chapter 17

Isaiah 17 announces that Damascus will become a heap of ruins, and Ephraim, its ally, will lose its fortress. Israel's glory will dwindle until only a few olives are left on the tree. Then people will look to their Maker instead of their altars and Asherah poles, for they forgot the God of their salvation and planted gardens for a foreign god. The nations roar like the sea, but the LORD rebukes them, and they vanish like chaff before the wind.

1 An oracle concerning Damascus: See, Damascus will cease to be a city and will become a heap of ruins.[1]

2 The cities of Aroer will be deserted and left to flocks, which will lie down with no one to frighten them.

3 The fortress will vanish from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus; the remnant of Aram will be like the glory of the Israelites, declares the LORD of Armies.

4 In that day the glory of Jacob will dwindle, and the fat of his body will waste away.

5 It will be as when a reaper gathers standing grain and harvests the ears with his arm, as when one gleans ears of grain in the Valley of Rephaim.

6 Gleanings will be left in it, as when an olive tree is beaten: two or three olives on the topmost bough, four or five on the branches of a fruitful tree, declares the LORD, the God of Israel.

7 On that day people will gaze up at the One who made them; their eyes will look towards Israel's Holy One.

8 They will not look to the altars, the work of their hands, or regard what their fingers have made, the Asherah poles and the incense altars.

9 In that day their strong cities will be like the deserted places of the woods and the hilltops, which were abandoned before the Israelites, and there will be desolation.

10 You have forgotten the God who saved you; you have not kept in mind the Rock where you found shelter. That is why you plant delightful gardens and sow vine cuttings for a foreign god.

11 On the day you plant them you make them grow, and in the morning you make your seed blossom, yet the harvest will vanish in a day of sickness and incurable pain.

12 Ah, the uproar of many peoples, roaring like the roaring of the seas! Ah, the tumult of nations,

rumbling like the rumbling of mighty waters!

13 The nations rumble like the rumbling of many waters, but He rebukes them, and they flee far away, driven like chaff on the hills before the wind, like tumbleweed before a storm.

14 At evening there is terror; before morning they are gone. This is the lot of those who plunder us, the fate of those who rob us.

1 Damascus fell to Assyria in 732 BC, and Samaria, the capital of Ephraim, in 722 BC.

Chapter 18

Isaiah 18 addresses the land of whirring wings beyond the rivers of Cush, which sends envoys in papyrus boats. The whole world is to watch for the LORD's signal. He waits quietly in His dwelling place, then, before the harvest, cuts away the spreading branches and leaves them to the birds and beasts. At that time the tall and smooth-skinned people will bring gifts to the LORD of Armies at Mount Zion.

1 Woe to the land of whirring wings beyond the rivers of Cush,[1]

2 which sends envoys by sea in papyrus boats over the waters! Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth-skinned, to a people feared near and far, a nation strong and conquering, whose land is divided by rivers.

3 All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a signal is raised on the mountains, look! When a trumpet sounds, listen!

4 For this is what the LORD said to me: I will keep quiet and look on from My dwelling place, like shimmering heat in the sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

5 For before the harvest, once the flowering is over and the blossom turns into a swelling grape, He will slash the shoots with pruning hooks and hack away the straggling branches.

6 They will all be left to the birds of prey on the mountains and to the wild animals; the birds will feed on them all summer and the wild animals all winter.

7 At that time gifts will be brought to the LORD of Armies from a people tall and smooth-skinned, from a people feared near and far, a nation strong and conquering, whose land is divided by rivers, to Mount Zion, the place of the name of the LORD of Armies.

1 Cush is the land of the upper Nile, south of Egypt, which then ruled Egypt.

Chapter 19

Isaiah 19 is the oracle concerning Egypt. The LORD rides on a swift cloud to Egypt; its idols tremble, Egyptian fights Egyptian, and a cruel king will rule them. The Nile will dry up, fishermen and weavers will despair, and Pharaoh's wise counsellors will be fools, staggering under a spirit of confusion. Yet in that day Egypt will turn to the LORD: there will be an altar to Him in Egypt, He will send them a saviour, and a highway will join Egypt and Assyria, with Israel as the third, a blessing in the midst of the earth.

1 An oracle concerning Egypt: See, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before Him, and the heart of Egypt melts within it.

2 I will stir up Egyptian against Egyptian; brother will fight against brother, neighbour against neighbour, city against city, kingdom against kingdom.

3 Egypt's spirit will fail within it, and I will confound its plans; they will consult idols and the spirits of the dead, the mediums and the spiritists.

4 I will hand Egypt over to a cruel master, and a fierce king will rule over them, declares the Lord, the LORD of Armies.

5 The waters of the sea will dry up, and the river will be parched and dry.[1]

6 The canals will stink; the streams of Egypt will dwindle and dry up; reeds and rushes will wither.

7 The plants along the Nile, at the mouth of the Nile, and every sown field along the Nile will dry up, be blown away and be no more.

8 The fishermen will mourn, all who cast hooks into the Nile will lament, and those who spread nets on the water will pine away.

9 Those who work with combed flax will be in despair, and the weavers of white cloth will lose hope.

10 The pillars of the land will be crushed, and all the hired workers will be sick at heart.

11 The princes of Zoan are utter fools; Pharaoh's wise counsellors give senseless advice. How can you say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"?

12 Where then are your wise men? Let them tell you and make known what the LORD of Armies has planned against Egypt.

13 The princes of Zoan have become fools; the princes of Memphis are deceived; the cornerstones of her tribes have led Egypt astray.

14 The LORD has poured into them a spirit of confusion, and they make Egypt stagger in all she does, as a drunkard staggers in his vomit.

15 There is nothing Egypt can do, head or tail, palm branch or reed.

16 In that day the Egyptians will be like women; they will tremble with fear at the hand the LORD of Armies raises against them.

17 The land of Judah will become a terror to Egypt; everyone to whom it is mentioned will be in dread because of the plan the LORD of Armies has made against them.

18 On that day there will be five cities in Egypt speaking the tongue of Canaan and swearing loyalty to the LORD of Armies; one will be named the City of Destruction.[2]

19 In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the middle of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border.

20 It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of Armies in the land of Egypt; when they cry out to the LORD because of their oppressors, He will send them a saviour and defender who will rescue them.

21 So the LORD will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will worship with sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and keep them.

22 The LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing; they will turn to the LORD, and He will hear their pleas and heal them.

23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will come to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

24 On that day Israel will stand as a third alongside Egypt and Assyria, a blessing at the heart of the world,

25 whom the LORD of Armies will bless with the words, "Blessed are Egypt, My people, Assyria, whom My hands have made, and Israel, My own possession."

1 'The sea' and 'the river' here both mean the Nile.

2 Some Hebrew manuscripts and the Dead Sea Scrolls have 'the City of the Sun', that is, Heliopolis.

Chapter 20

> *Isaiah 20 tells how, when Sargon's commander took Ashdod, the LORD told Isaiah to strip off his sackcloth and sandals. For three years Isaiah went stripped and barefoot as a sign against Egypt and Cush: so the king of Assyria would lead away their captives in shame, and those on the coast who had trusted in them would ask how they could ever escape.*

1 In the year that the commander-in-chief, sent by Sargon king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and captured it,[1]

2 at that time the LORD spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz, saying, "Go, loosen the sackcloth from your waist and take your sandals off your feet." And he did so, going about stripped and barefoot.

3 Then the LORD said, "Just as My servant Isaiah has gone stripped and barefoot for three years as a sign and portent against Egypt and Cush,

4 so the king of Assyria will drive off the prisoners of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old, naked and barefoot, their buttocks uncovered, to Egypt's disgrace.

5 They will be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush, their hope, and Egypt, their boast.

6 In that day those who live on this coast will say, 'See what has happened to those we trusted, to

whom we fled for help and rescue from the king of
Assyria! How then can we escape?’”

1 In 711 BC. Ashdod, a Philistine city, had rebelled against Assyria hoping for help from Egypt.

Chapter 21

Isaiah 21 gives three short oracles. The first, on the Wilderness of the Sea, is a harsh vision that leaves the prophet in anguish: Elam and Media advance, and a watchman posted at the LORD’s command at last sees riders coming and cries, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon!” The second, on Dumah, has someone calling from Seir to ask the watchman what is left of the night. The third, on Arabia, tells the people of Tema to bring water and bread to fugitives, for within a year the glory of Kedar will end.

1 An oracle concerning the Wilderness of the Sea:
Like whirlwinds sweeping through the Negev, it
comes from the wilderness, from a terrifying
land.[1]

2 A harsh vision has been shown to me: the traitor
betrays, and the destroyer destroys. Go up, Elam!
Lay siege, Media! I will put an end to all the
groaning she has caused.

3 Therefore my body is filled with anguish; pangs
have seized me like the pangs of a woman in
labour. I am bewildered by what I hear, dismayed
by what I see.

4 My heart staggers; horror overwhelms me; the
twilight I longed for has become a terror to me.

5 They set the table, they spread the rugs, they eat,
they drink. Rise up, you officers, oil the shields!

6 For this is what the Lord said to me: “Go, post a
watchman; let him report what he sees.

7 When he sees riders, horsemen in pairs, riders on
donkeys, riders on camels, let him listen carefully,
very carefully.”

8 Then the watchman called out like a lion: “Lord, I
stand on the watchtower continually by day, and I
am stationed at my post every night.[2]

9 And look, here comes a man in a chariot, with a
pair of horsemen!” And he answered, “Fallen,
fallen is Babylon, and all the images of her gods
lie shattered on the ground!”[3]

10 O my people, threshed and winnowed on my
threshing floor, what I have heard from the LORD
of Armies, the God of Israel, I have told you.

11 An oracle concerning Dumah: One calls to me
from Seir, “Watchman, what is left of the night?
Watchman, what is left of the night?”

12 The watchman says, “Morning comes, and also
the night. If you would ask, ask; come back
again.”

13 An oracle concerning Arabia: In the thickets of
Arabia you will lodge, you caravans of Dedanites.

14 Bring water for the thirsty; you who live in the
land of Tema, meet the fugitive with bread.

15 They are running from the swords, from the
sword drawn and ready, from the bow bent to
shoot, from the crush of battle.

16 For this is what the Lord said to me: Within a
year, as a hired worker counts it, all the glory of
Kedar will come to an end.

17 The remaining archers, the warriors of Kedar,
will be few, for the LORD, the God of Israel, has
spoken.

1 Probably southern Babylonia, by the Persian Gulf; see verse 9.

2 The Dead Sea Scrolls have ‘Then the watchman called out’.

3 Compare Revelation 14:8; 18:2.

Chapter 22

Isaiah 22 turns to Jerusalem, the Valley of Vision. The city revels on its rooftops, though its rulers fled and were captured, and the prophet weeps bitterly. When enemies filled its valleys, the people looked to their weapons, repaired the walls and stored water, but did not look to the God who planned it all. Called to mourning, they feasted instead: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Then the LORD sends Isaiah against Shebna the steward, who is carving himself a grand tomb: he will be hurled away, and Eliakim will be given his robe and the key of the house of David. Yet even Eliakim, like a peg, will one day give way.

1 An oracle concerning the Valley of Vision: What troubles you now, that you have all gone up on the rooftops,[1]

2 you city full of commotion, town of tumult and revelry? Your slain were not slain by the sword or killed in battle.

3 All your rulers fled together; they were captured without a bow being drawn. All of you who were found were captured together, though you had fled far away.

4 Therefore I said, "Look away from me; let me weep bitterly. Do not try to comfort me over the destruction of the daughter of my people."

5 For the Lord GOD of Armies has a day of tumult and trampling and confusion in the Valley of Vision, a day of battering down walls and of crying out to the mountains.

6 Elam took up the quiver, with chariots and horsemen, and Kir uncovered the shield.

7 Your choicest valleys were full of chariots, and horsemen took up positions at the gates.

8 He removed the covering of Judah, and in that day you looked to the weapons in the House of the Forest.

9 You saw that there were many breaches in the walls of the City of David; you collected the waters of the lower pool.

10 You counted the houses of Jerusalem and tore houses down to strengthen the wall.

11 Between the two walls you built a cistern for the water of the old pool. But you never looked to the One who brought this about, or gave a thought to Him who shaped it long ago.

12 In that day the Lord GOD of Armies called for weeping and mourning, for shaving the head and putting on sackcloth.

13 But instead there is joy and merrymaking, killing cattle and slaughtering sheep, eating meat and drinking wine: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."[2]

14 The LORD of Armies has revealed this in my hearing: Surely this guilt will not be atoned for until you die, says the Lord GOD of Armies.

15 This is what the Lord GOD of Armies says: Go to this steward, to Shebna, who is over the household, and say:

16 What are you doing here, and who gave you leave to cut out a tomb for yourself here, cutting your tomb on the height and carving a resting place for yourself in the rock?

17 See, the LORD is about to hurl you away violently, you strong man, and grip you firmly.

18 He will roll you up tightly like a ball and throw you into a wide land. There you will die, and there your splendid chariots will remain, you disgrace to your master's house!

19 I will push you out of your position and drag you down from your office.

20 In that day I will summon My servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah.

21 I will clothe him with your robe and fasten your sash on him and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to the people of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.

22 I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; what he opens, no one will shut, and what he shuts, no one will open.[3]

23 I will drive him like a peg into a firm place, and he will become a throne of honour for his father's house.

24 They will hang on him all the weight of his father's house, offspring and offshoots, all the small vessels, from bowls to jars.

25 In that day, declares the LORD of Armies, the peg driven into a firm place will give way; it will be cut down and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off, for the LORD has spoken.

1 Jerusalem, perhaps named from the valleys around it.

2 Quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:32.

3 Compare Revelation 3:7.

Chapter 23

Isaiah 23 is the oracle concerning Tyre, the great sea-trading city. The ships of Tarshish are told to wail, for Tyre is destroyed, and Sidon is put to shame. The LORD of Armies planned it, to humble the pride of all the honoured of the earth. Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, then return to her trade like a prostitute singing to be remembered; but in the end her profits will be holy to the LORD and supply those who live in His presence.

1 An oracle concerning Tyre: Wail, you ships of Tarshish, for Tyre is destroyed, without house or harbour! From the land of Cyprus the news has reached them.[1]

2 Be silent, you people of the coast, you merchants of Sidon, whose messengers crossed the sea

3 over many waters. Her revenue was the grain of Shihor, the harvest of the Nile, and she was the marketplace of the nations.

4 Be ashamed, Sidon, for the sea has spoken, the stronghold of the sea: “I have neither laboured nor given birth; I have not raised young men or brought up young women.”

5 When the report reaches Egypt, they will be in anguish at the news about Tyre.

6 Cross over to Tarshish; wail, you people of the coast!

7 Is this your exultant city, whose origin is from days of old, whose feet carried her to settle far away?

8 Who devised this against Tyre, the city that handed out crowns, whose traders were princes and whose dealers were famed throughout the world?

9 The LORD of Armies has planned it, to defile the pride of all glory and to humble all the honoured of the earth.

10 Overflow your land like the Nile, daughter of Tarshish; there is no longer any restraint.

11 He has stretched out His hand over the sea and made kingdoms tremble; the LORD has given command concerning Canaan to destroy its strongholds.

12 He said, “You will exult no more, oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon. Rise, cross over to Cyprus; even there you will find no rest.”

13 Look at the land of the Chaldeans! This is the people that is no more. Assyria destined it for desert creatures; they raised their siege towers, stripped its palaces and made it a ruin.[2]

14 Wail, you ships of Tarshish, for your stronghold is destroyed!

15 In that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, the span of one king’s life. At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the prostitute:

16 “Take a lyre and go about the city, forgotten prostitute! Play skilfully, sing many songs, so that you may be remembered.”

17 At the end of seventy years the LORD will visit Tyre. She will return to her hire and prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth.

18 But her profits and her hire will be holy to the LORD. They will not be stored or hoarded, but will supply abundant food and fine clothing for those who live before the LORD.

1 Hebrew ‘Kittim’, here and in verse 12.

2 The meaning of the Hebrew of this verse is uncertain.

Chapter 24

Isaiah 24 begins a vision of judgement on the whole earth. The LORD will lay the earth waste, sparing neither priest nor people, master nor servant, for its inhabitants have broken the everlasting covenant. The wine and music cease, and the city of chaos is shut up. From the ends of the earth come songs of glory to the Righteous One, but the prophet wastes away at the treachery he sees. Terror, pit and snare await; the earth reels like a drunkard. The LORD will punish the powers of heaven and the kings of earth, and then He will reign in glory on Mount Zion.

1 See, the LORD is about to lay the earth waste
and make it desolate; He will twist its surface and
scatter its inhabitants.[1]

2 It will be the same for priest as for people, for
master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for
seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for
debtor as for creditor.

3 The earth will be utterly laid waste and utterly
plundered, for the LORD has spoken this word.

4 The earth mourns and withers; the world
languishes and withers; the exalted of the earth
languish.

5 The earth is defiled by its inhabitants, for they
have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes
and broken the everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its
people bear their guilt; therefore the inhabitants
of the earth are burned up, and few people are
left.

7 The new wine dries up and the vine wilts; all who
were glad at heart groan.

8 The joyful sound of tambourines is stilled, the
noise of the revellers has ceased, the joy of the
lyre is silenced.

9 No longer do they drink wine with singing;
strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

10 The city of chaos is broken down; every house is
shut up so that no one can enter.

11 In the streets they cry out for wine; all joy has
turned to gloom; gladness is banished from the
earth.

12 Desolation is left in the city, and its gate is
battered into ruins.

13 For so it will be in the midst of the earth among
the peoples, as when an olive tree is beaten, as at
the gleaning when the grape harvest is over.

14 They raise their voices and shout for joy; from
the west they proclaim the majesty of the LORD.

15 Therefore in the east give glory to the LORD; in
the coastlands of the sea give glory to the name of
the LORD, the God of Israel.

16 From the ends of the earth we hear songs:
“Glory to the Righteous One!” But I said, “I waste
away, I waste away! Woe is me! The treacherous
betray; with treachery the treacherous betray.”

17 Terror, pit and snare await you, you people of
the earth![2]

18 Whoever flees at the sound of terror will fall into
the pit, and whoever climbs out of the pit will be
caught in the snare. For the windows of heaven
are opened, and the foundations of the earth
shake.

19 The earth is shattered; the earth is torn apart;
the earth totters and reels.

20 The earth staggers like a drunkard; it sways like
a hut. Its rebellion lies heavy on it, and it falls,
never to rise again.

21 In that day the LORD will punish the host of
heaven in the heavens and the kings of the earth
on the earth.

22 They will be herded together like prisoners in a
pit; they will be shut up in a prison and after many
days be punished.

23 Then the moon will be confounded and the sun
ashamed, for the LORD of Armies will reign on
Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and His glory will
be before His elders.

1 Chapters 24–27 widen the oracles against the nations into a vision of the whole world.

2 In Hebrew the three words sound alike: ‘pahad, pahat, pah’.

Chapter 25

Isaiah 25 is a song of praise for the LORD's faithful plans: He has made the proud city a ruin and been a refuge for the poor. On Mount Zion He will prepare a feast of rich food and aged wine for all peoples, remove the shroud over the nations, swallow up death for ever and wipe away the tears from every face. His people will say, "Look, this is our God; we waited for Him, and He saved us." Moab, by contrast, will be trampled down in its pride.

1 LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You and praise Your name, for You have done wonderful things, plans formed long ago, faithful and sure.

2 For You have made the city a heap of rubble, the fortified town a ruin; the foreigners' palace is a city no more; it will never be rebuilt.

3 Therefore a strong people will honour You; the city of ruthless nations will fear You.

4 For You have been a stronghold for the poor, a stronghold for the needy in their distress, a refuge from the storm and a shade from the heat. For the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall,

5 like heat in a dry land. You subdue the uproar of foreigners; as heat is cooled by the shade of a cloud, so the song of the ruthless is silenced.

6 On this mountain the LORD of Armies will prepare for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of aged wine, of the best of meats and the finest of wines.

7 On this mountain He will swallow up the shroud that covers all peoples, the sheet spread over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death for ever. The Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from every face and remove the disgrace of His people from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.[1]

9 In that day they will say, "Look, this is our God; we waited for Him, and He saved us. This is the LORD; we waited for Him; let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

10 For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain, but Moab will be trampled down in his place as straw is trampled in the water of a dung heap.

11 He will spread out his hands in it as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim, but the LORD will bring down his pride despite the skill of his hands.

12 The high fortifications of your walls He will bring down, lay low and cast to the ground, to the very dust.

1 1 Corinthians 15:54 quotes the first line as 'Death is swallowed up in victory', following another reading of the Hebrew; compare Revelation 21:4.

Chapter 26

Isaiah 26 is the song Judah will sing in that day: they have a strong city whose gates open to the righteous nation. Those whose minds rest on the LORD He keeps in complete peace, for He is an everlasting Rock who brings down the lofty city. The people long for Him in the night; other lords have ruled them, but His name alone they honour. They laboured like a woman in childbirth but brought forth only wind. Yet the LORD's dead will live and rise from the dust. His people are to hide for a little while until His wrath has passed, for He is coming to punish the earth.

1 On that day the people of Judah will sing this song: Our city is strong; He makes salvation its walls and its ramparts.

2 Open the gates, so that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith.

3 Those whose minds rest on You, You guard in complete peace, because they trust in You.[1]

4 Trust in the LORD for ever, for the LORD, the LORD Himself, is an everlasting Rock.

5 For He has brought low those who live on high; He lays the lofty city low, lays it low to the ground and casts it down to the dust.

6 The foot tramples it, the feet of the oppressed, the steps of the poor.

7 The path of the righteous is level; You, the Upright One, make smooth the way of the righteous.

8 Yes, LORD, walking in the way of Your judgements, we wait for You; Your name and Your

renown are the desire of our souls.

9 My soul longs for You in the night; my spirit within me seeks You at dawn. For when Your judgements come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.

10 Though grace is shown to the wicked, he does not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness he acts unjustly and does not see the majesty of the LORD.

11 LORD, Your hand is lifted high, but they do not see it. Let them see Your zeal for Your people and be put to shame; let the fire reserved for Your enemies consume them.

12 LORD, You establish peace for us, for all that we have accomplished You have done for us.

13 LORD our God, other lords besides You have ruled over us, but Your name alone do we honour.

14 They are dead; they will not live; they are shades; they will not rise. For You have punished and destroyed them and wiped out all memory of them.

15 You have enlarged the nation, LORD; You have enlarged the nation; You are glorified; You have extended all the borders of the land.

16 LORD, in distress they sought You; they poured out a whispered prayer when Your discipline was on them.

17 Like a pregnant woman about to give birth, who writhes and cries out in her pains, so were we in Your presence, LORD.

18 We were pregnant, we writhed, but we gave birth to wind. We have brought no salvation to the earth, and no inhabitants of the world have been born.

19 Your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy! For your dew is like the dew of the morning, and the earth will give birth to the dead.[2]

20 Come, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until the wrath has passed by.

21 For see, the LORD is coming out from His dwelling place to punish the people of the earth for their iniquity. The earth will disclose the blood shed on it and will no longer cover its slain.

1 Hebrew ‘peace, peace’, meaning perfect peace.

2 Compare Daniel 12:2. Hebrew ‘my body will rise’ and ‘dew of lights’.

Chapter 27

> *Isaiah 27 foretells that in that day the LORD will slay Leviathan, the twisting serpent of the sea. He sings of His vineyard, which He waters and guards night and day; Jacob will take root and fill the world with fruit. Israel’s punishment has been measured, and its guilt will be atoned for when the altars and Asherah poles are smashed, though the fortified city lies deserted. Then the LORD will gather His people one by one, and at the sound of a great trumpet the exiles in Assyria and Egypt will come to worship Him in Jerusalem.*

1 In that day the LORD will punish with His sword, harsh, great and strong, Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and He will slay the monster of the sea.[1]

2 In that day sing of a pleasant vineyard:

3 I, the LORD, am its keeper; I water it every moment. So that no one may harm it, I guard it night and day.

4 I have no anger. If only there were briers and thorns to fight! I would march against them and burn them all up.

5 Or else let them take hold of My protection; let them make peace with Me; let them make peace with Me.

6 In days to come Jacob will take root; Israel will bud and blossom and fill the whole world with fruit.

7 Has He struck Israel as He struck those who struck him? Has he been killed as his killers were killed?

8 By driving her away, by exile, You contended with her; He removed her with His fierce blast on the day of the east wind.

9 So by this the guilt of Jacob will be atoned for, and this will be the full fruit of removing his sin: when he makes all the altar stones like chalk crushed to pieces, no Asherah poles or incense altars will remain standing.

10 For the fortified city is solitary, a homestead
deserted and forsaken like the wilderness; there
the calf grazes, there it lies down and strips its
branches bare.
11 When its boughs are dry they are broken off;
women come and make fires with them. For this is
a people without understanding; therefore their
Maker has no compassion on them, and He who
formed them shows them no favour.
12 In that day the LORD will thresh from the
flowing Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt, and you,
people of Israel, will be gathered one by one.
13 In that day a great trumpet will be blown, and
those who were perishing in the land of Assyria
and those who were exiled in the land of Egypt
will come and worship the LORD on the holy
mountain in Jerusalem.

1 Leviathan, the sea monster of ancient poetry, stands for the powers of chaos and evil; compare Job 41; Psalm 74:14.

Chapter 28

Isaiah 28 pronounces woe on Samaria, the proud crown of Ephraim's drunkards, which will be trampled; but the LORD Himself will be a crown of glory for the remnant. Judah's priests and prophets also reel with drink and mock Isaiah's message as babble, so the LORD will speak to them through foreign tongues. The rulers of Jerusalem boast of a covenant with death, but the Lord GOD lays in Zion a tested and precious cornerstone; whoever trusts will not panic. Their covenant with death will be annulled. The chapter ends with a parable: as a farmer ploughs, sows and threshes each crop in its own way, so the LORD is wonderful in counsel.

1 Woe to the proud crown of Ephraim's drunkards,
to the fading flower of its glorious beauty, set on
the head of a fertile valley, the city of those
overcome by wine![1]
2 See, the Lord has one who is mighty and strong;
like a hailstorm and a destroying wind, like a
downpour of mighty, overflowing waters, he will
throw it to the ground with his hand.
3 The proud crown of Ephraim's drunkards will be
trampled underfoot,
4 and the fading flower of its glorious beauty, set
on the head of a fertile valley, will be like a fig ripe
before the summer harvest: whoever sees it
swallows it as soon as it is in his hand.
5 In that day the LORD of Armies will be a crown
of glory and a diadem of beauty for the remnant of
His people,
6 a spirit of justice for the one who sits in
judgement, and strength for those who turn back
the battle at the gate.
7 These also stagger from wine and reel from
strong drink: priest and prophet stagger from
strong drink and are befuddled by wine; they reel
from strong drink, they stagger when seeing
visions, they stumble when giving judgement.
8 For all the tables are covered with vomit; there is
no place without filth.
9 "Whom is he trying to teach? To whom is he
explaining his message? To children weaned from
milk, to those just taken from the breast?
10 For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule
on rule; a little here, a little there."[2]
11 So then, with stammering lips and a foreign
tongue He will speak to this people,
12 to whom He said, "This is the place of rest; let
the weary rest; this is the place of repose," but
they would not listen.[3]
13 So the word of the LORD to them will be: Do and
do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little
here, a little there, so that they will go and fall
backwards, be broken, snared and captured.
14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you
scoffers who rule this people in Jerusalem.
15 Because you have said, "We have made a
covenant with death, and with Sheol we have an
agreement. When the overwhelming scourge
passes through, it will not touch us, for we have
made lies our refuge and hidden ourselves in
falsehood,"
16 therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: See, I
am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a
precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever
trusts will not be in haste.[4]
17 I will use justice as the measuring line and
righteousness as the plumb line; hail will sweep
away your false refuge, and floods will swamp
your hiding place.
18 Your covenant with death will be cancelled, your
pact with Sheol will not stand; when the flood of

the scourge sweeps through, it will beat you down.

19 As often as it passes through, it will take you; morning after morning it will pass through, by day and by night. Understanding this message will bring sheer terror.

20 The bed is too short to lie stretched out on, and the cover too small to wrap round you.

21 For the LORD will rise up as at Mount Perazim; He will rouse Himself as in the Valley of Gibeon, to do His work, His strange work, and to perform His task, His alien task.[5]

22 So now, stop your mocking, or your bonds will be made tighter, for I have heard from the Lord GOD of Armies a decree of destruction against the whole land.

23 Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say.

24 Does the ploughman plough all day for sowing? Does he keep breaking up and harrowing his ground?

25 When he has levelled its surface, does he not scatter dill and sow cumin, and put in wheat in rows, barley in its place, and spelt at the edges?

26 For his God instructs him and teaches him the right way.

27 Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over cumin; dill is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod.

28 Grain is crushed for bread, but one does not thresh it for ever; though he drives his cartwheel and horses over it, he does not crush it.

29 This also comes from the LORD of Armies, who is wonderful in counsel and great in wisdom.

1 Samaria, capital of the northern kingdom, built on a hill above a fertile valley.

2 The Hebrew sounds like baby talk, ‘tsav la-tsav, qav la-qav’, mocking the prophet’s teaching.

3 Verses 11–12 are quoted, in a different form, in 1 Corinthians 14:21.

4 Quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 9:33; 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6: ‘will not be put to shame’.

5 See 2 Samuel 5:20 and Joshua 10:10–14. This time the LORD will fight against His own people.

Chapter 29

> *Isaiah 29 pronounces woe on Ariel, the city where David camped. The LORD will besiege her until her voice whispers from the dust; then suddenly He will scatter her enemies like chaff, and they will vanish like a dream. The people are blind and asleep, and the vision is like a sealed book they cannot read. They honour God with their lips while their hearts are far from Him, so He will do wonders that confound the wise. Those who hide their plans from Him forget that the clay cannot judge the potter. Soon the deaf will hear and the blind see, the humble will rejoice, and Jacob will no longer be ashamed.*

1 Woe to Ariel, Ariel, the city where David camped! Add year to year; let the festivals run their round.[1]

2 Yet I will bring distress on Ariel; there will be mourning and lamentation, and she will be to Me like an altar hearth.

3 I will encamp against you all around; I will besiege you with towers and raise siege works against you.

4 Brought low, you will speak from the ground; your words will come muffled from the dust. Your voice will come from the ground like that of a ghost, and your speech will whisper from the dust.

5 But the horde of your enemies will become like fine dust, the horde of the ruthless like chaff blowing away. Suddenly, in an instant,

6 you will be visited by the LORD of Armies with thunder and earthquake and great noise, with whirlwind and storm and the flame of a devouring fire.

7 And the swarm of all the nations warring against Ariel, all who storm her fortress and press her hard, will vanish like a dream, like a vision seen at night,

8 as when a hungry man dreams he is eating, but wakes up with his hunger unsatisfied, or as when a thirsty man dreams he is drinking, but wakes up faint with his thirst unquenched. So it will be with the horde of all the nations that fight against Mount Zion.

9 Be astonished and dumbfounded; blind yourselves and be blind! Be drunk, but not with wine; stagger, but not from strong drink.

10 For the LORD has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep; He has shut your eyes, the prophets,

and covered your heads, the seers.[2]

11 For you the whole vision has become like the
words of a sealed book. When they give it to one
who can read and say, “Read this, please,” he
answers, “I cannot, for it is sealed.”

12 And when they give the book to one who cannot
read and say, “Read this, please,” he answers, “I
cannot read.”

13 The Lord said: Because this people draw near
with their mouths and honour Me with their lips,
while their hearts are far from Me, and their fear
of Me is a commandment taught by men,[3]

14 therefore I will again do amazing things with
this people, wonder upon wonder. The wisdom of
their wise will perish, and the understanding of
their discerning will vanish.[4]

15 Woe to those who go to great depths to hide
their plans from the LORD, who do their work in
the dark and say, “Who sees us? Who will know?”

16 You turn things upside down! Is the potter to be
regarded as the clay, that what is made should say
of its maker, “He did not make me,” or the thing
formed say of the one who formed it, “He has no
understanding”?

17 In a very short time will not Lebanon be turned
into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be
regarded as a forest?

18 In that day the deaf will hear the words of a
book, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of
the blind will see.

19 The humble will again rejoice in the LORD, and
the poorest of people will exult in the Holy One of
Israel.

20 For the ruthless will come to nothing and the
mocker will cease, and all who watch for evil will
be cut off,

21 those who make a man guilty by a word, who set
a trap for the one who reproves at the gate and
with empty arguments turn aside the innocent.

22 Therefore this is what the LORD, who redeemed
Abraham, says concerning the house of Jacob:
Jacob will no longer be ashamed; his face will no
longer grow pale.

23 For when he sees his children, the work of My
hands, in his midst, they will keep My name holy;
they will keep holy the Holy One of Jacob and
stand in awe of the God of Israel.

24 Those who go astray in spirit will come to
understanding, and those who grumble will accept
instruction.

1 Ariel, a name for Jerusalem, means ‘altar hearth’ (verse 2), or perhaps ‘lion of God’.

2 Compare Romans 11:8.

3 Quoted, from the Greek, in Matthew 15:8–9 and Mark 7:6–7.

4 Quoted, from the Greek, in 1 Corinthians 1:19.

Chapter 30

Isaiah 30 condemns the rebellious children who go down to Egypt for help without asking the LORD; Egypt is Rahab Who Sits Still, and its help is worthless. They tell the prophets to speak smooth things, so their sin will collapse on them like a bulging wall. Their salvation lay in returning and rest, quietness and trust, but they chose to flee on horses. Yet the LORD waits to be gracious: He will answer their cry, their Teacher will guide them, saying, “This is the way; walk in it,” and He will send rain and abundance and heal His people. His name comes in burning anger to shatter Assyria, while His people sing as at a festival.

1 Woe to the rebellious children, declares the
LORD, who carry out a plan that is not Mine and
make an alliance, but not by My Spirit, adding sin
to sin;

2 who set out to go down to Egypt without
consulting Me, to take refuge in Pharaoh’s
protection and to shelter in Egypt’s shade!

3 Pharaoh’s protection will become your shame,
and shelter in Egypt’s shade your disgrace.

4 Though his officials are at Zoan and his envoys
have reached Hanes,

5 everyone will be put to shame because of a
people who cannot help them, who bring neither
help nor profit, only shame and disgrace.

6 An oracle concerning the beasts of the Negev:
Through a land of trouble and distress, of lioness
and lion, of viper and flying serpent, they carry
their riches on the backs of donkeys and their

treasures on the humps of camels to a people that cannot help them.

7 Egypt's help is worthless and empty; therefore I have called her Rahab Who Sits Still.[1]

8 Now go, write it on a tablet before them and inscribe it in a book, so that it may serve for the time to come as a witness for ever.

9 For they are a rebellious people, lying children, children unwilling to hear the instruction of the LORD,

10 who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right; speak to us smooth things; prophesy illusions.

11 Get out of the way; turn aside from the path; stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!"

12 Therefore this is what the Holy One of Israel says: Because you have rejected this word and trusted in oppression and deceit and relied on them,

13 this iniquity will be to you like a breach in a high wall, bulging out and about to collapse, whose crash comes suddenly, in an instant;

14 it will break like a potter's jar, smashed so ruthlessly that among its pieces not a fragment is found for taking fire from a hearth or scooping water from a cistern.

15 For this is what the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, says: In returning and rest you will be saved; in quietness and trust will be your strength. But you were unwilling.

16 You said, "No! We will flee on horses." Therefore you will flee! "We will ride on swift steeds." Therefore your pursuers will be swift!

17 A thousand of you will run at the shout of one; at the shout of five you will all run, until those left of you are like a lone pole on a hilltop, a banner on a height.

18 Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you; therefore He rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all who wait for Him.

19 O people of Zion who live in Jerusalem, your weeping is over. He will show you grace when you cry for help; the moment He hears you, He will answer.

20 Though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself; your eyes will see your Teacher.[2]

21 And your ears will hear a word behind you: "This is the way; walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

22 Then you will defile your silver-plated idols and your gold-covered images; you will scatter them like a menstrual cloth and say to them, "Away with you!"

23 He will give rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and the bread that the ground produces will be rich and plentiful. In that day your cattle will graze in wide pastures.

24 The oxen and donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, winnowed with shovel and fork.

25 On every high mountain and every lofty hill there will be streams of running water, in the day of great slaughter, when the towers fall.

26 The moon will shine as brightly as the sun, and the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days together, on the day the LORD bandages His people's injuries and heals the wounds He dealt them.

27 See, the name of the LORD comes from afar, burning with His anger, in thick rising smoke; His lips are full of fury, and His tongue is like a consuming fire.

28 His breath is like an overflowing torrent that rises up to the neck, to sift the nations in the sieve of destruction, and to place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads them astray.

29 You will have a song as on the night when a holy festival is kept, and gladness of heart as when one goes up with the flute to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

30 The LORD will make His majestic voice heard and show the descent of His arm in raging anger and the flame of a devouring fire, with cloudburst, storm and hailstones.

31 At the voice of the LORD Assyria will be shattered; He will strike with His rod.

32 Every stroke of the appointed staff that the LORD lays on him will be to the sound of tambourines and lyres, as He fights against them with brandished arm.

33 For Topheth has long been prepared; it has been made ready for the king. Its fire pit has been made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of burning sulphur, sets it ablaze.[3]

1 Rahab, the sea monster of ancient poetry, was a name for Egypt (Psalm 87:4).

2 Or ‘your teachers’.

3 Topheth was the place of burning in the Valley of Ben-hinnom (2 Kings 23:10).

Chapter 31

Isaiah 31 again pronounces woe on those who go down to Egypt and trust in horses and chariots instead of the Holy One of Israel. The Egyptians are men, not God, and their horses flesh, not spirit. Like a lion that is not frightened off its prey, the LORD of Armies will come down to fight for Mount Zion, and like birds hovering overhead He will shield Jerusalem. Israel is called to return to Him and throw away its idols, for Assyria will fall by a sword not of man.

1 Woe to those who run down to Egypt for help and lean on horses, who put their trust in great numbers of chariots and in the strength of their cavalry, yet never look to the Holy One of Israel or turn to the LORD!

2 Yet He too is wise and can bring disaster; He does not take back His words. He will rise against the house of evildoers and against the helpers of those who do wrong.

3 The Egyptians are men, not God, and their horses are flesh, not spirit. When the LORD stretches out His hand, the helper will stumble and the one helped will fall; they will all perish together.

4 For this is what the LORD said to me: As a lion or a young lion growls over its prey, and though a whole band of shepherds is called out against it, it is not frightened by their shouting or daunted by their noise, so the LORD of Armies will come down to fight on Mount Zion and on its hill.

5 Like birds hovering overhead, the LORD of Armies will shield Jerusalem; He will shield and rescue it, pass over and deliver it.[1]

6 Return to Him against whom you have so deeply rebelled, people of Israel.

7 For in that day each of you will reject the idols of silver and gold that your sinful hands have made.

8 Assyria will fall by a sword not of man; a sword not of mortals will devour him. He will flee from the sword, and his young men will be put to forced labour.

9 His rock will pass away in terror, and his officers will desert the standard in panic, declares the LORD, whose fire is in Zion and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

1 ‘Pass over’ is the word used of the Passover in Exodus 12:13.

Chapter 32

Isaiah 32 looks to a king who will reign in righteousness, with princes who are a shelter from the storm and shade in a weary land. Then eyes will see and ears hear, and fools will no longer be called noble. The complacent women of Jerusalem are warned to tremble, for the harvest will fail and the city will be deserted, until the Spirit is poured out from on high. Then justice will live in the wilderness, righteousness will produce peace, and God’s people will live in quiet homes.

1 See, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice.

2 Each will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in a dry land, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land.

3 Then the eyes that see will no longer be dim, and the ears that hear will pay attention.

4 The mind of the rash will know and understand, and the stammering tongue will speak quickly and clearly.

5 The fool will no longer be called noble, nor the scoundrel be spoken of as honourable.

6 For the fool speaks folly, and his heart plots wickedness: to practise ungodliness and to spread error about the LORD, to leave the hungry empty and to deprive the thirsty of drink.

7 The scoundrel’s methods are evil; he devises wicked schemes to ruin the poor with lies, even when the plea of the needy is just.

8 But the noble man makes noble plans, and by noble deeds he stands.

9 Rise up, you women who are at ease, and hear
my voice; you complacent daughters, listen to
what I say.
10 In little more than a year you complacent
women will tremble, for the grape harvest will fail
and the fruit harvest will not come.
11 Tremble, you women who are at ease; shudder,
you complacent ones; strip yourselves bare and
put sackcloth round your waists.
12 Beat your breasts in grief for the lovely fields
and the vines heavy with fruit,
13 for the land of my people, overgrown with
thorns and briers, and for all the joyful houses in
the exultant city.
14 For the palace will be forsaken, the crowded city
deserted; hill and watchtower will become dens
for ever, a delight for wild donkeys, a pasture for
flocks,
15 until the Spirit is poured on us from above, and
the desert turns into orchard, and the orchard
seems like a forest.
16 Justice will make its home in the desert, and
righteousness will live in the orchard.
17 Righteousness will produce peace; its fruit will
be calm and security for ever.[1]
18 My people will dwell in peaceful homes, in safe
houses, in undisturbed places of rest.
19 Though hail flattens the forest and the city is
laid low,
20 blessed are you who sow beside every stream
and let your ox and donkey range freely.

1 Compare James 3:18.

Chapter 33

Isaiah 33 pronounces woe on the destroyer and prays for the LORD's grace. The land mourns, the treaties are broken, and the envoys weep, but the LORD will rise and consume the nations like thorns. The sinners in Zion ask who can live with the consuming fire, and the answer is the one who walks in righteousness and refuses bribes; he will dwell on the heights. Their eyes will see the King in His beauty and Jerusalem as a tent that will never be moved, for the LORD is their judge, lawgiver and king, and the people living there will be forgiven.

1 Woe to you, destroyer, who have not been
destroyed, traitor, who have not been betrayed!
When you have finished destroying, you will be
destroyed; when you have finished betraying, you
will be betrayed.
2 LORD, be gracious to us; we wait for You. Be our
strength every morning, our salvation in time of
trouble.
3 At the sound of the tumult the peoples flee; when
You rise up, the nations scatter.
4 Your plunder is gathered as locusts gather;
people swarm over it like swarming grasshoppers.
5 The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high; He
will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.
6 He will be the stability of your times, a store of
salvation, wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the
LORD is Zion's treasure.
7 Look, their brave men cry aloud in the streets;
the envoys of peace weep bitterly.
8 The highways are deserted; no traveller is on the
roads. The treaty is broken, its witnesses
despised; no one is regarded.[1]
9 The land mourns and languishes; Lebanon is
ashamed and withers; Sharon is like the Arabah,
and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves.
10 Now I will arise, says the LORD; now I will stand
up; now I will be lifted high.
11 What you conceive is chaff, and what you bear is
straw; your own breath is a fire that will burn you
up.
12 The peoples will be burned as if to lime, like
thorns cut down and set ablaze.
13 Hear what I have done, you who are far off;
recognise My strength, you who are near.
14 The sinners in Zion are terrified; trembling has
seized the godless: "Who of us can live with the
consuming fire? Who of us can live with
everlasting burnings?"
15 The one who walks in righteousness and speaks
what is right, who rejects gain from extortion, who
keeps his hands from taking bribes, who stops his
ears from hearing of bloodshed and shuts his eyes
from looking on evil,
16 he will dwell on the heights; the fortress of
rocks will be his refuge; his bread will be given

him, and his water will not fail.

17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will see a land that stretches far away.

18 Your heart will recall the terror: “Where is the one who counted? Where is the one who weighed the tribute? Where is the one who counted the towers?”

19 You will no longer see the arrogant people, the people of obscure speech that you could not comprehend, with a stammering tongue you could not understand.

20 Look on Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, and none of its ropes broken.

21 There the LORD in His majesty will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams, where no galley with oars will go and no mighty ship will pass.

22 For the LORD is our judge; the LORD gives us our laws; the LORD is our king; it is He who will save us.

23 Your ropes hang loose; they cannot hold the mast firm or spread the sail. Then an abundance of spoil will be divided; even the lame will carry off plunder.

24 No one living there will say, “I am sick”; the people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.

1 So the Dead Sea Scrolls; the main Hebrew text has ‘cities’.

Chapter 34

Isaiah 34 summons the nations to hear of the LORD’s fury against them. Their slain will lie unburied, and the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll. His sword descends on Edom for a great slaughter, a day of vengeance on behalf of Zion. Edom’s streams will become burning pitch, and its land will lie waste for ever, measured out to chaos and given over to owls, jackals and wild creatures, as the book of the LORD declares.

1 Come near, you nations, to listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that fills it, the world, and all that comes from it.

2 For the LORD is angry with all the nations and furious with all their armies; He has devoted them to destruction and given them over to slaughter.

3 Their slain will be thrown out, and the stench of their corpses will rise; the mountains will flow with their blood.

4 All the host of heaven will rot away, and the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll; all their host will wither like leaves falling from the vine, like shrivelled figs from the fig tree.[1]

5 For My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends on Edom, on the people I have devoted to destruction, in judgement.

6 The sword of the LORD drips with blood; it is greasy with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats and the kidney fat of rams. For the LORD holds a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in Edom’s land.

7 Wild oxen will fall with them, and young bulls with the mighty steers. Their land will be drenched with blood, and their dust gorged with fat.

8 For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense to uphold Zion’s cause.

9 Edom’s streams will be turned into pitch and her dust into sulphur; her land will become burning pitch.

10 It will not be quenched night or day; its smoke will rise for ever. From generation to generation it will lie waste; no one will ever pass through it again.

11 The desert owl and the hedgehog will possess it; the great owl and the raven will nest there. He will stretch over it the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of emptiness.[2]

12 Her nobles will have nothing there to call a kingdom, and all her princes will be gone.

13 Thorns will grow over her fortresses, nettles and brambles in her strongholds. She will become a haunt for jackals, a home for ostriches.

14 Desert creatures will meet with hyenas, and wild goats will call to each other; there the night creature will settle and find herself a place to rest.

15 There the owl will nest and lay eggs, hatch them and gather her young under her shadow; there the kites will gather, each with its mate.

16 Look in the LORD's book and read it: not one of these creatures will be absent, none without its mate. His own mouth gave the order, and His Spirit brought them together.

17 He has cast the lot for them; His hand has portioned it out to them with a measuring line. They will possess it for ever and live there from generation to generation.

1 Compare Revelation 6:13–14.

2 'Chaos' and 'emptiness' are the words of Genesis 1:2, 'formless and empty'.

Chapter 35

Isaiah 35 turns to joy. The wilderness will blossom and see the glory of the LORD. The weak are to be strengthened and the anxious told, "Be strong; do not fear! Here is your God." Then the blind will see, the deaf hear, the lame leap and the mute shout, for streams will flow in the desert. A highway called the Way of Holiness will run through it, safe from lions, and the ransomed of the LORD will return to Zion with singing, while sorrow and sighing flee away.

1 Desert and parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and flower like the crocus.

2 It will burst into bloom and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the LORD, the splendour of our God.

3 Strengthen the weak hands and steady the knees that give way.[1]

4 Say to those whose hearts are anxious, "Be strong; do not fear! Here is your God; He will come with vengeance, with divine retribution. He will come and save you."

5 Then blind eyes will be opened and deaf ears unstopped.

6 Then the lame will leap like deer, and the mute tongue will sing for joy; water will burst out in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

7 The burning sand will become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they once lay, there will be grass with reeds and rushes.

8 A highway will be there, a road, and it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it; it will be for those who walk that way, and fools will not wander onto it.

9 There will be no lion there, and no savage beast will set foot on it; none will be found there. But the redeemed will walk on it,

10 and the ransomed of the LORD will return and come to Zion with singing, everlasting joy on their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.[2]

1 Compare Hebrews 12:12.

2 Repeated at 51:11.

Chapter 36

Isaiah 36 tells how, in Hezekiah's fourteenth year, Sennacherib king of Assyria took the fortified towns of Judah and sent his field commander with a great army to Jerusalem. Standing by the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, the commander mocked Hezekiah's trust in Egypt and in the LORD, and when the king's officials asked him to speak in Aramaic, he shouted in the language of Judah to the people on the wall, urging them not to let Hezekiah deceive them, for no god had saved any nation from Assyria. The people kept silent, and the officials brought his words to Hezekiah with their clothes torn.

1 In King Hezekiah's fourteenth year, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified towns of Judah and took them.[1]

2 The king of Assyria sent the field commander with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. He took up position by the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Launderer's Field.

3 Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went out to him.

4 The field commander said to them, "Tell Hezekiah, 'This is what the great king, the king of

Assyria, says: What is this confidence of yours based on?

5 You say you have counsel and strength for war, but these are empty words. On whom are you relying, that you have rebelled against me?

6 Look, you are relying on Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff, which pierces the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.

7 And if you say to me, "We are trusting in the LORD our God," is He not the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, telling Judah and Jerusalem, "You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem"?

8 Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you can put riders on them!

9 How then can you repulse even one officer among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?

10 Moreover, have I come up against this place to destroy it without the LORD? The LORD Himself told me, "Go up against this land and destroy it."'"

11 Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, Shebna and Joah said to the field commander, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak to us in the language of Judah within earshot of the people on the wall."

12 But the field commander replied, "Has my master sent me to say these things only to your master and to you, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine along with you?"

13 Then the field commander stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah: "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria!

14 This is what the king says: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he cannot deliver you from my hand.

15 Do not let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in the LORD by saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."

16 Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me and come out to me. Then each of you will eat from his own vine and his own fig tree and drink water from his own cistern,

17 until I come and remove you to a country like yours, a country of corn and new wine, of bread and vineyards.

18 Do not let Hezekiah mislead you when he says, "The LORD will save us." Has the god of any nation ever delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?

19 What has become of the gods of Hamath and of Arpad? What of the gods of Sepharvaim? Did they rescue Samaria from me?

20 Who among all the gods of these lands has delivered his land from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

21 But they kept silent and did not answer a word, for the king had commanded, "Do not answer him."

22 Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary and Joah son of Asaph the recorder went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and reported to him all that the field commander had said.

1 In 701 BC. Chapters 36–39 are found also, with small differences, in 2 Kings 18:13–20:19, and their wording here follows our 2 Kings. 2 Kings 18:14–16 has no parallel in Isaiah.

Chapter 37

Isaiah 37 tells how Hezekiah tore his clothes, went into the LORD's house and sent to Isaiah, who told him not to fear, for the king of Assyria would hear a rumour and return home. Sennacherib sent a letter repeating his threats; Hezekiah spread it before the LORD and prayed that all the kingdoms of the earth might know that He alone is God. Isaiah sent the LORD's answer: the virgin daughter of Zion despises the Assyrian, whose pride the LORD will curb with a hook in his nose; a remnant of Judah will take root, and the LORD will defend Jerusalem for His own sake and for David's sake. That night the angel of the LORD struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians, and Sennacherib went home, where his own sons killed him.

1 When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and went into the house of the LORD.

2 He sent Eliakim the palace administrator, Shebna the secretary and the senior priests, all wearing sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.

3 They said to him, “This is what Hezekiah says: ‘This day is a day of distress, of rebuke and disgrace. It is as when children have come to the moment of birth and there is no strength to deliver them.

4 Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of the field commander, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke him for the words the LORD your God has heard. So pray for the remnant that still survives.’”

5 When King Hezekiah’s officials came to Isaiah,

6 Isaiah said to them, “Tell your master, ‘This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid of the words you have heard, with which the underlings of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.

7 Listen! I am going to put a spirit in him so that, when he hears a certain report, he will return to his own land. And there I will have him cut down with the sword.’”

8 When the field commander heard that the king of Assyria had left Lachish, he withdrew and found the king fighting against Libnah.

9 Now Sennacherib received a report that Tirhakah king of Cush was marching out to fight against him. So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah with this word:

10 “Say to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Do not let the god you trust deceive you when he says, “Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.”

11 You have surely heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, devoting them to destruction. And will you be delivered?

12 Did the gods of the nations that my predecessors destroyed deliver them, the gods of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph and the people of Eden who were in Telassar?

13 What has become of the kings of Hamath and Arpad, and of the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena and of Ivvah?’”

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD.

15 And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD:

16 “LORD of Armies, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth.

17 Turn Your ear, LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, LORD, and see. Hear the words Sennacherib has sent to mock the living God.

18 It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have laid waste these nations and their lands.

19 They have thrown their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but only the work of human hands, wood and stone, and so they destroyed them.

20 Now, LORD our God, save us, I pray, from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, LORD, are God.”

21 Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘I have heard your prayer concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria.’

22 This is the word the LORD has spoken against him: ‘The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and scorns you; the daughter of Jerusalem tosses her head at your back.

23 Whom have you mocked and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes in pride? Against the Holy One of Israel!

24 Through your messengers you have mocked the Lord, and you have said, “With my many chariots I have climbed the heights of the mountains, the far recesses of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars, its finest junipers. I have reached its farthest lodging place, its densest forest.

25 I have dug wells and drunk water, and with the soles of my feet I have dried up all the streams of Egypt.”

26 Have you not heard? Long ago I ordained it; in days of old I planned it. Now I have brought it to pass, that you should turn fortified cities into heaps of rubble.

27 Their people, drained of strength, are dismayed and put to shame. They are like plants in the field, like tender green shoots, like grass on the roof, scorched before it grows up.

28 But I know when you sit down and when you go out and come in, and how you rage against Me.

29 Because you rage against Me and your arrogance has reached My ears, I will put My

hook in your nose and My bit in your mouth, and I will turn you back by the way you came.’

30 And this will be the sign for you, Hezekiah: this year you will eat what grows by itself, and in the second year what springs from that. But in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

31 Once more the surviving remnant of the house of Judah will take root below and bear fruit above.

32 For a remnant will come out of Jerusalem, and survivors from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

33 Therefore this is what the LORD says concerning the king of Assyria: ‘He will not enter this city or shoot an arrow here. He will not come before it with shield or build a siege ramp against it.

34 By the way he came he will return; he will not enter this city, declares the LORD.

35 I will defend this city and save it, for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David.’”

36 Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. When the people got up early in the morning, there were all the dead bodies![1]

37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.

38 One day, while he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword and escaped to the land of Ararat. And his son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king.

1 Compare 2 Chronicles 32:21.

Chapter 38

Isaiah 38 tells how Hezekiah fell mortally ill and Isaiah told him to set his house in order. Hezekiah turned to the wall and wept in prayer, and the LORD sent Isaiah back to promise him fifteen more years and the city’s deliverance, with a sign: the shadow on the stairway of Ahaz went back ten steps. Then comes the psalm Hezekiah wrote after his recovery: he had thought he would go down to Sheol in the middle of his days, his life rolled up like a weaver’s cloth, but the LORD kept him from the pit and cast all his sins behind His back, and he will sing in the LORD’s house all his days.

1 In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him and said, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Set your house in order, for you are going to die; you will not recover.’”[1]

2 Hezekiah turned to face the wall and prayed to the LORD:

3 “Please, LORD, remember how I have walked before You faithfully and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in Your sight.” And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah:

5 “Go and tell Hezekiah, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will add fifteen years to your life.

6 I will rescue you and this city from the power of Assyria’s king, and I will protect this city.

7 This is the sign to you from the LORD that the LORD will do what He has promised:

8 I will make the shadow cast by the sun on the stairway of Ahaz go back the ten steps it has gone down.’” So the sun went back the ten steps it had gone down.[2]

9 A writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, after he had been ill and had recovered from his illness:

10 I said: In the middle of my days I must depart; I am consigned to the gates of Sheol for the rest of my years.

11 I said: I will not see the LORD, the LORD in the land of the living; I will look on mankind no more among those who dwell in the world.

12 My dwelling is pulled up and taken from me like a shepherd’s tent; like a weaver I have rolled up my life; He cuts me off from the loom. From day to night You make an end of me.

13 I waited patiently till morning, but like a lion He breaks all my bones; from day to night You make an end of me.

14 Like a swift or a crane I chirp; I moan like a dove. My eyes grow weak from looking upward.

Lord, I am oppressed; be my security!

15 What am I to say? He has told me, and He has
acted. I will go on quietly through all my years, my
soul still bitter.

16 Lord, by such things people live, and in all of
them is the life of my spirit. Restore me to health
and let me live![3]

17 Surely it was for my welfare that I had such
bitterness. In love You have kept my soul from the
pit of destruction, for You have cast all my sins
behind Your back.

18 For Sheol cannot thank You; death cannot praise
You; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for
Your faithfulness.

19 The living, the living, they thank You, as I do
today; a father makes Your faithfulness known to
his children.

20 The LORD will save me, and we will play my
songs on stringed instruments all the days of our
life in the house of the LORD.

21 Now Isaiah had said, “Let them take a cake of
figs and apply it to the boil, and he will recover.”[4]

22 And Hezekiah had asked, “What will be the sign
that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?”

1 Compare 2 Kings 20:1–11, where the order of events is slightly different.

2 The stairway probably served as a sundial.

3 The meaning of the Hebrew of this verse is uncertain.

4 Verses 21–22 tell what happened before the sign in verses 7–8; compare 2 Kings 20:7–8.

Chapter 39

Isaiah 39 tells how envoys came from Merodach-baladan king of Babylon with letters and a present after Hezekiah’s recovery, and Hezekiah gladly showed them all his treasures. Isaiah asked what they had seen and then gave him the word of the LORD of Armies: everything in his palace would one day be carried off to Babylon, and some of his descendants would serve as eunuchs in the king of Babylon’s palace. Hezekiah called the word good, thinking there would be peace and security in his own lifetime.

1 At that time Merodach-baladan son of Baladan,
the king of Babylon, sent Hezekiah letters and a
gift, because he had heard about his illness and
his recovery.[1]

2 Hezekiah was glad of the envoys and showed
them his whole treasure house: the silver, the
gold, the spices and the fine oil, his armoury and
everything found in his storehouses. There was
nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that
Hezekiah did not show them.

3 Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah
and asked him, “What did these men say, and
where have they come from?” “They came from a
distant land,” Hezekiah replied. “They came from
Babylon.”

4 Isaiah asked, “What have they seen in your
palace?” “They have seen everything in my
palace,” Hezekiah answered. “There is nothing
among my treasures that I did not show them.”

5 Isaiah then said to Hezekiah, “Listen to the word
of the LORD of Armies.

6 The days are surely coming when everything in
your palace, and all that your ancestors have
stored up until this day, will be carried off to
Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD.

7 And some of your own descendants, who will be
born to you, will be taken away, and they will
become eunuchs in the palace of the king of
Babylon.”

8 Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The word of the LORD
you have spoken is good.” For he thought, “There
will be peace and security in my lifetime.”

1 Compare 2 Kings 20:12–19.

Chapter 40

Isaiah 40 opens the message of comfort: Jerusalem's hard service is over and her guilt paid for. A voice calls for a highway for the LORD in the wilderness, for His glory will be revealed to all flesh. People wither like grass, but the word of our God stands for ever. Zion is to tell the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!", who comes in might yet tends His flock like a shepherd. No one has measured or taught Him; the nations are a drop in a bucket, and no idol can compare with Him. He who names every star does not grow weary, and those who wait for Him will gain fresh strength and soar on wings like eagles.

1 Comfort My people, comfort them, says your God.[1]

2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and call out to her that her time of hard service is over, that her guilt has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

3 A voice is calling: In the wilderness clear the way of the LORD; make a straight highway in the desert for our God.[2]

4 Every valley will be raised up, and every mountain and hill made low; the uneven ground will become level, and the rough places a plain.

5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

6 A voice says, "Call out!" And I said, "What shall I call?" "All flesh is grass, and all its loyalty like the flower of the field.[3]

7 The grass withers and the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass.

8 Grass dries up and flowers droop, but the word of our God endures for ever."

9 Go up on a high mountain, Zion, bringer of good news; lift up your voice with strength, Jerusalem, bringer of good news; lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and His arm rules for Him. See, His reward is with Him, and His recompense goes before Him.

11 Like a shepherd He tends His flock; He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; He gently leads those that are nursing.

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, marked off the heavens with the span of his hand, held the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains on scales and the hills in a balance?

13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or as His counsellor has taught Him?[4]

14 Whom did He consult to give Him understanding? Who taught Him the path of justice, or taught Him knowledge, or showed Him the way of understanding?

15 See, the nations are like a drop from a bucket; they are counted as dust on the scales; He lifts up the islands like fine dust.

16 Lebanon is not enough for fuel, nor its animals enough for a burnt offering.

17 All the nations are as nothing before Him; He regards them as less than nothing and emptiness.

18 To whom, then, will you compare God? What likeness will you set up beside Him?

19 An idol? A craftsman casts it, a goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions silver chains for it.

20 One too poor for such an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not totter.

21 Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded?

22 It is He who is enthroned over the circle of the earth, whose people look like grasshoppers to Him; He spreads out the skies like a canopy and pitches them like a tent to dwell in.

23 He brings princes to nothing and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the ground, when He blows on them and they wither, and the storm carries them away like stubble.

25 To whom then will you compare Me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; because of His great might and the strength of His power, not one is missing.

27 Why do you say, Jacob, and complain, Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my cause

is disregarded by my God”?

28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not grow faint or weary; His understanding no one can fathom.

29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

30 Even young people grow faint and weary, and young men stumble and fall,

31 but those who wait for the LORD will gain fresh strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run without growing weary, walk without growing faint.

1 Chapters 40–66 look beyond Isaiah’s own day to the exile in Babylon and the return.

2 Verses 3–5 are quoted, from the Greek, in Luke 3:4–6 (compare Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; John 1:23), where the voice is in the wilderness.

3 Verses 6–8 are quoted, from the Greek, in 1 Peter 1:24–25, which has ‘glory’ for ‘loyalty’.

4 Quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 11:34 and 1 Corinthians 2:16: ‘Who has known the mind of the LORD?’

Chapter 41

Isaiah 41 summons the islands to judgement. The LORD has stirred up a conqueror from the east who scatters kings like chaff, while the nations prop up their idols with nails. But Israel, His servant, the offspring of Abraham His friend, need not fear: He will strengthen and uphold them, make them a threshing sledge, and turn the desert into pools for the poor and needy. Then the LORD challenges the idols to foretell what is coming; they cannot, for they are nothing, but He has announced to Zion the one He has raised up.

1 Be silent before Me, you islands; let the peoples renew their strength. Let them come forward and speak; let us meet together for judgement.

2 Who has stirred up one from the east, whom victory meets at every step? He hands nations over to him and subdues kings before him; he makes them like dust with his sword, like windblown chaff with his bow.[1]

3 He pursues them and passes on in safety by a path his feet have not travelled.

4 Who has brought this about and done it, summoning each generation from the start? It is I, the LORD; I was there first, and I will be with the last.

5 The islands see it and are afraid; the ends of the earth tremble; they draw near and come.

6 Each helps his neighbour and says to his brother, “Be strong!”

7 The craftsman encourages the goldsmith, and the one who smooths with the hammer encourages the one who strikes the anvil, saying of the soldering, “It is good.” He fastens it with nails so that it will not totter.

8 But you, Israel My servant, you, Jacob, My chosen one, descendants of Abraham who loved Me,[2]

9 you whom I took from the ends of the earth and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, “You are My servant; I have chosen you and not rejected you”:

10 Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

11 See, all who rage against you will be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and will perish.

12 You will look for those who quarrel with you, but you will not find them; those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all.

13 For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

14 Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you few men of Israel. I Myself will help you, declares the LORD; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

15 See, I will make you a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth; you will thresh the mountains and crush them, and make the hills like chaff.

16 You will toss them in the air, the wind will sweep them off, and the gale will blow them away; but you will be glad in the LORD and boast in Israel’s Holy One.

17 The poor and needy look for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

18 I will open rivers on the bare heights and springs in the valleys; I will turn the desert into pools of water and the dry land into springs.

19 I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle and the olive; I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together,

20 so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

21 Present your case, says the LORD; bring your strong arguments, says the King of Jacob.

22 Let them bring them and tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their outcome; or declare to us the things to come.

23 Tell us what is coming hereafter, so that we may know that you are gods. Do something, good or bad, so that we may be dismayed and see it together.

24 See, you are less than nothing, and your work is worthless; whoever chooses you is detestable.

25 I have stirred up one from the north, and he has come, one from the rising of the sun who calls on My name. He tramples rulers as if they were mortar, as a potter treads the clay.

26 Who declared it from the beginning, so that we might know, or beforehand, so that we might say, "He is right"? No one declared it, no one proclaimed it, no one heard any words from you.

27 I was the first to say to Zion, "Look, here they are!" and I gave Jerusalem a bearer of good news.

28 But when I look, there is no one; among them there is no counsellor who can give an answer when I ask them.

29 See, they are all false; their works are nothing; their cast images are wind and emptiness.

1 Cyrus king of Persia, named in 44:28 and 45:1.
2 Compare 2 Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23.

Chapter 42

Isaiah 42 presents the LORD's chosen Servant, on whom He has put His Spirit: He will bring justice to the nations quietly, without breaking a bruised reed, and will be a covenant for the people and a light for the nations, opening blind eyes and freeing prisoners. The whole earth is called to sing a new song, for the LORD goes out like a warrior and will lead the blind by new paths. But Israel, the LORD's servant, is blind and deaf, plundered because it would not walk in His ways, and does not take it to heart.

1 Look at My Servant, whom I hold up, My chosen one, the delight of My soul. I have set My Spirit upon Him, and He will bring justice to the nations.[1]

2 He will not cry out or raise His voice, or make it heard in the streets.

3 A bruised reed He will not break, and a smouldering wick He will not snuff out; in faithfulness He will bring forth justice.

4 He will not grow dim or be crushed until He has established justice on the earth; and the islands will wait for His instruction.

5 This is what God the LORD says, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:

6 I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness; I will take hold of Your hand and keep You; I will make You a covenant for the people and a light for the nations,

7 to give sight to blind eyes, to lead captives out of confinement, and to free from the prison those who sit in darkness.

8 I am the LORD; that is My name. I will not give My glory to another or My praise to carved idols.

9 See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; before they spring up I tell you of them.

10 Sing to the LORD a new song, His praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea and all that is in it, you islands and all who live in them.

11 Let the wilderness and its towns raise their voices, the villages where Kedar lives; let the people of Sela sing for joy; let them shout from the mountaintops.

12 Let them give the LORD the glory and tell of His praise in the coastlands.

13 The LORD goes out like a mighty man; like a warrior He stirs up His zeal. He shouts, He raises the battle cry, He triumphs over His enemies.

14 For a long time I have kept silent; I have been still and held Myself back. Now, like a woman in labour, I will cry out; I will gasp and pant.

15 I will lay waste mountains and hills and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn rivers into islands and dry up the pools.

16 I will lead the blind by a way they do not know; I will guide them on paths they have not known. I will turn the darkness before them into light and make the rough places level. These are the things I will do, and I will not forsake them.

17 Those who trust in carved idols, who say to cast images, "You are our gods," will be turned back in utter shame.

18 Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, so that you may see!

19 Who is blind but My servant, or deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one at peace with Me, blind like the servant of the LORD?

20 You have seen many things, but you do not take them to heart; your ears are open, but no one hears.

21 It pleased the LORD, for the sake of His righteousness, to make His instruction great and glorious.

22 But this is a people plundered and looted, all of them trapped in holes and hidden in prisons. They have become plunder with no one to rescue them, spoil with no one to say, "Give it back!"

23 Which of you will listen to this, pay attention and hear for the time to come?

24 Who handed Jacob over to be spoil and Israel to the plunderers? Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned? They would not walk in His ways or obey His instruction.

25 So He poured out on him His burning anger and the fury of war. It set him ablaze all around, yet he did not understand; it burned him, yet he did not take it to heart.

1 This is the first of the passages about the Servant of the LORD (42:1–9; 49:1–13; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). In them the Servant's pronouns are capitalised, as in Matthew 12:18–21, which quotes verses 1–4 from the Greek. Elsewhere the servant is Israel.

Chapter 43

> *Isaiah 43 brings words of comfort to Israel: do not fear, for the LORD has redeemed you and called you by name; through waters and fire He will be with you, for you are precious in His sight. He will gather His sons and daughters from every direction. Israel is His witness that He alone is God and Saviour, and no one can deliver out of His hand. He who made a way through the sea will do a new thing, making rivers in the desert for His chosen people. Yet Israel has wearied Him with its sins; still He blots out their transgressions for His own sake.*

1 But now this is what the LORD says, He who created you, Jacob, He who formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through fire, you will not be burned; the flame will not set you ablaze.

3 For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place.

4 Because you are precious in My sight, honoured, and I love you, I give people in your place and nations in exchange for your life.

5 Have no fear, for I am with you. I will bring your children from the east and gather you together from the west.

6 To the north I will say, "Hand them over!" and to the south, "Do not keep them back! Bring My sons from far away and My daughters from the ends of the world,

7 everyone who is called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed and made."

8 Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears.

9 All the nations gather together, and the peoples assemble. Which of them can declare this and tell us the former things? Let them bring their

witnesses to prove them right, so that others may hear and say, “It is true.”

10 You are My witnesses, declares the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no god was formed, and after Me there will be none.[1]

11 I alone am the LORD; apart from Me there is no saviour.

12 I declared and saved and proclaimed, and there was no foreign god among you. You are My witnesses, declares the LORD, that I am God.

13 Yes, from of old I am He; no one can deliver out of My hand. When I act, who can reverse it?

14 This is what the LORD says, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring them all down as fugitives, the Chaldeans in the ships they rejoiced in.[2]

15 I am the LORD, your Holy One, Israel’s Creator and your King.

16 This is what the LORD says, who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters,

17 who brought out chariot and horse, army and warrior together; they lie down, never to rise; they are extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

18 Do not remember the former things or dwell on the past.

19 See, I am doing a new thing; now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

20 The wild animals will honour Me, the jackals and the ostriches, because I provide water in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My chosen people,

21 the people I formed for Myself, so that they may declare My praise.

22 But you did not call on Me, Jacob; you grew tired of Me, Israel.

23 You have not brought Me sheep for burnt offerings or honoured Me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with offerings or wearied you with demands for incense.

24 You have not spent your silver on fragrant cane for Me, nor filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices. Instead you have loaded Me with your sins and tired Me with your wrongdoing.

25 It is I, I alone, who wipe out your rebellious acts for My own sake and remember your sins no more.

26 Remind Me; let us argue the matter together; state your case so that you may be proved right.

27 Your first father sinned, and your spokesmen rebelled against Me.

28 So I profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and I handed Jacob over to destruction and Israel to scorn.

1 Compare John 8:24, 28.

2 The meaning of the Hebrew of the last line is uncertain.

Chapter 44

Isaiah 44 promises that the LORD will pour His Spirit on Jacob’s offspring, and they will gladly take His name. He is the first and the last, and there is no God besides Him. The chapter then mocks the making of idols: a carpenter burns half a log to cook his meal and warm himself, and from the rest makes a god and prays to it, never asking whether it is a lie. The LORD has swept away Israel’s sins like a cloud, and the heavens are called to sing. He who made all things says of Jerusalem that it will be rebuilt, and of Cyrus that he is His shepherd.

1 But now listen, Jacob My servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.

2 This is what the LORD says, who made you, who formed you in the womb and will help you: Do not fear, Jacob My servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.[1]

3 For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your offspring and My blessing on your descendants.

4 They will spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams.

5 One will say, “I belong to the LORD”; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; another will write on his hand, “The LORD’s”, and take the name Israel.

6 This is the word of the LORD, Israel's King and
Redeemer, the LORD of Armies: I am the first and
the last, and apart from Me there is no God.[2]
7 Who is like Me? Let him proclaim it; let him
declare it and set it out before Me, since I
established My ancient people. Let them foretell
what is coming and what will happen.
8 Do not tremble or be afraid. Have I not told you
from of old and declared it? You are My witnesses.
Is there any God besides Me? There is no other
Rock; I know of none.
9 All who make idols are nothing, and the things
they treasure are worthless. Their witnesses
neither see nor know, so they will be put to shame.
10 Who shapes a god or casts an idol that can profit
nothing?
11 See, all its devotees will be put to shame; its
craftsmen are only human. Let them all assemble
and take their stand; they will be terrified and put
to shame together.
12 The ironsmith takes a tool and works it over the
coals; he shapes it with hammers and forges it
with his strong arm. He becomes hungry and loses
his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint.
13 The carpenter stretches out a measuring line
and marks it out with a pencil; he shapes it with
chisels and marks it with compasses. He shapes it
in the form of a man, with human beauty, to dwell
in a shrine.
14 He cuts down cedars for himself, or takes a
cypress or an oak, and lets it grow strong among
the trees of the forest; he plants a laurel, and the
rain makes it grow.
15 Then it becomes fuel for people to burn; he
takes some of it and warms himself; he kindles a
fire and bakes bread. He also makes a god and
worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.
16 Half of it he burns in the fire; over that half he
roasts meat and eats his fill. He also warms
himself and says, "Ah, I am warm; I see the fire!"
17 From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows
down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says,
"Save me, for you are my god!"
18 They do not know or understand, for their eyes
are plastered over so that they cannot see, and
their minds so that they cannot understand.
19 No one stops to think; no one has the knowledge
or understanding to say, "Half of it I burned in the
fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat
and ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what
is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?"
20 He feeds on ashes; a deluded heart has led him
astray. He cannot save himself or say, "Is not this
thing in my right hand a lie?"
21 Remember these things, Jacob, and Israel, for
you are My servant. I formed you; you are My
servant; Israel, I will not forget you.
22 I have swept away your transgressions like a
cloud and your sins like mist. Return to Me, for I
have redeemed you.
23 Sing for joy, you heavens, for the LORD has done
this; shout aloud, you depths of the earth! Break
into song, you mountains, you forests and all your
trees, for the LORD has redeemed Jacob and
shows His glory in Israel.
24 This is what the LORD says, your Redeemer,
who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who
made all things, who alone stretched out the
heavens, who spread out the earth by Myself,
25 who frustrates the signs of false prophets and
makes fools of diviners, who turns back the wise
and makes their knowledge foolish,
26 who confirms the word of His servant and fulfils
the counsel of His messengers, who says of
Jerusalem, "She will be inhabited," and of the
towns of Judah, "They will be rebuilt, and I will
restore their ruins,"
27 who tells the ocean depths, "Dry up! I will make
your rivers run dry,"
28 who says of Cyrus, "He is My shepherd; he will
carry out all My purpose," saying of Jerusalem,
"She will be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Its
foundations will be laid."[3]

1 Jeshurun, 'upright one', is a poetic name for Israel (Deuteronomy 32:15; 33:5, 26).

2 Compare 41:4; 48:12; Revelation 1:17; 22:13.

3 Cyrus king of Persia conquered Babylon in 539 BC and let the exiles return (Ezra 1:1–4).

Chapter 45

Isaiah 45 addresses Cyrus as the LORD's anointed, whom He has taken by the hand to subdue nations and open gates, for the sake of Jacob His servant, though Cyrus does not know Him. The LORD forms light and darkness; there is no other God. The clay cannot question the potter. Cyrus will rebuild the city and free the exiles without payment, and the nations will acknowledge that God is with Israel. The LORD did not create the earth to be empty; He calls all the ends of the earth to turn to Him and be saved, for to Him every knee will bow.

1 This is what the LORD says to His anointed, to
Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue
nations before him and strip kings of their armour,
to open doors before him so that gates will not be
shut:[1]

2 I will go before you and level the mountains; I
will break down gates of bronze and cut through
bars of iron.

3 I will give you treasures hidden in darkness and
riches stored in secret places, so that you may
know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who
calls you by name.

4 For the sake of Jacob My servant and Israel My
chosen one, I call you by your name; I give you a
title of honour, though you do not know Me.

5 I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides Me
there is no God. I will arm you, though you do not
know Me,

6 so that people may know, from the rising of the
sun to its setting, that there is none besides Me. I
am the LORD, and there is no other.

7 I shape the light and bring the darkness; I make
well-being and bring disaster; I, the LORD, do all
this.

8 Rain down, you heavens, from above, and let the
skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open,
let salvation spring up, and let righteousness grow
with it. I, the LORD, have created it.

9 Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker, a
potsherd among potsherds on the ground! Does
the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?"
or "Your work has no handles"?

10 Woe to the one who says to a father, "What have
you fathered?" or to a woman, "What have you
brought to birth?"

11 This is what the LORD says, the Holy One of
Israel and its Maker: Do you question Me about
things to come concerning My children, or give
Me orders about the work of My hands?

12 It was I who made the earth and created
mankind on it; My own hands stretched out the
heavens, and I commanded all their host.

13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will
make all his ways straight. He will rebuild My city
and set My exiles free, not for a price or a bribe,
says the LORD of Armies.

14 This is what the LORD says: The wealth of Egypt
and the merchandise of Cush, and the Sabeans,
tall of stature, will come over to you and be yours.
They will follow you in chains; they will bow down
before you and plead with you: "Surely God is with
you, and there is no other; there is no other god."

15 Truly You are a God who hides Himself, O God of
Israel, the Saviour.

16 All the makers of idols will be put to shame and
disgraced; they will go off into disgrace together.

17 But Israel will be saved by the LORD with an
everlasting salvation; you will never be put to
shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting.

18 For this is what the LORD says, who created the
heavens, He is God; who formed the earth and
made it, He established it; He did not create it to
be empty, but formed it to be inhabited: I am the
LORD, and there is no other.

19 I have not spoken in secret, in some land of
darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,
"Seek Me in vain." I, the LORD, speak the truth; I
declare what is right.

20 Gather together and come; draw near together,
you survivors of the nations! They have no
knowledge, those who carry about their wooden
idols and pray to a god that cannot save.

21 Declare and present your case; let them consult
together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared
it from of old? Was it not I, the LORD? There is no
other God besides Me, a righteous God and a
Saviour; there is none but Me.

22 Look to Me and be saved, every corner of the
earth, for I am God and there is no one else.

23 By Myself I have sworn; from My mouth has
gone out in righteousness a word that will not be

revoked: To Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.[2]

24 They will say of Me, “In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength.” All who have raged against Him will come to Him and be put to shame.

25 In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be justified and will glory.

1 ‘Anointed’ is the Hebrew ‘messiah’, used here of a foreign king chosen for a task.

2 Quoted in Romans 14:11; compare Philippians 2:10–11.

Chapter 46

Isaiah 46 contrasts Babylon’s gods with the LORD. Bel and Nebo are loaded onto weary animals and carried into captivity, but the LORD has carried His people since birth and will carry them to old age. No one can compare with Him: idols must be carried and cannot answer, but He declares the end from the beginning, and His purpose will stand. He has called a bird of prey from the east, and His salvation for Zion is near.

1 Bel bows down, Nebo stoops; their idols are loaded on beasts and cattle. The images you carried about are now a burden on weary animals.[1]

2 They stoop and bow down together; they cannot rescue the burden, but they themselves go into captivity.

3 Listen to Me, house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, you whom I have upheld since you were conceived, whom I have carried since birth.

4 Even to your old age I am He, and to grey hairs I will carry you. I have made you, and I will bear you; I will carry you and rescue you.

5 To whom will you liken Me and make Me equal? To whom will you compare Me, that we may be alike?

6 Some pour out gold from the bag and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; they bow down and worship it.

7 They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it in its place, and there it stands; it cannot move from its spot. Though one cries out to it, it does not answer; it cannot save him from his trouble.

8 Remember this and stand firm; take it to heart, you transgressors.

9 Call to mind what happened long ago, for I am God and there is no other; I am God, and no one is like Me.

10 I declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times what is still to come. I say, My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

11 I call a bird of prey from the east, from a far-off land the man to fulfil My purpose. What I have said, I will bring about; what I have planned, I will do.

12 Hear Me, you hard-hearted people, so far from what is right.

13 I am bringing My righteousness near; it is not far off, and My salvation will not delay. I will grant salvation in Zion, My splendour to Israel.

1 Bel (Marduk) and Nebo were chief gods of Babylon.

Chapter 47

Isaiah 47 is a taunt against Babylon. The virgin daughter of Babylon must come down from her throne, sit in the dust and grind flour like a slave, for the LORD will take vengeance. She showed no mercy to His people and thought she would be mistress for ever, saying, “I am, and there is no one besides me.” In a single day she will lose husband and children, and none of her sorceries or star-gazers will save her; they are stubble for the fire.

1 Come down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter Babylon; sit on the ground, throneless, daughter of the Chaldeans, for you will never again be called soft and pampered.

2 Take millstones and grind flour; remove your veil, strip off your skirt, bare your legs, wade through the rivers.

3 Your body will be uncovered and your disgrace
laid bare. I will take revenge and will spare no
one.

4 Our Redeemer, whose name is the LORD of
Armies, is Israel's Holy One.

5 Sit without a word and go into the dark, daughter
of the Chaldeans; you will no longer be called
queen of kingdoms.

6 I was angry with My people and let My
inheritance be defiled; I gave them into your
power, and you showed them no pity; on the old
you laid a crushing yoke.

7 You said, "I will be mistress for ever," so you did
not take these things to heart or consider how it
would end.

8 So now listen, you pleasure-loving woman who
lounge in safety, telling yourself, "I am the one;
there is none but me. I will never be a widow or
lose my children."[1]

9 Both of these will come upon you in a moment, in
a single day: the loss of children and widowhood.
They will come upon you in full measure, in spite
of your many sorceries and the great power of
your spells.

10 You trusted in your wickedness; you said, "No
one sees me." Your wisdom and your knowledge
led you astray, and you said in your heart, "I am,
and there is no one besides me."

11 But disaster will come upon you, and you will
not know how to charm it away; calamity will fall
on you that you cannot avert with a ransom; ruin
will come upon you suddenly, before you know it.

12 Keep on, then, with your spells and your many
sorceries, at which you have toiled since your
youth. Perhaps you will succeed; perhaps you will
cause terror.

13 You are worn out by all your counsels. Let them
stand up and save you, those who divide the
heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at each new
moon predict what will come upon you.

14 See, they are like stubble; the fire burns them
up. They cannot rescue themselves from the
power of the flame. This is no coal for warming
oneself, no fire to sit by!

15 That is all they are to you, those you have toiled
with and traded with since your youth; each
wanders off on his own way, and there is no one to
save you.

1 Compare Revelation 18:7–8.

Chapter 48

> *Isaiah 48 rebukes the house of Jacob, who swear by the LORD's name but not in truth. Because they were stubborn, He announced events long beforehand so that they could not credit their idols; now He announces new things. For His name's sake He has refined them in the furnace of affliction, not destroyed them. He is the first and the last, and the one He loves will carry out His purpose against Babylon. If only they had listened, their peace would have been like a river. Now they are to flee from Babylon and proclaim that the LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob, yet there is no peace for the wicked.*

1 Listen to this, house of Jacob, you who bear
Israel's name and spring from Judah's stock, who
take oaths in the LORD's name and call on Israel's
God, though not truthfully or rightly.

2 For you call yourselves after the holy city and
lean on the God of Israel; the LORD of Armies is
His name.

3 The former things I declared long ago; they went
out from My mouth and I announced them; then
suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.

4 Because I knew how stubborn you are, that your
neck is an iron sinew and your forehead bronze,

5 I declared them to you long ago; before they
happened I announced them to you, so that you
could not say, "My idol did them; my carved image
and my cast image ordained them."

6 You have heard; now look at it all. Will you not
declare it? From now on I announce to you new
things, hidden things you have not known.

7 They are created now, not long ago; before today
you have not heard of them, so that you cannot
say, "Yes, I knew them."

8 You have neither heard nor known; from of old
your ear has not been opened. For I knew how
treacherous you are; you were called a rebel from
birth.

9 For My name's sake I defer My anger; for the
sake of My praise I hold it back from you, so as
not to cut you off.

10 Look, I have put you through the refiner's fire,
though not for silver; I have tried you in the
furnace of suffering.
11 For My own sake, yes, for My own sake I act;
how could I let My name be dishonoured? My
glory I will give to no other.
12 Listen to Me, Jacob, Israel, whom I called: I am
He; I am the first, and I am the last.
13 It was My hand that founded the earth, and My
right hand that unrolled the heavens; I summon
them, and together they stand to attention.
14 Assemble, all of you, and listen! Which of them
has declared these things? The one the LORD
loves will carry out His purpose against Babylon,
and His arm will be against the Chaldeans.
15 I, I have spoken; yes, I have called him; I have
brought him, and he will succeed in his way.
16 Draw near to Me and listen: from the start I
have not spoken in hiding; since it began, I have
been present. And now the Lord GOD has sent me,
together with His Spirit.[1]
17 This is what the LORD says, your Redeemer, the
Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who
teaches you what is for your good, who leads you
in the way you should go.
18 If only you had listened to My commands! Your
peace would have flowed like a river and your
righteousness rolled in like the sea's waves.
19 Your offspring would have been like the sand,
and your descendants like its grains; their name
would never be cut off or destroyed from before
Me.
20 Go out from Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans!
Declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it
out to the ends of the earth; say, "The LORD has
redeemed His servant Jacob!"
21 They did not thirst when He led them through
the deserts; He made water flow for them from
the rock; He split the rock and the water gushed
out.
22 There is no peace for the wicked, says the
LORD.

1 In the last line the speaker changes, perhaps to the prophet or to the Servant of 49:1.

Chapter 49

Isaiah 49 is the Servant's own word to the islands: the LORD called Him before birth, made His mouth like a sharp sword, and named Him "My Servant, Israel". Though He feels He has laboured in vain, the LORD will make Him not only the restorer of Jacob but a light for the nations, so that salvation reaches the ends of the earth. Kings will bow before the One despised by the nation. The LORD will lead His people home like a shepherd. When Zion says the LORD has forgotten her, He answers that a mother may forget her child, but He will not forget her; He has engraved her on His palms. Her children will crowd back, kings will carry them, and He will rescue the captives and save her children.

1 Listen to Me, you islands; pay attention, you
peoples from afar. The LORD called Me before I
was born; from My mother's womb He named
Me.[1]
2 He made My mouth like a sharp sword and hid
Me in the shadow of His hand; He made Me a
polished arrow and concealed Me in His quiver.
3 He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel, in
whom I will display My glory."
4 But I said, "I have laboured in vain; I have spent
My strength for nothing and to no purpose. Yet
surely My cause is with the LORD, and My reward
with My God."
5 So now the LORD speaks, He who shaped Me in
the womb as His Servant, to turn Jacob back to
Him and to gather Israel to Him; I am honoured in
the LORD's sight, and My God is My strength.
6 He says, "It is too small a thing for You to be My
Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and bring
back the preserved of Israel. I will also make You
a light for the nations, so that My salvation may
reach to the ends of the earth."[2]
7 This is what the LORD says, the Redeemer of
Israel, its Holy One, to the One despised and
abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers:
Kings will see and rise, princes will see and bow
down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the
Holy One of Israel, who has chosen You.
8 This is the LORD's word: At the time of favour I
answered You; on the day of salvation I came to
Your help. I will guard You and give You as a
covenant to the people, to rebuild the land and to
share out again its ruined inheritances,[3]

9 saying to the prisoners, “Come out,” and to those
in darkness, “Show yourselves.” They will feed
along the roads and find pasture on every bare
height.
10 They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the
scorching heat or the sun strike them, for He who
has compassion on them will lead them and guide
them to springs of water.
11 I will make all My mountains a road, and My
highways will be raised up.
12 Look, they come from far away, some from the
north, some from the west, some from the land of
Sinim.[4]
13 Shout for joy, you heavens; rejoice, you earth;
break into song, you mountains! For the LORD
comforts His people and will have compassion on
His afflicted ones.
14 But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me; the
Lord has forgotten me.”
15 Can a woman forget her nursing child, or lack
compassion for the son of her womb? Even if
these forget, I will not forget you.
16 Look, I have carved you on the palms of My
hands; your walls are in My sight continually.
17 Your builders hurry; those who destroyed you
and laid you waste go away from you.
18 Lift up your eyes all around and see; they all
gather and come to you. As surely as I live,
declares the LORD, you will wear them all as
ornaments and bind them on like a bride.
19 For your ruins and desolate places and your
devastated land will now be too small for your
people, and those who swallowed you up will be
far away.
20 The children born in your bereavement will yet
say in your hearing, “This place is too cramped for
me; make room for me to live.”
21 Then you will say in your heart, “Who has borne
me these? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and
turned away; who has brought these up? I was left
all alone; where have these come from?”
22 This is what the Lord GOD says: See, I will
beckon to the nations and raise My signal to the
peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms
and carry your daughters on their shoulders.
23 Kings will be your foster fathers, and their
queens your nursing mothers. They will bow down
before you with their faces to the ground and lick
the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am
the LORD; those who hope in Me will not be put to
shame.
24 Can plunder be taken from warriors, or captives
rescued from the righteous?
25 But this is what the LORD says: Even the
captives of the warrior will be taken, and the
plunder of the ruthless rescued. I will contend
with those who contend with you, and I will save
your children.
26 I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh,
and they will be drunk on their own blood as with
wine. Then all flesh will know that I, the LORD,
am your Saviour, your Redeemer, the Mighty One
of Jacob.

1 Verses 1–13 are the second of the Servant passages (see the note at 42:1). Here the Servant speaks.
2 Quoted in Acts 13:47; compare Luke 2:32.
3 The first lines are quoted, from the Greek, in 2 Corinthians 6:2.
4 The Dead Sea Scrolls have ‘Syene’, that is, Aswan in southern Egypt.

Chapter 50

> *Isaiah 50 asks where Israel’s certificate of divorce is: the LORD did not sell His people; they were sold for their own sins, though His hand is not too short to redeem. Then the Servant speaks again. The Lord GOD has given Him a teacher’s tongue and opened His ear, and He did not turn back; He offered His back to those who beat Him and did not hide His face from spitting. He has set His face like flint, for the Lord GOD helps Him and will vindicate Him. Those who walk in darkness are to trust in the LORD, but those who kindle their own fires will lie down in torment.*

1 This is what the LORD says: Where is your
mother’s certificate of divorce, with which I sent
her away? Or to which of My creditors did I sell
you? See, you were sold because of your
iniquities, and because of your transgressions
your mother was sent away.
2 Why was there no one when I came? Why did no
one answer when I called? Is My hand too short to

redeem, or have I no power to rescue? See, by My rebuke I dry up the sea; I turn rivers into a desert; their fish rot for lack of water and die of thirst.

3 I clothe the heavens with darkness and make sackcloth their covering.

4 The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of those who are taught, to know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning He wakens; He wakens My ear to listen like one being taught.[1]

5 The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious; I did not turn back.

6 I offered My back to those who beat Me and My cheeks to those who pulled out My beard; I did not hide My face from insults and spitting.[2]

7 But the Lord GOD helps Me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set My face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.

8 The One who will prove Me right is close at hand. Who will take Me to court? Let us face each other. Who has a case against Me? Let him step forward.[3]

9 It is the Lord GOD who helps Me; who will condemn Me? See, they will all wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

10 Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of His Servant? Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

11 But all of you who kindle a fire and arm yourselves with burning arrows, walk in the light of your fire and among the arrows you have set ablaze! This is what you will receive from My hand: you will lie down in torment.

1 Verses 4–11 are the third of the Servant passages (see the note at 42:1).

2 Compare Matthew 26:67; 27:30.

3 Compare Romans 8:33–34.

Chapter 51

Isaiah 51 calls those who seek righteousness to look to Abraham and Sarah, from whom the LORD made many; He will comfort Zion and make her wilderness like Eden. His salvation will last for ever, though heaven and earth wear out, so His people need not fear human insults. The prophet calls on the arm of the LORD to awake as in the days when He cut Rahab to pieces and dried up the sea, and the ransomed will return to Zion with joy. The LORD who comforts them asks why they fear mortal men. Jerusalem, who has drunk the cup of His wrath, is told to wake, for He has taken the cup from her hand and will give it to her tormentors.

1 Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD: look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were dug.

2 Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many.

3 The LORD will surely comfort Zion and console all her ruined places; He will turn her desert into an Eden and her wastelands into the garden of the LORD. Gladness and joy will fill her, with thanksgiving and the sound of music.

4 Pay attention to Me, My people; give ear to Me, My nation, for instruction will go out from Me, and My justice will become a light to the peoples.

5 My righteousness draws near; My salvation is on its way, and My arm will judge the peoples. The islands will hope in Me and wait for My arm.

6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants will die like gnats. But My salvation will last for ever, and My righteousness will never fail.

7 Listen to Me, you who know what is right, you people who have My instruction in your hearts: do not fear the reproach of men or be dismayed by their insults.

8 The moth will devour them like clothing, and the grub will eat them like wool; but My righteousness will endure for ever, My salvation to every generation.

9 Awake, awake, put on strength, arm of the LORD! Awake as in days of old, as in generations long ago. Was it not You who cut Rahab to pieces, who pierced the sea monster?

10 Was it not You who made the sea run dry, the waters of the vast deep, who turned the ocean floor into a road for the redeemed to pass over?

11 The ransomed of the LORD will return and come
to Zion with singing, everlasting joy on their
heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and
sorrow and sighing will flee away.[1]

12 I, I am He who comforts you. Who are you, that
you fear mortal man, the son of man who is given
up like grass,

13 that you forget the LORD your Maker, who
stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations
of the earth, that you live in constant dread all day
long because of the fury of the oppressor, as he
sets himself to destroy? But where is the fury of
the oppressor?

14 The one who is bowed down will soon be set
free; he will not die and go down to the pit, nor
will he lack bread.

15 For I am the LORD your God, who churns up the
sea so that its waves thunder; His name is the
LORD of Armies.

16 I have placed My words in your mouth and
sheltered you under the shadow of My hand, I who
set the heavens in place and founded the earth,
and who say to Zion, “You are My people.”

17 Wake yourself, wake yourself! Rise up,
Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the LORD’s
hand the cup of His wrath, who have drained to
the dregs the goblet that makes people stagger.

18 Of all the sons she bore, there is no one to guide
her; of all the sons she raised, there is no one to
take her by the hand.

19 These two disasters have befallen you; who will
console you? Devastation and destruction, famine
and sword; who will comfort you?[2]

20 Your sons have fainted; they lie at the head of
every street like an antelope caught in a net. They
are full of the wrath of the LORD, the rebuke of
your God.

21 Therefore hear this, you afflicted one, drunk, but
not with wine.

22 This is what your Lord, the LORD, says, your
God who defends His people: See, I have taken
out of your hand the cup that makes people
stagger, the goblet of My wrath; you will never
drink it again.

23 I will put it into the hand of your tormentors,
who said to you, “Lie down, so that we may walk
over you,” and you made your back like the
ground, like a street to be walked on.

1 As in 35:10.

2 So the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Greek and other versions; the main Hebrew text has ‘how may I comfort you?’

Chapter 52

Isaiah 52 calls Zion to wake, put on her beautiful garments and shake off the dust of captivity, for she was sold for nothing and will be redeemed without money. How lovely are the feet of the messenger who announces peace and salvation and tells Zion, “Your God is King!” Her watchmen shout for joy as the LORD returns, and all the ends of the earth will see His salvation. The exiles are to go out from Babylon, purified, with the LORD going before and behind them. Then the last Servant passage begins: the LORD’s Servant will be greatly exalted, though His appearance was so marred that many were appalled, and kings will be silenced before Him.

1 Wake up, wake up, Zion, and clothe yourself with
strength! Dress in your finest clothes, Jerusalem,
holy city, for the uncircumcised and the unclean
will never come into you again.

2 Shake off your dust; rise up, captive Jerusalem!
Loose the bonds from your neck, captive daughter
Zion!

3 For this is what the LORD says: You were sold for
nothing, and without money you will be redeemed.

4 For this is what the Lord GOD says: At first My
people went down to Egypt to live there; then
Assyria oppressed them without cause.

5 And now what do I have here? declares the
LORD, for My people have been taken away for
nothing. Their rulers wail, declares the LORD, and
all day long My name is continually despised.[1]

6 Therefore My people will know My name;
therefore in that day they will know that it is I who
speak: Here I am.

7 How lovely on the mountains are the feet of the
messenger who brings good news, who proclaims
peace, who brings good tidings, who proclaims
salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God is King!”[2]

8 Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices;
together they shout for joy, for with their own eyes
they will see the LORD return to Zion.
9 Break into songs of joy together, you ruins of
Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted His
people; He has redeemed Jerusalem.
10 The LORD has bared His holy arm in the sight of
all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will
see the salvation of our God.
11 Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch
nothing unclean; go out from her midst; purify
yourselves, you who carry the vessels of the
LORD.[3]
12 For you will not go out in haste or leave in flight,
for the LORD will go before you, and the God of
Israel will be your rear guard.
13 See, My Servant will act wisely; He will be
raised and lifted up and greatly exalted.[4]
14 Just as many were appalled at Him, so marred
was His appearance, beyond that of any man, and
His form beyond that of the children of mankind,
15 so He will sprinkle many nations; kings will shut
their mouths because of Him. For what they were
not told, they will see, and what they had not
heard, they will understand.[5]

1 Romans 2:24 quotes the last line from the Greek.
2 Quoted in Romans 10:15; compare Nahum 1:15.
3 Compare 2 Corinthians 6:17.
4 52:13–53:12 is the fourth of the Servant passages (see the note at 42:1). The New Testament reads it of the suffering, death and exaltation of Jesus (Acts 8:32–35).
5 The Greek has ‘startle’ for ‘sprinkle’. The last lines are quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 15:21.

Chapter 53

Isaiah 53 continues the song of the suffering Servant. Who has believed the message? He grew up like a root in dry ground, with no beauty to attract us; He was despised and shunned, and we held Him of no account. Yet He carried our sorrows; He was pierced for our rebellion and crushed for our wrongs, and by His bruises we are healed. We had all wandered like sheep, and the LORD laid on Him the guilt of us all. He went silently like a lamb to the slaughter, was cut off from the land of the living and buried with the wicked and the rich, though He had done no wrong. Yet it was the LORD’s will: His life was made an offering for guilt, and He will see His offspring, make many righteous and share the spoils with the great, because He poured out His life to death and interceded for transgressors.

1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has
the arm of the LORD been revealed?[1]
2 He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, like a
root out of dry ground. He had no form or
splendour that we should look at Him, no beauty
that we should desire Him.
3 He was despised and shunned by others, a man
of suffering who knew what sickness was; like one
from whom people turn their faces, He was
despised, and we held Him of no account.
4 Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our
sorrows; yet we regarded Him as stricken, struck
by God and afflicted.[2]
5 But He was pierced because of our rebellion and
crushed because of our wrongdoing; the
punishment that made us whole fell on Him, and
by His bruises we are healed.[3]
6 We had all wandered off like sheep, each of us
turning to his own way, and the LORD laid on Him
the guilt of us all.
7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not
open His mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,
He did not open His mouth.[4]
8 By oppression and judgement He was taken
away, and who of His generation considered that
He was cut off from the land of the living, stricken
for the transgression of My people?
9 He was given a grave with the wicked and with
the rich in His death, though He had committed
no violence, and no deceit was found in His
mouth.[5]
10 Yet it was the LORD’s will to crush Him and
make Him suffer. When His life is made an
offering for guilt, He will see His offspring and
prolong His days, and the will of the LORD will
prosper in His hand.
11 After the anguish of His soul He will see light
and be satisfied; by His knowledge My righteous

Servant will make many righteous, and He will bear their iniquities.[6]

12 So I will give Him a share among the great, and He will divide the plunder with the mighty, because He laid down His life to death and was counted among the lawless; He carried the sin of many and pleaded for the transgressors.[7]

1 Quoted in John 12:38 and Romans 10:16.

2 Compare Matthew 8:17, 'He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases'.

3 Compare 1 Peter 2:24.

4 Verses 7–8 are quoted, from the Greek, in Acts 8:32–33.

5 Compare 1 Peter 2:22.

6 'Light' is in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Greek, but not in the main Hebrew text.

7 Quoted in Luke 22:37.

Chapter 54

Isaiah 54 calls the barren woman, Zion, to sing, for her children will outnumber those of the married woman; she must enlarge her tent. Her Maker is her husband, the Holy One of Israel her Redeemer. For a moment He abandoned her, but with everlasting loyal kindness He will have compassion on her; as He swore after the flood, so He swears now that His covenant of peace will never be shaken. He will rebuild her with precious stones, her children will be taught by the LORD, and no weapon forged against her will succeed.

1 Sing, barren woman, you who have not borne a child; break into song and shout aloud, you who have never been in labour! For the children of the desolate woman will be more than the children of the married woman, says the LORD.[1]

2 Enlarge the place of your tent; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes.

3 For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and resettle the desolate cities.

4 Do not fear, for you will not be put to shame; do not be disgraced, for you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood.

5 For the One who made you is your husband, whose name is the LORD of Armies; your Redeemer is Israel's Holy One, who is called God of the whole earth.

6 For the LORD has called you back like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife married in youth and then rejected, says your God.

7 For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

8 In a flood of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting loyal kindness I will have compassion on you, says the LORD your Redeemer.

9 For this is like the days of Noah to Me: as I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you or rebuke you.

10 Though the mountains may depart and the hills be shaken, My loyal kindness will not depart from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken, says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

11 O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted, see, I will set your stones in antimony and lay your foundations with sapphires.

12 I will build your towers of ruby and your gates of glittering stone, and all your outer wall of jewels.

13 All your children will be taught by the LORD, and great will be your children's peace.[2]

14 You will be established in righteousness; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear, and from terror, for it will not come near you.

15 If anyone attacks you, it will not be from Me; whoever attacks you will fall because of you.

16 See, I created the smith who blows on the coals and produces a weapon fit for its work; and I created the destroyer to wreak havoc.

17 No weapon forged against you will succeed, and you will refute every tongue that rises against you in judgement. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication from Me, declares the LORD.

1 Quoted in Galatians 4:27.
2 Compare John 6:45.

Chapter 55

Isaiah 55 invites everyone who is thirsty to come and buy wine and milk without money, and to listen and live, for the LORD will make an everlasting covenant with them, the loyal kindness promised to David. Nations will run to them. The wicked are to seek the LORD while He may be found, for He will freely pardon; His thoughts and ways are as high above theirs as the heavens are above the earth. Like rain that waters the earth, His word will not return empty. His people will go out with joy, and the trees of the field will clap their hands.

1 Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the water;
you who have no money, come, buy grain and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk with no money and at no cost.
2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest food.
3 Turn your ear and come to Me; listen, so that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the loyal kindness faithfully promised to David.[1]
4 See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples.
5 See, you will summon a nation you do not know, and a nation that does not know you will run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you.
6 Look for the LORD while He can still be found; call to Him while He is close.
7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, so that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon.
8 My thoughts are not like your thoughts, and your ways are not like My ways, declares the LORD.
9 As far as the heavens are above the earth, so far are My ways above your ways and My thoughts above your thoughts.
10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
11 so will My word be that goes out from My mouth: it will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
12 For you will go out with joy and be led out in peace; the mountains and hills will break into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.
13 Instead of the thornbush the cypress will grow, and instead of the brier the myrtle will grow. This will be a memorial for the LORD, an everlasting sign that will not be cut off.

1 Quoted, from the Greek, in Acts 13:34.

Chapter 56

Isaiah 56 calls for justice, for the LORD's salvation is near. Foreigners and eunuchs who keep His Sabbaths and hold fast to His covenant need not fear they are shut out: He will give them a name better than sons and daughters and bring them to His holy mountain, for His house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples. But Israel's watchmen are blind and its shepherds greedy, mute dogs who love to sleep and drink.

1 This is what the LORD says: Keep justice and do what is right, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness to be revealed.
2 Blessed is the person who does this, the human being who keeps firm hold of it, who honours the Sabbath and does not defile it, and who stops his hand from doing wrong.
3 Let no foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people," and let no eunuch say, "See, I am a dry tree."
4 For this is what the LORD says: To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, who choose what pleases Me and hold fast to My covenant,

5 to them I will give a monument and a name
inside My house and within My walls, worth more
than sons and daughters; I will give them a name
that lasts for ever and will never be cut off.
6 And the foreigners who join themselves to the
LORD to serve Him, to love the name of the LORD
and to be His servants, all who keep the Sabbath
without profaning it and hold fast to My covenant,
7 these I will bring to My holy mountain and give
them joy in My house of prayer; their offerings
and sacrifices will be accepted on My altar. For
My house will be known as a house of prayer for
every people.[1]
8 The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of
Israel, declares: I will gather still others to them
besides those already gathered.
9 All you beasts of the field, all you beasts of the
forest, come and devour!
10 Israel's watchmen are blind; they all lack
knowledge. They are all mute dogs that cannot
bark; they lie dreaming, loving to sleep.
11 The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never
have enough. They are shepherds who lack
understanding; they have all turned to their own
way, each seeking his own gain, every one of
them.
12 "Come," they say, "let me get wine, and let us
drink our fill of strong drink. Tomorrow will be like
today, only far better!"

1 Quoted in Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46.

Chapter 57

Isaiah 57 laments that the righteous perish and no one takes it to heart, though they enter into peace. It condemns the people's idolatry, their lust under every green tree, child sacrifice in the ravines and sacrifices on the high mountains; when they cry out, let their idols save them, for a breath will carry them off. But the high and exalted One, whose name is Holy, lives also with the crushed and lowly in spirit, to revive them. He will not be angry for ever; He will heal and comfort, and proclaim peace to the far and the near. Yet there is no peace for the wicked.

1 The righteous perish, and no one takes it to
heart; the devout are taken away, and no one
understands that the righteous are taken away
from evil.
2 They enter into peace; those who walk uprightly
rest on their beds.
3 But you, come here, you children of a sorceress,
offspring of an adulterer and a prostitute!
4 Whom are you mocking? At whom do you open
your mouth and stick out your tongue? Are you
not children of rebellion, offspring of deceit,
5 you who burn with lust among the oaks, under
every spreading tree, who slaughter your children
in the ravines, under the clefts of the rocks?
6 Among the smooth stones of the ravines is your
portion; they, they are your lot. To them you have
poured out drink offerings and offered grain
offerings. Should I relent because of these?[1]
7 On a high and lofty mountain you have made
your bed; there too you went up to offer sacrifice.
8 Behind the door and the doorpost you have set
up your sign. Deserting Me, you uncovered your
bed, climbed into it and opened it wide; you made
a bargain with them; you loved their bed and
gazed on their nakedness.
9 You journeyed to the king with oil and multiplied
your perfumes; you sent your envoys far away and
sent them down to Sheol itself.[2]
10 You were wearied by your many journeys, but
you did not say, "It is hopeless." You found new
strength, and so you did not faint.
11 Whom did you so dread and fear that you lied to
Me, and did not remember Me or take it to heart?
Is it not because I have kept silent for a long time
that you do not fear Me?
12 I will expose your righteousness and your works,
and they will not help you.
13 When you cry out, let your collection of idols
save you! The wind will carry them all off; a
breath will take them away. But whoever takes
refuge in Me will possess the land and inherit My
holy mountain.
14 And it will be said: Build up, build up, prepare
the road! Remove every obstacle from the way of
My people.
15 For this is what the high and exalted One says,
who lives for ever, whose name is Holy: I live in a

high and holy place, and also with the one who is crushed and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the crushed.

16 For I will not accuse for ever, nor will I always be angry, for then the spirit would grow faint before Me, the breath of life that I have made.

17 Because of his sinful greed I was angry and struck him; I hid My face in anger, but he kept turning back to the way of his own heart.

18 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to those who mourn for him,

19 creating praise on their lips. Peace, peace to the far and the near, says the LORD, and I will heal him.[3]

20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waters churn up mud and mire.

21 For the wicked there is no peace, says my God.

1 In Hebrew ‘smooth stones’ and ‘portion’ sound alike.

2 ‘The king’ may be Molech, the god of child sacrifice; compare verse 5.

3 Compare Ephesians 2:17.

Chapter 58

Isaiah 58 tells the prophet to declare the people’s sins like a trumpet. They seek God and fast, then complain that He does not notice, while on their fast days they exploit their workers and quarrel. The fast the LORD chooses is to loosen the chains of injustice, set the oppressed free, share bread with the hungry and shelter the poor. Then their light will break out like the dawn, the LORD will answer when they call, and they will be like a well-watered garden, rebuilding the ancient ruins. If they honour His Sabbath as a delight, they will find their delight in the LORD.

1 Shout aloud, do not hold back; raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to My people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet day after day they seek Me and delight to know My ways, as if they were a nation that did what was right and did not forsake the justice of its God. They ask Me for righteous judgements and delight to draw near to God.

3 “Why have we fasted,” they say, “and You have not seen? Why have we humbled ourselves, and You have not noticed?” See, on the day of your fast you do as you please and drive all your workers hard.

4 See, you fast only to quarrel and fight and to strike with a wicked fist. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it only to bow one’s head like a reed and lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call that a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

6 Is not this the fast I choose: to loosen the chains of wickedness, to untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and to break every yoke?[1]

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and to bring the homeless poor into your house, to clothe the naked when you see them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8 Then your light will break out like the dawn, and your healing will spring up quickly; your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

9 Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing finger and malicious talk,

10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your gloom will be like noonday.

11 The LORD will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and strengthen your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

12 Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of the Breach, Restorer of Streets to Live In.

13 If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on My holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD’s holy day honourable, and if you honour it by not

going your own way, seeking your own pleasure or speaking idle words,

14 then you will find your delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth and feed you with the inheritance of your father Jacob. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

1 Jesus adds a line from this verse to His reading of 61:1–2 in Luke 4:18.

Chapter 59

Isaiah 59 explains that the LORD's hand is not too short to save; it is the people's sins that have separated them from God. Their hands are stained with blood, their lips speak lies, they hatch vipers' eggs, and they do not know the way of peace. So the people confess that justice is far from them; they grope like the blind and moan like doves, for their sins testify against them and truth has stumbled in the street. The LORD saw that there was no one to intervene, so He put on righteousness as a breastplate and salvation as a helmet to repay His enemies. A Redeemer will come to Zion, and His Spirit and words will never depart from His people.

1 See, the LORD's hand is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear.

2 It is your wrongdoing that has come between you and your God; your sins have made Him hide His face from you, so that He does not listen.

3 Your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt; your lips speak falsehood, and your tongue murmurs evil.

4 No one sues justly, and no one pleads his case honestly. They trust in empty words and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.

5 They hatch the eggs of vipers and weave the webs of spiders. Whoever eats their eggs dies, and when one is crushed a viper breaks out.

6 Their webs cannot become clothing; they cannot cover themselves with what they make. Their works are works of iniquity, and acts of violence are in their hands.

7 Their feet hurry towards evil; they rush to spill innocent blood. Their plans are plans of wickedness; devastation and ruin mark their roads.[1]

8 The way of peace they do not know, and there is no justice in their tracks. They have made their roads crooked; no one who walks on them knows peace.

9 So justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us. We look for light, but there is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in gloom.

10 Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like people without eyes. We stumble at noon as if it were twilight; among the strong we are like the dead.

11 All of us growl like bears and coo mournfully like doves. We hope for justice, and there is none; for salvation, and it stays far away.

12 For our transgressions are many before You, and our sins testify against us. Our transgressions are with us, and we know our iniquities:

13 rebelling against and denying the LORD, turning away from following our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving lies and uttering them from the heart.

14 So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands far off; truth has stumbled in the public square, and uprightness cannot enter.

15 Truth is missing, and whoever turns from evil becomes a prey. The LORD saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no justice.

16 He saw that there was no one; He was appalled that there was no one to intervene. So His own arm brought Him salvation, and His righteousness upheld Him.

17 He clothed Himself with righteousness as His breastplate and set salvation as a helmet on His head; He dressed in vengeance as His garment and wrapped zeal around Him like a cloak.[2]

18 He will repay each as their deeds deserve: fury for His foes, payment for His enemies; even the coastlands will get what is due to them.

19 So from the west they will fear the name of the LORD, and from the rising of the sun His glory, for He will come like a rushing stream driven by the breath of the LORD.

20 A Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, declares the LORD.[3]

21 As for Me, this is My covenant with them, says the LORD: My Spirit, who is on you, and My words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children,

or from the mouths of your children's children,
from now on and for ever, says the LORD.

1 Verses 7–8 are quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 3:15–17.
2 Compare Ephesians 6:14, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5:8.
3 Verses 20–21 are quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 11:26–27.

Chapter 60

Isaiah 60 calls Zion to arise and shine, for her light has come and the glory of the LORD has risen on her while darkness covers the earth. Nations will come to her light and kings to her dawn; her sons and daughters will return, and the wealth of the nations will flow to her: camels from Midian, gold and frankincense from Sheba, flocks for the altar, ships from Tarshish. Foreigners will rebuild her walls, and her gates will never be shut. She will be called the City of the LORD. The sun and moon will no longer be needed, for the LORD will be her everlasting light, and her people will all be righteous.

1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

2 For see, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you, and His glory appears over you.

3 The nations will walk by your light, and kings by the radiance of your rising.

4 Lift up your eyes all around and see: they all gather and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip.

5 Then you will look and be radiant; your heart will thrill and swell with joy, because the wealth of the seas will be brought to you, and the riches of the nations will come to you.

6 A multitude of camels will cover you, young camels of Midian and Ephah; all from Sheba will come, bringing gold and frankincense and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.[1]

7 Kedar's flocks will all be gathered for you, and Nebaioth's rams will be at your service; they will go up on My altar and be accepted, and I will make My beautiful house more beautiful still.

8 Who are these that fly like a cloud, like doves to their windows?

9 Surely the islands wait for Me, with the ships of Tarshish in the lead, to bring your sons from afar, and their silver and gold with them, to the name of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you.

10 Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though I struck you in My wrath, in My favour I will have compassion on you.

11 Your gates will always stand open; they will never be shut, day or night, so that people may bring you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession.[2]

12 For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; those nations will be utterly ruined.

13 The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the cypress, the plane and the pine together, to adorn the place of My sanctuary, and I will glorify the place of My feet.

14 The sons of those who oppressed you will come bowing before you; all who despised you will bow down at your feet and call you the City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15 Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you majestic for ever, a joy from age to age.

16 You will drink the milk of nations and be nursed at the breasts of kings. Then you will know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

17 Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron silver; instead of wood bronze, and instead of stones iron. I will make peace your governor and righteousness your ruler.

18 No longer will violence be heard of in your land, or havoc and wreckage inside your borders; you will name your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.

19 The sun will no longer be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.[3]

20 Your sun will never set again, and your moon will not wane, for the LORD will be your

everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be ended.

21 Then all your people will be righteous; they will possess the land for ever. They are the shoot I planted, the work of My hands, so that I may be glorified.

22 The least of them will become a thousand, and the smallest a mighty nation. I am the LORD; in its time I will hasten it.

1 Compare Matthew 2:11.
2 Compare Revelation 21:24–26.
3 Compare Revelation 21:23; 22:5.

Chapter 61

Isaiah 61 is spoken by one anointed with the Spirit of the Lord GOD, sent to bring good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim release to captives and the year of the LORD's favour, and give those who mourn in Zion beauty instead of ashes and praise instead of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness and will rebuild the ancient ruins; they will be called priests of the LORD and receive a double portion, for the LORD loves justice and will make an everlasting covenant with them. The speaker rejoices that God has clothed him with salvation, and the Lord will make righteousness spring up before all nations. Jesus read verses 1–2 in the synagogue at Nazareth.

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives and freedom to those in prison,[1]

2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,

3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion, to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a garment of praise instead of a fainting spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities, desolate for generations.

5 Strangers will stand and tend your flocks; foreigners will be your ploughmen and vinedressers.

6 But you will be called priests of the LORD; people will speak of you as ministers of our God. You will eat the wealth of the nations and boast in their riches.

7 Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance. So they will possess a double portion in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs.

8 For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In My faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 Their children will be famous among the nations and their descendants among the peoples; everyone who sees them will recognise them as a people blessed by the LORD.

10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul will exult in my God, for He has clothed me with garments of salvation and wrapped me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden makes its seeds spring up, so the Lord GOD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all the nations.

1 Verses 1–2 are read by Jesus in Luke 4:18–19, mostly from the Greek, stopping before 'the day of vengeance'. Here the pronouns of the anointed speaker are capitalised.

Chapter 62

Isaiah 62 declares that for Zion's sake the prophet will not keep silent until her righteousness shines like the dawn. She will receive a new name: no longer Forsaken and Desolate, but My Delight Is in Her and Married, for as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so her God will rejoice over her. Watchmen on her walls are to give the LORD no rest until He makes Jerusalem the praise of the earth. He has sworn that enemies will no longer eat her harvest. The people are to prepare the highway, for her salvation is coming, and they will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD.

1 Because of Zion I will not be quiet, and because
of Jerusalem I will not keep still, until her
righteousness breaks out like daybreak and her
salvation burns like a torch.

2 The nations will see your righteousness and all
kings your glory; you will be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.

3 You will be a crown of splendour in the LORD's
hand, a royal diadem in the palm of your God.

4 No longer will you be called Forsaken, nor your
land be called Desolate, but you will be called My
Delight Is in Her, and your land Married, for the
LORD delights in you, and your land will be
married.[1]

5 As a young man marries a young woman, so your
sons will marry you; and as the bridegroom
rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice
over you.

6 On your walls, Jerusalem, I have posted
watchmen; all day and all night they will never be
silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest,

7 and give Him no rest until He establishes
Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.

8 The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by
His mighty arm: I will never again give your grain
as food to your enemies, and foreigners will not
drink the new wine for which you have laboured;

9 but those who harvest it will eat it and praise the
LORD, and those who gather it will drink it in the
courts of My sanctuary.

10 Go through, go through the gates; prepare the
way for the people! Build up, build up the
highway; clear it of stones; raise a signal over the
peoples.

11 See, the LORD has proclaimed to the ends of the
earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation
comes! See, His reward is with Him, and His
recompense goes before Him."

12 They will be called the Holy People, the
Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called
Sought After, the City Not Forsaken.

1 Hebrew 'Hephzibah' and 'Beulah'.

Chapter 63

Isaiah 63 opens with a figure coming from Edom in garments stained red. He has trodden the winepress of the nations alone in His wrath, for the day of vengeance was in His heart. Then the prophet recalls the LORD's loyal kindness to Israel: in all their distress He was distressed, and He carried them in the days of old, though they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit. The people remember how He led them through the sea by the hand of Moses, and they plead with Him to look down from heaven, for He is their Father and Redeemer, while their enemies have trampled His sanctuary.

1 Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, in
crimsoned garments, this one splendid in His
apparel, striding in the greatness of His strength?
"It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to
save."

2 Why are Your garments red, like those of one
treading the winepress?

3 "I have trampled the winepress by Myself; not
one of the peoples stood with Me. In My anger I
trod them down, in My fury I crushed them; their
blood splashed on My robes, and all My clothes
are stained.

4 The day for vengeance was in My heart, and the
year for My redeeming had arrived.

5 I looked, but there was no one to help; I was
appalled that there was no one to support Me. So
My own arm brought Me salvation, and My wrath
upheld Me.

6 I trampled the peoples in My anger; I made them
drunk in My wrath and poured out their lifeblood

on the ground.”[1]

7 I will tell of the loyal kindnesses of the LORD, the
praises of the LORD, according to all that the
LORD has done for us, the great goodness to the
house of Israel that He has shown them according
to His compassion and the abundance of His loyal
kindness.

8 He said, “Surely they are My people, children
who will not be false,” and He became their
Saviour.

9 In every trouble of theirs He was troubled, and
the angel of His presence rescued them; in His
love and mercy He redeemed them; He picked
them up and carried them through all the days of
long ago.[2]

10 Yet they rebelled and brought grief to His Holy
Spirit, so He turned into their enemy and Himself
made war on them.[3]

11 Then they recalled the old days of Moses and his
people: Where is the One who led them up from
the sea, along with the shepherds of His flock?
Where is the One who set His Holy Spirit in their
midst,

12 who sent His glorious arm to march at Moses’
right hand, who split the waters in front of them
to win Himself a name for ever,

13 who led them through the depths? Like a horse
in the open country, they did not stumble.

14 Like cattle that go down into the valley, the
Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So You led
Your people, to make for Yourself a glorious name.

15 Look down from heaven and see, from Your holy
and glorious dwelling. Where are Your zeal and
Your might? Your tender mercies and compassion
are withheld from me.

16 Yet You are our Father; Abraham may not know
us, and Israel may not recognise us, but You,
LORD, are our Father; Redeemer from ages past is
Your name.

17 Why, LORD, do You make us stray from Your
ways and harden our hearts so that we do not fear
You? Return for the sake of Your servants, the
tribes of Your inheritance.

18 For a little while Your holy people possessed it;
now our adversaries have trampled down Your
sanctuary.

19 We have become as though You had never ruled
us, as though Your name had never been called
over us.[4]

1 Compare Revelation 14:19–20; 19:13–15.

2 So the spoken Hebrew; the written text and the Greek read ‘In all their distress it was no messenger or angel, but His presence that saved them’.

3 Compare Ephesians 4:30.

4 In Hebrew this verse also contains 64:1, and 64:2–12 are 64:1–11.

Chapter 64

Isaiah 64 continues the people’s prayer. They long for the LORD to tear open the heavens and come down, making the mountains quake and the nations tremble, for no eye has seen any God besides Him who acts for those who wait for Him. They confess that they have become unclean, that their righteous deeds are like a polluted garment, and that no one calls on His name. Yet He is their Father, they are the clay and He the potter. Their holy cities are a wilderness and the temple burned, so they ask whether He will keep silent for ever.

1 Oh, that You would tear open the heavens and
come down, that the mountains would quake at
Your presence,[1]

2 as when fire sets twigs ablaze and makes water
boil, to make Your name known to Your enemies,
so that the nations would tremble before You!

3 When You did awesome things that we did not
expect, You came down, and the mountains
quaked at Your presence.

4 From of old no one has heard, no ear has
perceived, no eye has seen a God besides You,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him.[2]

5 You meet those who gladly do right, who
remember You in Your ways. But You were angry,
and we sinned; we have been in our sins a long
time, and shall we be saved?[3]

6 All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like a polluted

garment. We all wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, sweep us away.

7 No one calls on Your name or rouses himself to take hold of You, for You have hidden Your face from us and made us melt away in the power of our iniquities.

8 Yet, LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter; we are all the work of Your hand.

9 Do not be exceedingly angry, LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Look, please, for we are all Your people.

10 Your sacred towns have turned to desert; Zion is a desert, Jerusalem a wasteland.

11 Our holy and glorious house, where our fathers praised You, has been burned with fire, and all our treasured places have become ruins.

12 After all this, LORD, will You hold Yourself back? Will You keep silent and afflict us beyond measure?

1 In Hebrew this verse is the second half of 63:19.

2 Compare 1 Corinthians 2:9.

3 The meaning of the Hebrew of the last lines is uncertain.

Chapter 65

Isaiah 65 gives the LORD's answer. He let Himself be found by those who did not seek Him, but all day long He held out His hands to a rebellious people who provoke Him with pagan rites and think themselves too holy for others. He will repay them, yet like a cluster of grapes with juice in it, He will not destroy them all, for the sake of His servants. His servants will eat, drink and rejoice, while those who forsook Him go hungry and ashamed. Then He announces new heavens and a new earth: Jerusalem will be a delight, with no more weeping, long life, homes and vineyards enjoyed in peace, answers before they call, and the wolf and the lamb grazing together.

1 I let Myself be sought by those who did not ask for Me; I let Myself be found by those who did not seek Me. To a nation that did not call on My name I said, "Here I am, here I am."[1]

2 All day long I have held out My hands to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own thoughts,

3 a people who constantly insult Me to My face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick,

4 who sit among the graves and spend the night in secret places, who eat the flesh of pigs, with broth of unclean meat in their pots,

5 who say, "Keep away; do not come near me, for I am too holy for you." These are smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all day long.

6 See, it is written before Me: I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will repay into their laps

7 both your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together, says the LORD. Because they burned incense on the mountains and insulted Me on the hills, I will measure out in full into their laps the payment for their former deeds.

8 This is what the LORD says: As when juice is found in a cluster of grapes and people say, "Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it," so I will do for the sake of My servants and not destroy them all.

9 I will bring out offspring from Jacob, and from Judah heirs of My mountains; My chosen ones will inherit them, and My servants will live there.

10 Sharon will become a pasture for flocks, and the Valley of Achor a resting place for herds, for My people who have sought Me.

11 But you who forsake the LORD and forget My holy mountain, who spread a table for Fortune and fill bowls of mixed wine for Destiny,[2]

12 I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to the slaughter, because I called and you did not answer; I spoke and you did not listen. You did what was evil in My sight and chose what does not please Me.

13 Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: See, My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty; My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.

14 My servants will sing for joy from gladness of heart, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail from a broken spirit.

15 You will leave your name as a curse for My chosen ones: “So may the Lord GOD put you to death.” But to His servants He will give another name.

16 Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth, and whoever swears in the land will swear by the God of truth, for the former troubles are forgotten and hidden from My eyes.

17 For see, I am creating new heavens and a new earth; the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.[3]

18 But be glad and rejoice for ever in what I create, for see, I am creating Jerusalem to be a delight and her people a joy.

19 I will rejoice over Jerusalem and delight in My people; the sound of weeping and the cry of distress will be heard in her no more.

20 No longer will there be in her an infant who lives only a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; for one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be thought accursed.

21 They will build houses and live in them themselves; they will plant vineyards and eat the grapes themselves.

22 They will not build for others to live in, or plant for others to eat; for like the days of a tree will be the days of My people, and My chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They will not labour in vain or bear children for calamity, for they will be offspring blessed by the LORD, and their descendants with them.

24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will not harm or destroy on all My holy mountain, says the LORD.

1 Verses 1–2 are quoted, from the Greek, in Romans 10:20–21.

2 Hebrew ‘Gad’ and ‘Meni’, gods of luck.

3 Compare 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1.

Chapter 66

Isaiah 66 closes the book. Heaven is the LORD’s throne and the earth His footstool; no house can contain Him, but He looks to the humble and contrite who tremble at His word, while the sacrifices of the self-willed are abhorrent to Him. Zion will give birth to her children in a single day, and all who love Jerusalem will be comforted as a mother comforts her child. The LORD will come in fire to judge all flesh, and He will gather all nations to see His glory; survivors will be sent to the distant islands to proclaim it, and the nations will bring Israel’s brothers home as an offering. As the new heavens and earth endure, so will His people, and all flesh will worship Him, while the rebels’ fire will never be quenched.

1 This is what the LORD says: Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. What kind of house will you build for Me, and where will My resting place be?[1]

2 Did not My hand make all these things, and so they came to be? declares the LORD. But this is the one I will look to: the one who is humble and contrite in spirit and who trembles at My word.

3 Whoever slaughters an ox is like one who kills a man; whoever sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog’s neck; whoever presents a grain offering, like one who offers pig’s blood; whoever burns incense, like one who blesses an idol. They have chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in their abominations.

4 So I also will choose harsh treatment for them and bring on them what they dread, because when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not listen. They did what was evil in My sight and chose what does not please Me.

5 Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers who hate you and cast you out for My name’s sake have said, “Let the LORD be glorified, so that we may see your joy!” Yet they will be put to shame.

6 Listen, an uproar from the city! A sound from the temple! It is the sound of the LORD repaying His enemies what they deserve.

7 Before she was in labour, she gave birth; before her pains came on her, she delivered a son.

8 Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day, or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet as soon

as Zion was in labour, she gave birth to her children.

9 Do I bring to the moment of birth and not cause delivery? says the LORD. Do I who cause delivery shut the womb? says your God.

10 Be glad with Jerusalem and celebrate over her, all who love her; share her great joy, all who mourned for her,

11 so that you may nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts, and drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance.

12 For this is what the LORD says: See, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream; you will nurse and be carried on her hip and dandled on her knees.

13 As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you, and you will be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 When you see this, your heart will rejoice, and your bones will flourish like the grass; the hand of the LORD will be known to His servants, but His indignation to His enemies.

15 For see, the LORD will come in fire, and His chariots like a whirlwind, to repay His anger in fury and His rebuke in flames of fire.

16 For by fire and by His sword the LORD will execute judgement on all flesh, and many will be those slain by the LORD.

17 Those who consecrate and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one in the centre, who eat the flesh of pigs and detestable things and mice, will come to an end together, declares the LORD.

18 For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see My glory.

19 I will set a sign among them and send survivors from them to the nations: to Tarshish, Pul and Lud, the archers, to Tubal and Greece, and to faraway coastlands that have never heard of My renown or seen My glory; and they will declare My glory among the nations.[2]

20 And they will bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, on horses, in chariots and wagons, on mules and camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in clean vessels to the house of the LORD.

21 And I will take some of them also to be priests and Levites, says the LORD.

22 For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I make will remain before Me, declares the LORD, so your offspring and your name will remain.

23 From New Moon to New Moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh will come to worship before Me, says the LORD.

24 And they will go out and look on the corpses of those who rebelled against Me, for their worm will not die, and their fire will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all flesh.[3]

1 Verses 1–2 are quoted in Acts 7:49–50.

2 The Greek has ‘Put’ (Libya) for ‘Pul’.

3 Compare Mark 9:48.