

# Isaiah

## Heading

1:1 Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem<sup>1</sup> that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz during the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah reigned over Judah.<sup>2</sup>

## Obedience, not Sacrifice

1:2 Listen, O heavens,  
pay attention, O earth!<sup>3</sup>

For the LORD speaks:

“I raised children,<sup>4</sup> I brought them up,<sup>5</sup>  
but<sup>6</sup> they have rebelled<sup>7</sup> against me!

1:3 An ox recognizes its owner,  
a donkey recognizes where its owner puts  
its food;<sup>8</sup>

but Israel does not recognize me,<sup>9</sup>

my people do not understand.”

1:4<sup>10</sup> The sinful nation is as good as  
dead,<sup>11</sup>

the people weighed down by evil deeds.  
They are offspring who do wrong,  
children<sup>12</sup> who do wicked things.

They have abandoned the LORD,  
and rejected the Holy One of Israel.<sup>13</sup>  
They are alienated from him.<sup>14</sup>

1:5<sup>15</sup> Why do you insist on being bat-  
tered?

Why do you continue to rebel?<sup>16</sup>

Your head has a massive wound,<sup>17</sup>  
your whole body is weak.<sup>18</sup>

1:6 From the soles of your feet to your  
head,

there is no spot that is unharmed.<sup>19</sup>

There are only bruises, cuts,  
and open wounds.

They have not been cleansed<sup>20</sup> or ban-  
daged,

<sup>1</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, [and] Hezekiah, kings of Judah.”

**sn** Isaiah’s prophetic career probably began in the final year of Uzziah’s reign (ca. 740 B.C., see Isa 6:1) and extended into the later years of Hezekiah’s reign, which ended in 686 B.C.

<sup>3</sup> **sn** The personified heavens and earth are summoned to God’s courtroom as witnesses against God’s covenant people. Long before this Moses warned the people that the heavens and earth would be watching their actions (see Deut 4:26; 30:19; 31:28; 32:1).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or “sons” (NAB, NASB).

**sn** “Father” and “son” occur as common terms in ancient Near Eastern treaties and covenants, delineating the suzerain and vassal as participants in the covenant relationship. The prophet uses these terms, the reference to heavens and earth as witnesses, and allusions to deuteronomical covenant curses (1:7-9, 19-20) to set his prophecy firmly against the backdrop of Israel’s covenantal relationship with Yahweh.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** The normal word pair for giving birth to and raising children is יָלַד (*yalad*, “to give birth to”) and גָּדַל (*gadal*, “to grow, raise”). The pair יָלַד וְרָם (*rum*, “to raise up”) probably occur here to highlight the fact that Yahweh made something important of Israel (cf. R. Mosis, *TDOT* 2:403).

<sup>6</sup> **sn** Against the backdrop of Yahweh’s care for his chosen people, Israel’s rebellion represents abhorrent treachery. The conjunction prefixed to a nonverbal element highlights the sad contrast between Yahweh’s compassionate care for His people and Israel’s thankless rebellion.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** To rebel carries the idea of “covenant treachery.” Although an act of פְּשָׁעָה (*pesha*, “rebellion”) often signifies a breach of the law, the legal offense also represents a violation of an existing covenantal relationship (E. Carpenter and M. Grisanti, *NIDOTTE* 3:707).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the donkey the feeding trough of its owner.” The verb in the first line does double duty in the parallelism.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Although both verbs have no object, the parallelism suggests that Israel fails to recognize the LORD as the one who provides for their needs. In both clauses, the placement of “Israel” and “my people” at the head of the clause focuses the reader’s attention on the rebellious nation (C. van der Merwe, J. Naudé, J. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 346-47).

<sup>10</sup> **sn** Having summoned the witnesses and announced the LORD’s accusation against Israel, Isaiah mourns the nation’s impending doom. The third person references to the LORD in the second half of the verse suggest that the quotation from the LORD (cf. vv. 2-3) has concluded.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Woe [to the] sinful nation.” The Hebrew term רָוַי (*roy*, “woe, ah”) was used in funeral laments (see 1 Kgs 13:30; Jer 22:18; 34:5) and carries the connotation of death. In highly dramatic fashion the prophet acts out Israel’s funeral in advance, emphasizing that their demise is inevitable if they do not repent soon.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or “sons” (NASB). The prophet contrasts four terms of privilege – nation, people, offspring, children – with four terms that depict Israel’s sinful condition in Isaiah’s day – sinful, evil, wrong, wicked (see J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 43).

<sup>13</sup> **sn** *Holy One of Israel* is one of Isaiah’s favorite divine titles for God. It pictures the LORD as the sovereign king who rules over his covenant people and exercises moral authority over them.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they are estranged backward.” The LXX omits this statement, which presents syntactical problems and seems to be outside the synonymous parallelistic structure of the verse.

<sup>15</sup> **sn** In vv. 5-9 Isaiah addresses the battered nation (5-8) and speaks as their representative (9).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Why are you still beaten? [Why] do you continue rebellion?” The rhetorical questions express the prophet’s disbelief over Israel’s apparent masochism and obsession with sin. The interrogative construction in the first line does double duty in the parallelism. H. Wildberger (*Isaiah*, 1:18) offers another alternative by translating the two statements with one question: “Why do you still wish to be struck that you persist in revolt?”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all the head is ill”; NRSV “the whole head is sick”; CEV “Your head is badly bruised.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and all the heart is faint.” The “heart” here stands for bodily strength and energy, as suggested by the context and usage elsewhere (see Jer 8:18; Lam 1:22).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “there is not in it health”; NAB “there is no sound spot.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “pressed out.”

nor have they been treated<sup>1</sup> with olive oil.<sup>2</sup>

**1:7** Your land is devastated, your cities burned with fire. Right before your eyes your crops are being destroyed by foreign invaders.<sup>3</sup> They leave behind devastation and destruction.<sup>4</sup>

**1:8** Daughter Zion<sup>5</sup> is left isolated, like a hut in a vineyard, or a shelter in a cucumber field; she is a besieged city.<sup>6</sup>

**1:9** If the LORD who commands armies<sup>7</sup> had not left us a few survivors, we would have quickly become like Sodom,<sup>8</sup>

we would have become like Gomorrah. **1:10** Listen to the LORD's word, you leaders of Sodom!<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "softened" (so NASB, NRSV); NIV "soothed."

<sup>2</sup> **sn** This verse describes wounds like those one would receive in battle. These wounds are comprehensive and without remedy.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "As for your land, before you foreigners are devouring it."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "and [there is] devastation like an overthrow by foreigners." The comparative preposition כ (ke, "like, as") has here the rhetorical nuance, "in every way like." The point is that the land has all the earmarks of a destructive foreign invasion because that is what has indeed happened. One could paraphrase, "it is desolate as it can only be when foreigners destroy." On this use of the preposition in general, see GKC 376 §118.x. Many also prefer to emend "foreigners" here to "Sodom," though there is no external attestation for such a reading in the MSS or ancient versions. Such an emendation finds support from the following context (vv. 9-10) and usage of the preceding noun מְהַפְּקָה (mahpekkeh, "overthrow"). In its five other uses, this noun is associated with the destruction of Sodom. If one accepts the emendation, then one might translate, "the devastation resembles the destruction of Sodom."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "daughter of Zion" (so KJV, NASB, NIV). The genitive is appositional, identifying precisely which daughter is in view. By picturing Zion as a daughter, the prophet emphasizes her helplessness and vulnerability before the enemy.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "like a city besieged." Unlike the preceding two comparisons, which are purely metaphorical, this third one identifies the reality of Israel's condition. In this case the comparative preposition, as in v. 7b, has the force, "in every way like," indicating that all the earmarks of a siege are visible because that is indeed what is taking place. The verb form in MT is Qal passive participle of נָצַר (natsar, "guard"), but since this verb is not often used of a siege (see BDB 666 s.v. נָצַר), some prefer to reposit the form as a Niphal participle from II נָצַר (tsur, "besiege"). However, the latter is not attested elsewhere in the Niphal (see BDB 848 s.v. II נָצַר).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Traditionally, "the LORD of hosts." The title pictures God as the sovereign king who has at his disposal a multitude of attendants, messengers, and warriors to do his bidding. In some contexts, like this one, the military dimension of his rulership is highlighted. In this case, the title pictures him as one who leads armies into battle against his enemies.

<sup>8</sup> **tc** The translation assumes that בְּקִימָה (kim'at, "quickly," literally, "like a little") goes with what follows, contrary to the MT accents, which take it with what precedes. In this case, one could translate the preceding line, "If the LORD who commands armies had not left us a few survivors." If בְּקִימָה goes with the preceding line (following the MT accents), this expression highlights the idea that there would only be a few survivors (H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:20; H. Zobel, *TDOT* 8:456). Israel would not be almost like Sodom but exactly like Sodom.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Building on the simile of v. 9, the prophet sarcastically addresses the leaders and people of Jerusalem as if they

Pay attention to our God's rebuke,<sup>10</sup> people of Gomorrah!

**1:11** "Of what importance to me are your many sacrifices?"<sup>11</sup> says the LORD.

"I am stuffed with<sup>12</sup> burnt sacrifices of rams and the fat from steers. The blood of bulls, lambs, and goats I do not want.<sup>13</sup>

**1:12** When you enter my presence, do you actually think I want this – animals trampling on my courtyards?<sup>14</sup>

**1:13** Do not bring any more meaningless<sup>15</sup> offerings;

I consider your incense detestable!<sup>16</sup> You observe new moon festivals, Sabbaths, and convocations,

but I cannot tolerate sin-stained celebrations!<sup>17</sup>

**1:14** I hate your new moon festivals and assemblies;

were leaders and residents of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah. The sarcasm is appropriate, for if the judgment is comparable to Sodom's, that must mean that the sin which prompted the judgment is comparable as well.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "to the instruction of our God." In this context, which is highly accusatory and threatening, תּוֹרָה (torah, "law, instruction") does not refer to mere teaching, but to corrective teaching and rebuke.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "Why to me the multitude of your sacrifices?" The sarcastic rhetorical question suggests that their many sacrifices are of no importance to the LORD. This phrase answers the possible objection that an Israelite could raise in response to God's indictment: "But we are offering the sacrifices you commanded!"

**sn** In this section the LORD refutes a potential objection that his sinful people might offer in their defense. He has charged them with rebellion (vv. 2-3), but they might respond that they have brought him many sacrifices. So he points out that he requires social justice first and foremost, not empty ritual.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The verb שָׂבַע (sava', "be satisfied, full") is often used of eating and/or drinking one's fill. See BDB 959 s.v. שָׂבַע. Here sacrifices are viewed, in typical ancient Near Eastern fashion, as food for the deity. God here declares that he has eaten and drunk, as it were, his fill.

<sup>13</sup> **sn** In the chiasmic structure of the verse, the verbs at the beginning and end highlight God's displeasure, while the heaping up of references to animals, fat, and blood in the middle lines hints at why God wants no more of their sacrifices. They have, as it were, piled the food on his table and he needs no more.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "When you come to appear before me, who requires this from your hand, trampling of my courtyards?" The rhetorical question sarcastically makes the point that God does not require this parade of livestock. The verb "trample" probably refers to the eager worshipers and their sacrificial animals walking around in the temple area.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "worthless" (NASB, NCV, CEV); KJV, ASV "vain."

<sup>16</sup> **sn** Notice some of the other practices that Yahweh regards as "detestable": homosexuality (Lev 18:22-30; 20:13), idolatry (Deut 7:25; 13:15), human sacrifice (Deut 12:31), eating ritually unclean animals (Deut 14:3-8), sacrificing defective animals (Deut 17:1), engaging in occult activities (Deut 18:9-14), and practicing ritual prostitution (1 Kgs 14:23).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "sin and assembly" (these two nouns probably represent a hendiadys). The point is that their attempts at worship are unacceptable to God because the people's everyday actions in the socio-economic realm prove they have no genuine devotion to God (see vv. 16-17).

they are a burden  
that I am tired of carrying.

**1:15** When you spread out your hands in  
prayer,

I look the other way;<sup>1</sup>

when you offer your many prayers,

I do not listen,

because your hands are covered with  
blood.<sup>2</sup>

**1:16<sup>3</sup>** Wash! Cleanse yourselves!

Remove your sinful deeds<sup>4</sup>

from my sight.

Stop sinning!

**1:17** Learn to do what is right!

Promote justice!

Give the oppressed reason to celebrate!<sup>5</sup>

Take up the cause of the orphan!

Defend the rights of the widow!<sup>6</sup>

**1:18<sup>7</sup>** Come, let's consider your options,<sup>8</sup>  
says the LORD.

“Though your sins have stained you like  
the color red,  
you can become<sup>9</sup> white like snow;  
though they are as easy to see as the color  
scarlet,

you can become<sup>10</sup> white like wool.<sup>11</sup>

**1:19** If you have a willing attitude and  
obey,<sup>12</sup>

then you will again eat the good crops of  
the land.

**1:20** But if you refuse and rebel,  
you will be devoured<sup>13</sup> by the sword.”

Know for certain that the LORD has  
spoken.<sup>14</sup>

### Purifying Judgment

**1:21** How tragic that the once-faithful city  
has become a prostitute!<sup>15</sup>

She was once a center of<sup>16</sup> justice,  
fairness resided in her,

but now only murderers.<sup>17</sup>

**1:22** Your<sup>18</sup> silver has become scum,<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I close my eyes from you.”

<sup>2</sup> **sn** This does not just refer to the blood of sacrificial animals, but also the blood, as it were, of their innocent victims. By depriving the poor and destitute of proper legal recourse and adequate access to the economic system, the oppressors have, for all intents and purposes, “killed” their victims.

<sup>3</sup> **sn** Having demonstrated the people's guilt, the LORD calls them to repentance, which will involve concrete action in the socio-economic realm, not mere emotion.

<sup>4</sup> **sn** This phrase refers to Israel's covenant treachery (cf. Deut 28:10; Jer 4:4; 21:12; 23:2, 22; 25:5; 26:3; 44:22; Hos 9:15; Ps 28:4). In general, the noun *בַּעֲלֵי־כַבֵּם* (*ma'alleykhem*) can simply be a reference to deeds, whether good or bad. However, Isaiah always uses it with a negative connotation (cf. 3:8, 10).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. The translation assumes an emendation of *הַמִּזִּין* (*khamuts*, “oppressor [?]”) to *הַמִּזִּין* (*khamuts*, “oppressed”), a passive participle from *לְמַזִּין* (*khamats*, “oppress”; HALOT 329 s.v. *לְמַזִּין*) and takes the verb *לְמַזִּין* (*ashar*) in the sense of “make happy” (the delocutive Piel, meaning “call/pronounce happy,” is metonymy here, referring to actually effecting happiness). The parallelism favors this interpretation, for the next two lines speak of positive actions on behalf of the destitute. The other option is to retain the MT pointing and translate, “set right the oppressor,” but the nuance “set right” is not clearly attested elsewhere for the verb *לְמַזִּין*. This verb does appear as a participle in Isa 3:12 and 9:16 with the meaning “to lead or guide.” If it can mean to “lead” or “rebuke/redirect” in this verse, the prophet could be contrasting this appeal for societal reformation (v. 17c) with a command to reorder their personal lives (v. 17a-b). J. A. Motyer (*The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 47) suggests that these three statements (v. 17a-c) provide “the contrast between the two ends of imperfect society, the oppressor and the needy, the one inflicting and the other suffering the hurt. Isaiah looks for a transformed society wherever it needs transforming.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** This word refers to a woman who has lost her husband, by death or divorce. The orphan and widow are often mentioned in the OT as epitomizing the helpless and impoverished who have been left without the necessities of life due to the loss of a family provider.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** The LORD concludes his case against Israel by offering them the opportunity to be forgiven and by setting before them the alternatives of renewed blessing (as a reward for repentance) and final judgment (as punishment for persistence in sin).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Traditionally, “let us reason together,” but the context suggests a judicial nuance. The LORD is giving the nation its options for the future.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The imperfects must be translated as modal (indicating capability or possibility) to bring out the conditional nature of the offer. This purification will only occur if the people repent and change their ways.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The imperfects must be translated as modal (indicating capability or possibility) to bring out the conditional nature of the offer. This purification will only occur if the people repent and change their ways.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “though your sins are like red, they will become white like snow; though they are red like scarlet, they will be like wool.” The point is not that the sins will be covered up, though still retained. The metaphorical language must be allowed some flexibility and should not be pressed into a rigid literalistic mold. The people's sins will be removed and replaced by ethical purity. The sins that are now as obvious as the color red will be washed away and the ones who are sinful will be transformed.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “listen”; KJV “obedient”; NASB “If you consent and obey.”

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The wordplay in the Hebrew draws attention to the options. The people can obey, in which case they will “eat” v. 19 *אָכַל* [*to'khehu*]. Qal active participle of lament (see Lam 1:1; 2:1; 4:1-2). Or they can disobey, in which case they will be devoured (*Heb* “eaten,” *אָכַל*, *אָכַל*, [*u'kkelu*], Qal passive/Pual of *אָכַל*) by God's judgment.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” The introductory *כִּי* (*ki*) may be asseverative (as reflected in the translation) or causal/explanatory, explaining why the option chosen by the people will become reality (it is guaranteed by the divine word).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “How she has become a prostitute, the faithful city!” The exclamatory *אֵיךָ* (*ekha*, “how!”) is used several times as the beginning of a lament (see Lam 1:1; 2:1; 4:1-2). Unlike a number of other OT passages that link references to Israel's harlotry to idolatry, Isaiah here makes the connection with social and moral violations.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “filled with.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or “assassins.” This refers to the oppressive rich and/or their henchmen. R. Ortlund (*Whoredom*, 78) posits that it serves as a synecdoche for all varieties of criminals, the worst being mentioned to imply all lesser ones. Since Isaiah often addressed his strongest rebuke to the rulers and leaders of Israel, he may have in mind the officials who bore the responsibility to uphold justice and righteousness.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The pronoun is feminine singular; personified Jerusalem (see v. 21) is addressed.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or “dross.” The word refers to the scum or impurities floating on the top of melted metal.

your beer is diluted with water.<sup>1</sup>  
**1:23** Your officials are rebels,<sup>2</sup>  
 they associate with<sup>3</sup> thieves.  
 All of them love bribery,  
 and look for<sup>4</sup> payoffs.<sup>5</sup>  
 They do not take up the cause of the  
 orphan,<sup>6</sup>  
 or defend the rights of the widow.<sup>7</sup>  
**1:24** Therefore, the sovereign LORD who  
 commands armies,<sup>8</sup>  
 the powerful Ruler of Israel,<sup>9</sup> says this:  
 “Ah, I will seek vengeance<sup>10</sup> against my  
 adversaries,  
 I will take revenge against my enemies.<sup>11</sup>  
**1:25** I will attack you;<sup>12</sup>  
 I will purify your metal with flux.<sup>13</sup>  
 I will remove all your slag.<sup>14</sup>  
**1:26** I will reestablish honest judges as in  
 former times,  
 wise advisers as in earlier days.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The metaphors of silver becoming impure and beer being watered down picture the moral and ethical degeneration that had occurred in Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or “stubborn”; CEV “have rejected me.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and companions of” (so KJV, NASB); CEV “friends of crooks.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “pursue”; NIV “chase after gifts.”

<sup>5</sup> **sn** Isaiah may have chosen the word for gifts (שְׁלוֹמוֹת, *shalmonim*; a hapax legomena here), as a sarcastic pun on what these rulers should have been doing. Instead of attending to peace and wholeness (שְׁלוֹם, *shalom*), they sought after payoffs (שְׁלוֹמוֹת).

<sup>6</sup> **sn** See the note at v. 17.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** The rich oppressors referred to in Isaiah and the other eighth century prophets were not rich capitalists in the modern sense of the word. They were members of the royal military and judicial bureaucracies in Israel and Judah. As these bureaucracies grew, they acquired more and more land and gradually commandeered the economy and legal system. At various administrative levels bribery and graft become commonplace. The common people outside the urban administrative centers were vulnerable to exploitation in such a system, especially those, like widows and orphans, who had lost their family provider through death. Through confiscatory taxation, conscription, excessive interest rates, and other oppressive governmental measures and policies, they were gradually disenfranchised and lost their landed property, and with it, their rights as citizens. The socio-economic equilibrium envisioned in the law of Moses was radically disturbed.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].” On the title “the LORD who commands armies,” see the note at v. 9.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the powerful [one] of Israel.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “console myself” (i.e., by getting revenge); NRSV “pour out my wrath on.”

<sup>11</sup> **sn** The LORD here identifies with the oppressed and comes as their defender and vindicator.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “turn my hand against you.” The second person pronouns in vv. 25-26 are feminine singular. Personified Jerusalem is addressed. The idiom “turn the hand against” has the nuance of “strike with the hand, attack,” in Ps 81:15 HT (81:14 ET); Ezek 38:12; Am 1:8; Zech 13:7. In Jer 6:9 it is used of gleaning grapes.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I will purify your dross as [with] flux.” “Flux” refers here to minerals added to the metals in a furnace to prevent oxides from forming. For this interpretation of בור בר (*bor*), see HALOT 153 s.v. בור בר and 750 s.v. סִיג.

<sup>14</sup> **sn** The metaphor comes from metallurgy; slag is the substance left over after the metallic ore has been refined.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I will restore your judges as in the beginning; and your counselors as in the beginning.” In this context, where social injustice and legal corruption are denounced (see v.

Then you will be called, ‘The Just City,  
 Faithful Town.’”

**1:27**<sup>16</sup> Zion will be freed by justice,<sup>17</sup>  
 and her returnees by righteousness.<sup>18</sup>

**1:28** All rebellious sinners will be shattered,<sup>19</sup>

those who abandon the LORD will perish.

**1:29** Indeed, they<sup>20</sup> will be ashamed of the

23), the “judges” are probably government officials responsible for making legal decisions, while the “advisers” are probably officials who helped the king establish policies. Both offices are also mentioned in 3:2.

<sup>16</sup> **sn** The third person reference to the LORD in v. 28 indicates that the prophet is again (see vv. 21-24a) speaking. Since v. 27 is connected to v. 28 by a conjunction, it is likely that the prophet’s words begin with v. 27.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Zion will be ransomed with justice.” Both cola in this verse end with similar terms: justice and righteousness (and both are preceded by a ב [be] preposition). At issue is whether these virtues describe the means or result of the deliverance and whether they delineate God’s justice/righteousness or that of the covenant people. If the righteousness of Israelite returnees is in view, the point seems to be that the reestablishment of Zion as a center of justice (God’s people living in conformity with God’s demand for equity and justice) will deliver the city from its past humiliation and restore it to a place of prominence (see 2:2-4; cf. E. Kissane, *Isaiah*, 1:19). Most scholars conclude that “righteousness and “justice” refers to God alone (J. Ridderbos, *Isaiah* [BSC], 50; J. Watts, *Isaiah* [WBC], 1:25; E. J. Young, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:89; cf. NLT, TEV) or serves as a double reference to both divine and human justice and righteousness (J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 51; J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:10; H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:72). If it refers to both sides of the coin, these terms highlight the objective divine work of redemption and the subjective human response of penitence (Motyer, 51).

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, “her repentant ones/returnees with righteousness.” The form שְׁבִיחָה (*shaveha*, “her repentant ones”), as pointed in MT, is a masculine plural Qal participle from שׁוּב (*shuv*, “return”). Used substantively, it refers to the “returning (i.e., repentant) ones.” It is possible that the parallel line (with its allusion to being freed by a ransom payment) suggests that the form be repointed to שְׁבִיחָה (*shivyah*, “her captivity”), a reading that has support from the LXX. Some slightly emend the form to read שְׁבִיחָה (*shavaha*, “and will return”). According to this view, the verb from the first line applies to the second line as well with the following translation as a result: “she will be released when fairness is restored.” Regardless, it makes best sense in the context to regard this as a reference to repentant Israelites returning to the land of promise. This understanding provides a better contrast with the rebels and sinners in 1:28.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and [there will be] a shattering of rebels and sinners together.”

<sup>20</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text (and the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) has the third person here, though a few Hebrew MSS (and Targums) read the second person, which is certainly more consistent with the following context. The third person form is the more difficult reading and probably original. This disagreement in person has caused some to emend the first verb (3rd plural) to a 2nd plural form (followed by most English translations). The BHS textual apparatus suggests that the 2nd plural form be read even though there is only sparse textual evidence. LXX, Syriac, and the Vulgate change all the 2nd person verbs in 1:29-31 to 3rd person verbs. It is likely that the change to a 2nd person form represents an attempt at syntactical harmonization (J. de Waard, *Isaiah*, 10). The abrupt change from 3rd person to 2nd person may have been intentional for rhetorical impact (GKC 462 §144.p). The rapid change from exclamation (they did!) to reproach (you desired!) might be regarded as a rhetorical figure focusing attention on the addressees and their conditions (de Waard, 10; E. König, *Stilistik, Rhetorik, Poetik*, 239). This use of the 3rd person could also be understood as an impersonal third person: “one will be ashamed” (de Waard, 10). In v. 29 the prophet contin-



sacred trees  
 you<sup>1</sup> find so desirable;  
 you will be embarrassed because of the  
 sacred orchards<sup>2</sup>  
 where you choose to worship.  
**1:30** For you will be like a tree whose  
 leaves wither,  
 like an orchard<sup>3</sup> that is unwatered.  
**1:31** The powerful will be like<sup>4</sup> a thread  
 of yarn,  
 their deeds like a spark;  
 both will burn together,  
 and no one will put out the fire.

### *The Future Glory of Jerusalem*

**2:1** Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem<sup>5</sup> that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz.<sup>6</sup>

**2:2** In the future<sup>7</sup>  
 the mountain of the LORD's temple will  
 endure<sup>8</sup>  
 as the most important of mountains,  
 and will be the most prominent of hills.<sup>9</sup>  
 All the nations will stream to it,  
**2:3** many peoples will come and say,  
 "Come, let us go up to the LORD's moun-  
 tain,  
 to the temple of the God of Jacob,  
 so<sup>10</sup> he can teach us his requirements,<sup>11</sup>  
 and<sup>12</sup> we can follow his standards."<sup>13</sup>

ues his description of the sinners (v. 28), but then suddenly makes a transition to direct address (switching from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> person) in the middle of his sentence.

**1 tn** The second person pronouns in vv. 29-30 are masculine plural, indicating that the rebellious sinners (v. 28) are addressed.

**2 tn** Or "gardens" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB "groves."

**3 tn** Or "a garden" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

**4 tn** Heb "will become" (so NASB, NIV).

**5 map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**6 tn** Heb "the word which Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

**7 tn** Heb "in the end of the days." This phrase may refer generally to the future, or more technically to the final period of history. See BDB 31 s.v. אַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים. The verse begins with a verb that functions as a "discourse particle" and is not translated. In numerous places throughout the OT, the "to be" verb with a prefixed conjunction (וַיְהִי־וַיִּהְיֶה *vay'hi/vay'hi*) and וַיְהִי־וַיִּהְיֶה (*vay'hi/vay'hi*) occurs in this fashion to introduce a circumstantial clause and does not require translation.

**8 tn** Or "be established" (KJV, NIV, NRSV).

**9 tn** Heb "as the chief of the mountains, and will be lifted up above the hills." The image of Mount Zion being elevated above other mountains and hills pictures the prominence it will attain in the future.

**10 tn** The prefixed verb form with simple *vav* (ו) introduces a purpose/result clause after the preceding prefixed verb form (probably to be taken as a cohortative; see *IBHS* 650 §39.2.2a).

**11 tn** Heb "his ways." In this context God's "ways" are the standards of moral conduct he decrees that people should live by.

**12 tn** The cohortative with *vav* (ו) after the prefixed verb form indicates the ultimate purpose/goal of their action.

**13 tn** Heb "walk in his ways."

For Zion will be the center for moral instruction;<sup>14</sup>  
 the LORD will issue edicts from Jerusalem.<sup>15</sup>

**2:4** He will judge disputes between nations;  
 he will settle cases for many peoples.  
 They will beat their swords into plowshares,<sup>16</sup>  
 and their spears into pruning hooks.<sup>17</sup>  
 Nations will not take up the sword  
 against other nations,  
 and they will no longer train for war.  
**2:5** O descendants<sup>18</sup> of Jacob,  
 come, let us walk in the LORD's guiding light.<sup>19</sup>

### *The Lord's Day of Judgment*

**2:6** Indeed, O LORD,<sup>20</sup> you have abandoned your people,  
 the descendants of Jacob.  
 For diviners from the east are everywhere;<sup>21</sup>  
 they consult omen readers like the Philistines do.<sup>22</sup>  
 Plenty of foreigners are around.<sup>23</sup>

**14 tn** Heb "for out of Zion will go instruction."

**15 tn** Heb "the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

**16 sn** Instead of referring to the large plow as a whole, the plowshare is simply the metal tip which actually breaks the earth and cuts the furrow.

**17 sn** This implement was used to prune the vines, i.e., to cut off extra leaves and young shoots (H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:93; M. Klingbeil, *NIDOTTE* 1:1117-18). It was a short knife with a curved hook at the end sharpened on the inside like a sickle. Breaking weapons and fashioning agricultural implements indicates a transition from fear and stress to peace and security.

**18 tn** Heb "house," referring to the family line or descendants (likewise in v. 6).

**19 tn** Heb "let's walk in the light of the LORD." In this context, which speaks of the LORD's instruction and commands, the "light of the LORD" refers to his moral standards by which he seeks to guide his people. One could paraphrase, "let's obey the LORD's commands."

**20 tn** The words "O LORD" are supplied in the translation for clarification. Isaiah addresses the LORD in prayer.

**21 tc** Heb "they are full from the east." Various scholars retain the BHS reading and suggest that the prophet makes a general statement concerning Israel's reliance on foreign customs (J. Watts, *Isaiah* [WBC], 1:32; J. de Waard, *Isaiah*, 12-13). Nevertheless, it appears that a word is missing. Based on the parallelism (note "omen readers" in 5:6c), many suggest that קְסָמִים (*qos'mim*, "diviners") or מִקְסָם (*miqsam*, "divination") has been accidentally omitted. Homoioteleuton could account for the omission of an original קְסָמִים (note how this word and the following מִקְסָם [*mīqqedem*, "from the east"] both end in *mem*); an original מִקְסָם could have fallen out by homoiocartion (note how this word and the following מִקְסָם both begin with *mem*).

**22 tn** Heb "and omen readers like the Philistines." Through this line and the preceding, the prophet contends that Israel has heavily borrowed the pagan practices of the east and west (in violation of Lev 19:26; Deut 18:9-14).

**23 tn** Heb "and with the children of foreigners they [?]." The precise meaning of the final word is uncertain. Some take this verb (לִפְתָּק, *safaq*) to mean "slap," supply the object "hands," and translate, "they slap [hands] with foreigners"; HALOT 1349 s.v. לִפְתָּק. This could be a reference to foreign alliances. This translation has two disadvantages: It requires the conjectural insertion of "hands" and the use of this verb with its

2:7 Their land is full of gold and silver;  
there is no end to their wealth.<sup>4</sup>

Their land is full of horses;  
there is no end to their chariots.<sup>2</sup>

2:8 Their land is full of worthless idols;  
they worship<sup>3</sup> the product of their own  
hands,

what their own fingers have fashioned.

2:9 Men bow down to them in homage,  
they lie flat on the ground in worship.<sup>4</sup>  
Don't spare them!<sup>5</sup>

2:10 Go up into the rocky cliffs,  
hide in the ground.

Get away from the dreadful judgment of  
the LORD,<sup>6</sup>  
from his royal splendor!

2:11 Proud men will be brought low,  
arrogant men will be humiliated;<sup>7</sup>  
the LORD alone will be exalted<sup>8</sup>  
in that day.

2:12 Indeed, the LORD who commands  
armies has planned a day of judgment,<sup>9</sup>  
for<sup>10</sup> all the high and mighty,  
for all who are proud – they will be hu-  
miliated;

2:13 for all the cedars of Lebanon,

that are so high and mighty,  
for all the oaks of Bashan;<sup>11</sup>

2:14 for all the tall mountains,  
for all the high hills,<sup>12</sup>

2:15 for every high tower,  
for every fortified wall,

2:16 for all the large ships,<sup>13</sup>  
for all the impressive<sup>14</sup> ships.<sup>15</sup>

2:17 Proud men will be humiliated,  
arrogant men will be brought low;<sup>16</sup>  
the LORD alone will be exalted<sup>17</sup>  
in that day.

2:18 The worthless idols will be complete-  
ly eliminated.<sup>18</sup>

2:19 They<sup>19</sup> will go into caves in the rocky  
cliffs

and into holes in the ground,<sup>20</sup>  
trying to escape the dreadful judgment of  
the LORD<sup>21</sup>

and his royal splendor,  
when he rises up to terrify the earth.<sup>22</sup>

object prefixed with a  $\beta$  (*bet*) preposition with this meaning does not occur elsewhere. The other uses of this verb refer to clapping at someone, an indication of hostility. The translation above assumes the verb is derived from  $\text{לִשְׂפֹךְ}$  ("to suffice," attested in the Qal in 1 Kgs 20:10; HALOT 1349 s.v.  $\text{לִשְׂפֹךְ}$ ). In this case the point is that a sufficient number of foreigners (in this case, too many!) live in the land. The disadvantage of this option is that the preposition prefixed to "the children of foreigners" does not occur with this verb elsewhere. The chosen translation is preferred since it continues the idea of abundant foreign influence and does not require a conjectural insertion or emendation.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or "treasuries"; KJV "treasures."

<sup>2</sup> **sn** Judah's royal bureaucracy had accumulated great wealth and military might, in violation of Deut 17:16-17.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or "bow down to" (NIV, NRSV).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "men bow down, men are low." Since the verbs  $\text{שָׁחָה}$  (*shakhakh*) and  $\text{שָׁפַל}$  (*shafal*) are used later in this discourse to describe how God will humiliate proud men (see vv. 11, 17), some understand v. 9a as a prediction of judgment, "men will be brought down, men will be humiliated." However, these prefixed verbal forms with *vav* (h) consecutive appear to carry on the description that precedes and are better taken with the accusation. They draw attention to the fact that human beings actually bow down and worship before the lifeless products of their own hands.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "don't lift them up." The idiom "lift up" ( $\text{לָמַד}$  with  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , *nasa'* with preposition *lamed*) can mean "spare, forgive" (see Gen 18:24, 26). Here the idiom plays on the preceding verbs. The idolaters are bowed low as they worship their false gods; the prophet asks God not to "lift them up."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the dread of the LORD," that is, from the dread that he produces in the objects of his judgment." The words "get away" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the eyes of the pride of men will be brought low, and the arrogance of men will be brought down." The repetition of the verbs  $\text{שָׁפַל}$  (*shafal*) and  $\text{שָׁחָה}$  (*shakhakh*) from v. 9 draws attention to the appropriate nature of the judgment. Those proud men who "bow low" before idols will be forced to "bow low" before God when he judges their sin.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or "elevated"; CEV "honored."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "indeed [or "for"] the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] has a day."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or "against" (NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>11</sup> **sn** The cedars of Lebanon and oaks of Bashan were well-known for their size and prominence. They make apt symbols here for powerful men who think of themselves as prominent and secure.

<sup>12</sup> **sn** The high mountains and hills symbolize the apparent security of proud men, as do the high tower and fortified wall of v. 15.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the ships of Tarshish." This probably refers to large ships either made in or capable of traveling to the distant western port of Tarshish.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "desirable"; NAB, NIV "stately"; NRSV "beautiful."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** On the meaning of this word, which appears only here in the Hebrew Bible, see H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* (SBLDS), 41-42.

**sn** The ships mentioned in this verse were the best of their class, and therefore an apt metaphor for the proud men being denounced in this speech.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the pride of men will be brought down, and the arrogance of men will be brought low." As in v. 11, the repetition of the verbs  $\text{שָׁפַל}$  (*shafal*) and  $\text{שָׁחָה}$  (*shakhakh*) from v. 9 draws attention to the appropriate nature of the judgment. Those proud men who "bow low" before idols will be forced to "bow low" before God when he judges their sin.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or "elevated"; NCV "praised"; CEV "honored."

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The verb "pass away" is singular in the Hebrew text, despite the plural subject ("worthless idols") that precedes. The verb should be emended to a plural; the final *vav* (h) has been accidentally omitted by haplography (note the *vav* at the beginning of the immediately following form).

**tn** *Heb* "will completely pass away"; ASV "shall utterly pass away."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The identity of the grammatical subject is unclear. The "idols" could be the subject; they will "go" into the caves and holes when the idolaters throw them there in their haste to escape God's judgment (see vv. 20-21). The picture of the idols, which represent the foreign deities worshiped by the people, fleeing from the LORD would be highly polemical and fit the overall mood of the chapter. However it seems more likely that the idolaters themselves are the subject, for v. 10 uses similar language in sarcastically urging them to run from judgment.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "dust"; ASV "into the holes of the earth."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the dread of the LORD," that is, from the dread that he produces in the objects of his judgment." The words "trying to escape" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or "land." It is not certain if these verses are describing the judgment of Judah (see vv. 6-9) or a more universal judgment on all proud men.

2:20 At that time<sup>1</sup> men will throw their silver and gold idols, which they made for themselves to worship,<sup>2</sup> into the caves where rodents and bats live,<sup>3</sup> 2:21 so they themselves can go into the crevices of the rocky cliffs and the openings under the rocky overhangs,<sup>4</sup> trying to escape the dreadful judgment of the LORD<sup>5</sup> and his royal splendor, when he rises up to terrify the earth.<sup>6</sup> 2:22 Stop trusting in human beings, whose life's breath is in their nostrils. For why should they be given special consideration?

### A Coming Leadership Crisis

3:1 Look, the sovereign LORD who commands armies<sup>7</sup> is about to remove from Jerusalem<sup>8</sup> and Judah every source of security, including<sup>9</sup> all the food and water,<sup>10</sup> 3:2 the mighty men and warriors, judges and prophets, omen readers and leaders,<sup>11</sup> 3:3 captains of groups of fifty, the respected citizens,<sup>12</sup> advisers and those skilled in magical arts,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or "bow down to."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to the shrews and to the bats." On the meaning of the *חַפְרָפָרָה* (*khafarparah*, "shrew"), see HALOT 341 s.v. חַפְרָפָרָה. The BHS text as it stands (פִּתּוֹת לַחֲפּוֹר, *perot lakhpor*), makes no sense. Based on Theodotion's transliteration and a similar reading in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, most scholars suggest that the MT mistakenly divided a noun (a *hapax legomenon*) that should be translated "moles," "shrews," or "rodents."

<sup>4</sup> **sn** The precise point of vv. 20-21 is not entirely clear. Are they taking the idols into their hiding places with them, because they are so attached to their man-made images? Or are they discarding the idols along the way as they retreat into the darkest places they can find? In either case it is obvious that the gods are incapable of helping them.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the dread of the LORD," that is, from the dread that he produces in the objects of his judgment." The words "trying to escape" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or "land." It is not certain if these verses are describing the judgment of Judah (see vv. 6-9) or a more universal judgment on all proud men. Almost all English versions translate "earth," taking this to refer to universal judgment.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts]." On the title "the LORD who commands armies," see the note at 1:9.

<sup>8</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "support and support." The masculine and feminine forms of the noun are placed side-by-side to emphasize completeness. See GKC 394 §122.v.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all the support of food, and all the support of water."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "elder" (so ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); NCV "older leaders."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the ones lifted up with respect to the face." For another example of the Hebrew idiom, see 2 Kgs 5:1.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the wise with respect to magic." On the

and those who know incantations.

3:4 The LORD says,<sup>14</sup> "I will make youths their officials; malicious young men<sup>15</sup> will rule over them.

3:5 The people will treat each other harshly; men will oppose each other; neighbors will fight.<sup>16</sup> Youths will proudly defy the elderly and riffraff will challenge those who were once respected.<sup>17</sup>

3:6 Indeed, a man will grab his brother right in his father's house<sup>18</sup> and say,<sup>19</sup> "You own a coat – you be our leader! This heap of ruins will be under your control."<sup>20</sup>

3:7 At that time<sup>21</sup> the brother will shout,<sup>22</sup> "I am no doctor,<sup>23</sup>

I have no food or coat in my house; don't make me a leader of the people!"

3:8 Jerusalem certainly stumbles, Judah falls, for their words and their actions offend the LORD;<sup>24</sup>

meaning of the *חַרְשֵׁים* (*kharashim*, "magic"), see HALOT 358 s.v. חַרְשֵׁים. Some understand here a homonym, meaning "craftsmen." In this case, one could translate, "skilled craftsmen" (cf. NIV, NASB).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The words "the LORD says" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The prophet speaks in vv. 1-3 (note the third person reference to the LORD in v. 1), but here the LORD himself announces that he will intervene in judgment. It is unclear where the LORD's words end and the prophet's pick up again. The prophet is apparently speaking again by v. 8, where the LORD is referred to in the third person. Since vv. 4-7 comprise a thematic unity, the quotation probably extends through v. 7.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* *תְּאֻלִּים* (*ta'ulim*) is often understood as an abstract plural meaning "wantonness, cruelty" (cf. NLT). In this case the chief characteristic of these leaders is substituted for the leaders themselves. However, several translations make the parallelism tighter by emending the form to *עֲלִילִים* (*'ol'lim*, "children"; cf. ESV, NASB, NCV, NIV, NKJV, NRSV). This emendation is unnecessary for at least two reasons. The word in the MT highlights the cruelty or malice of the "leaders" who are left behind in the wake of God's judgment. The immediate context makes clear the fact that they are mere youths. The coming judgment will sweep away the leaders, leaving a vacuum which will be filled by incompetent, inexperienced youths.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "man against man, and a man against his neighbor."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and those lightly esteemed those who are respected." The verb *רָהַב* (*rahav*) does double duty in the parallelism.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[in] the house of his father" (so ASV); NIV "at his father's home."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The words "and say" are supplied for stylistic reasons.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "your hand"; NASB "under your charge."

<sup>21</sup> **sn** The man's motives are selfish. He tells his brother to assume leadership because he thinks he has some wealth to give away.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he will lift up [his voice]."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "wrapper [of wounds]"; KJV, ASV, NRSV "healer."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for their tongue and their deeds [are] to the LORD."

they rebel against his royal authority.<sup>1</sup>  
**3:9** The look on their faces<sup>2</sup> testifies to their guilt;<sup>3</sup>  
 like the people of Sodom they openly boast of their sin.<sup>4</sup>  
 Too bad for them!<sup>5</sup>  
 For they bring disaster on themselves.  
**3:10** Tell the innocent<sup>6</sup> it will go well with them,<sup>7</sup>  
 for they will be rewarded for what they have done.<sup>8</sup>  
**3:11** Too bad for the wicked sinners! For they will get exactly what they deserve.<sup>9</sup>  
**3:12** Oppressors treat my<sup>10</sup> people cruelly; creditors rule over them.<sup>11</sup>  
 My people's leaders misled them; they give you confusing directions.<sup>12</sup>  
**3:13** The LORD takes his position to judge; he stands up to pass sentence on his people.<sup>13</sup>  
**3:14** The LORD comes to pronounce judgment

on the leaders of his people and their officials.  
 He says,<sup>14</sup> "It is you<sup>15</sup> who have ruined<sup>16</sup> the vineyard!<sup>17</sup>  
 You have stashed in your houses what you have stolen from the poor.<sup>18</sup>  
**3:15** Why do you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?"<sup>19</sup>  
 The sovereign LORD who commands armies<sup>20</sup> has spoken.

*Washing Away Impurity*

**3:16** The LORD says,  
 "The women<sup>21</sup> of Zion are proud. They walk with their heads high<sup>22</sup> and flirt with their eyes.  
 They skip along<sup>23</sup> and the jewelry on their ankles jingles.<sup>24</sup>  
**3:17** So<sup>25</sup> the sovereign master<sup>26</sup> will afflict the foreheads of Zion's women<sup>27</sup> with skin diseases.<sup>28</sup>  
 The LORD will make the front of their heads bald."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "to rebel [against] the eyes of his majesty." The word *כבוד* (*kavod*) frequently refers to the LORD's royal splendor that is an outward manifestation of his authority as king.

<sup>2</sup> **sn** This refers to their proud, arrogant demeanor.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "answers against them"; NRSV "bears witness against them."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "their sin, like Sodom, they declare, they do not conceal [it]."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "woe to their soul."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or "the righteous" (KJV, NASB, NIV, TEV); NLT "those who are godly."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "that it is good."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "for the fruit of their deeds they will eat."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "for the work of his hands will be done to him."

<sup>10</sup> **sn** This may refer to the prophet or to the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text appears to read literally, "My people, his oppressors, he deals severely, and women rule over them." The correct text and precise meaning of the verse are debated. The translation above assumes (1) an emendation of *גּוֹשְׁיָם* (*nog'sayim*, "his oppressors") to *גּוֹשִׁיִּים* (*nog'shim*, "oppressors") by moving the *mem* (ם) on the following form to the end of the word and dropping the *vav* (ו) as virtually ditto-graphic; (2) an emendation of *מְעִילֵל* (*m<sup>e</sup>olel*, a singular participle that does not agree with the preceding plural subject) to *עִלְלוּ* (*ol<sup>lu</sup>*), a third plural Poel perfect from *עִלַּל* (*alal*, "deal severely"); note that the following form begins with a *vav* [ו]; the text may be haplographic or misdivided; and (3) an emendation (with support from the LXX) of *נָשִׁים* (*nashim*, "women") to *נֹשִׁיִּים* (*noshim*, "creditors"; a participle from *נָשַׂא*, *nasa'*). Another option is to emend *עִלְלוּ* to *עִלְלִים* (*ol<sup>lim</sup>*, "children") and read, "My people's oppressors are children; women rule over them." In this case the point is the same as in v. 4; the leadership void left by the judgment will be filled by those incompetent to lead the community – children and women. (The text reflects the ancient Israelite patriarchal mindset.)

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "and the way of your paths they confuse." The verb *בָּלַע* (*bala'*, "confuse"; HALOT 135 s.v. | בִּלַע) is a homonym of the more common *בָּלַע* ("swallow"; see HALOT 134 s.v. בִּלַע).

<sup>13</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has "nations," but the preceding and following contexts make it clear that the LORD is judging his covenant people. *גּוֹשִׁיִּים* (*animim*) should be changed (with support from the LXX) to *עַמִּים*. The final *mem* (ם) on the form in the Hebrew is either dittographic or enclitic. When the *mem* was added or read as a plural ending, the *vav* (ו) was then misread as a *yod* (י).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The words "he says" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The pronominal element is masculine plural; the leaders are addressed.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The verb *בָּעַר* (*ba'ar*, "graze, ruin"; HALOT 146 s.v. | בער) is a homonym of the more common *בָּעַר* (*ba'ar*, "burn"; see HALOT 145 s.v. בערו).

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The vineyard is a metaphor for the nation here. See 5:1-7.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "the plunder of the poor [is] in your houses" (so NASB).

<sup>19</sup> **sn** The rhetorical question expresses the LORD's outrage at what the leaders have done to the poor. He finds it almost unbelievable that they would have the audacity to treat his people in this manner.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts]." On the title "the LORD who commands armies," see the note at 1:9.

**sn** The use of this title, which also appears in v. 1, forms an inclusio around vv. 1-15. The speech begins and ends with a reference to "the master, the LORD who commands armies."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "daughters" (so KJV, NAB, NRSV).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb "with an outstretched neck." They proudly hold their heads high so that others can see the jewelry around their necks.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb "walking and skipping, they walk."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb "and with their feet they jingle."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** In the Hebrew text vv. 16-17 and one long sentence, "Because the daughters of Zion are proud and walk... the sovereign master will afflict...." In v. 17 the LORD refers to himself in the third person.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in v. 18 is *אֲדוֹנָי* (*adonay*).

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb "the daughters of Zion."

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Or "a scab" (KJV, ASV); NIV, NCV, CEV "sores."

<sup>29</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of this line is unclear because of the presence of the rare word *פֶּת* (*pot*). Since the verb in the line means "lay bare, make naked," some take *פֶּת* as a reference to the genitals (cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV, CEV). (In 1 Kgs 7:50 a noun *פֶּת* appears, with the apparent meaning "socket.") J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:139, n. 2), basing his argument on alleged Akkadian evidence and the parallelism of the verse, takes *פֶּת* as "forehead."



3:18<sup>1</sup> At that time<sup>2</sup> the sovereign master will remove their beautiful ankle jewelry,<sup>3</sup> neck ornaments, crescent shaped ornaments, 3:19 earrings, bracelets, veils, 3:20 headdresses, ankle ornaments, sashes, sachets,<sup>4</sup> amulets, 3:21 rings, nose rings, 3:22 festive dresses, robes, shawls, purses, 3:23 garments, vests, head coverings, and gowns.<sup>5</sup>

3:24 A putrid stench will replace the smell of spices,<sup>6</sup> a rope will replace a belt, baldness will replace braided locks of hair, a sackcloth garment will replace a fine robe, and a prisoner's brand will replace beauty.

3:25 Your<sup>7</sup> men will fall by the sword, your strong men will die in battle.<sup>8</sup>

3:26 Her gates will mourn and lament; deprived of her people, she will sit on the ground.<sup>9</sup>

4:1 Seven women will grab hold of one man at that time.<sup>10</sup>

They will say, "We will provide<sup>11</sup> our own food,

we will provide<sup>12</sup> our own clothes; but let us belong to you<sup>13</sup> – take away our shame!"<sup>14</sup>

### The Branch of the Lord

4:2 At that time<sup>15</sup>

the crops given by the LORD will bring admiration and honor;<sup>16</sup> the produce of the land will be a source of pride and delight

to those who remain in Israel.<sup>17</sup>

4:3 Those remaining in Zion,<sup>18</sup> those left in Jerusalem,<sup>19</sup>

will be called "holy,"<sup>20</sup>

all in Jerusalem who are destined to live.<sup>21</sup>

4:4 At that time<sup>22</sup> the sovereign master<sup>23</sup> will wash the excrement<sup>24</sup> from Zion's women,

he will rinse the bloodstains from Jerusalem's midst,<sup>25</sup>

as he comes to judge

and to bring devastation.<sup>26</sup>

a wife and mother.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the vegetation of the LORD will become beauty and honor." Many English versions understand the phrase *וְיִרְחַק יְדֵיהֶם זַמְתָּהּ* (*tsemakh y'ivvah*) as a messianic reference and render it, "the Branch of the LORD" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT, and others). Though *זַמְתָּהּ* (*tsemakh*) is used by later prophets of a royal descendant (Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zech 3:8; 6:12), those passages contain clear contextual indicators that a human ruler is in view and that the word is being used in a metaphorical way of offspring. However, in Isa 4:2 there are no such contextual indicators. To the contrary, in the parallel structure of the verse *וְיִרְחַק יְדֵיהֶם זַמְתָּהּ* corresponds to "produce of the land," a phrase that refers elsewhere exclusively to literal agricultural produce (see Num 13:20, 26; Deut 1:25). In the majority of its uses *זַמְתָּהּ* refers to literal crops or vegetation (in Ps 65:10 the LORD is the source of this vegetation). A reference to the LORD restoring crops would make excellent sense in Isa 4 and the prophets frequently included this theme in their visions of the future age (see Isa 30:23-24; 32:20; Jer 31:12; Ezek 34:26-29; and Amos 9:13-14).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the fruit of the land will become pride and beauty for the remnant of Israel."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>19</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Or "set apart," cf. CEV "special."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all who are written down for life in Jerusalem." A city register is envisioned; everyone whose name appears on the roll will be spared. This group comprises the remnant of the city referred to earlier in the verse.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "when" (so KJV, NAB, NASB); CEV "after"; NRSV "once."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is *אֲדֹנָי* (*'adonai*).

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The word refers elsewhere to vomit (Isa 28:8) and fecal material (Isa 36:12). Many English versions render this somewhat euphemistically as "filth" (e.g., NAB, NIV, NRSV). Ironically in God's sight the beautiful jewelry described earlier is nothing but vomit and feces, for it symbolizes the moral decay of the city's residents (cf. NLT "moral filth").

<sup>25</sup> **sn** See 1:21 for a related concept.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning." The precise meaning of the second half of the verse is uncertain. *רוּחַהּ* (*ruakh*) can be understood as "wind" in which case the passage pictures the LORD using a destructive wind as an instrument of judgment. However, this would create a mixed metaphor, for the first half of the verse uses the imagery of washing and rinsing to depict judgment. Perhaps the image would be that of a windstorm accompanied by heavy rain. *רוּחַהּ* can also mean "spirit" in which case the verse may be referring to the LORD's Spirit or, more likely, to a disposition

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The translation assumes that the direct quotation ends with v. 17. The introductory formula "in that day" and the shift from a poetic to prosaic style indicate that a new speech unit begins in v. 18.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or "the beauty of [their] ankle jewelry."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "houses of breath." HALOT 124 s.v. *בֵּית* defines them as "scent-bottles"; cf. NAB, NRSV "perfume boxes."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of many of the words in this list is uncertain.

**sn** The rhetorical purpose for such a lengthy list is to impress on the audience the guilt of these women with their proud, materialistic attitude, whose husbands and fathers have profited at the expense of the poor.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and it will be in place of spices there will be a stench." The nouns for "spices" and "stench" are right next to each other in the MT for emphatic contrast. The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The pronoun is feminine singular, suggesting personified Zion, as representative of its women, is the addressee. The reference to "her gates" in v. 26 makes this identification almost certain.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "your strength in battle." The verb in the first clause provides the verbal idea for the second clause.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "she will be empty, on the ground she will sit." Jerusalem is personified as a destitute woman who sits mourning the empty city.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (ASV).

**sn** The seven to one ratio emphasizes the great disparity that will exist in the population due to the death of so many men in battle.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "eat" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); CEV "buy."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "wear" (so NASB, NRSV); NCV "make."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "only let your name be called over us." The Hebrew idiom "call the name over" indicates ownership. See 2 Sam 12:28, and BDB 896 s.v. *קָרָא*, Niph. 2.d.(4). The language reflects the cultural reality of ancient Israel, where women were legally the property of their husbands.

<sup>14</sup> **sn** This refers to the humiliation of being unmarried and childless. The women's words reflect the cultural standards of ancient Israel, where a woman's primary duties were to be

4:5 Then the LORD will create  
over all of Mount Zion<sup>1</sup>  
and over its convocations  
a cloud and smoke by day  
and a bright flame of fire by night;<sup>2</sup>  
indeed a canopy will accompany the  
LORD's glorious presence.<sup>3</sup>  
4:6 By day it will be a shelter to provide  
shade from the heat,  
as well as safety and protection from the  
heavy downpour.<sup>4</sup>

*A Love Song Gone Sour*

5:1 I<sup>5</sup> will sing to my love –  
a song to my lover about his vineyard.<sup>6</sup>  
My love had a vineyard  
on a fertile hill.<sup>7</sup>  
5:2 He built a hedge around it,<sup>8</sup> removed  
its stones,  
and planted a vine.  
He built a tower in the middle of it,  
and constructed a winepress.  
He waited for it to produce edible grapes,  
but it produced sour ones instead.<sup>9</sup>

that the LORD brings to the task of judgment. It is also uncertain if *בָּעֵר* (*ba'ar*) here means "burning" or "sweeping away, devastating."

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "over all the place, Mount Zion." Cf. NLT "Jerusalem"; CEV "the whole city."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a cloud by day, and smoke, and brightness of fire, a flame by night." Though the accents in the Hebrew text suggest otherwise, it might be preferable to take "smoke" with what follows, since one would expect smoke to accompany fire.

**sn** The imagery of the cloud by day and fire by night recalls the days of Moses, when a cloud and fire were tangible reminders that the LORD was guiding and protecting his people (Exod 13:21-22; 14:19, 24). In the future age envisioned in Isa 4, the LORD's protective presence will be a reality.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "indeed (or "for") over all the glory, a canopy." This may allude to Exod 40:34-35, where a cloud overshadows the meeting tent as it is filled with God's glory.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a shelter it will be for shade by day from heat, and for a place of refuge and for a hiding place from cloudburst and rain." Since both of the last nouns of this verse can mean rain, they can either refer to the rain storm and the rain as distinct items or together refer to a heavy downpour. Regardless, they do not represent unrelated phenomena.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** It is uncertain who is speaking here. Possibly the prophet, taking the role of best man, composes a love song for his friend on the occasion of his wedding. If so, *יָדִיד* (*yadid*) should be translated "my friend." The present translation assumes that Israel is singing to the LORD. The word *דוֹד* (*dod*, "lover") used in the second line is frequently used by the woman in the Song of Solomon to describe her lover.

<sup>6</sup> **sn** Israel, viewing herself as the LORD's lover, refers to herself as his vineyard. The metaphor has sexual connotations, for it pictures her capacity to satisfy his appetite and to produce children. See Song 8:12.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "on a horn, a son of oil." Apparently *קֶרֶן* (*qeren*, "horn") here refers to the horn-shaped peak of a hill (BDB 902 s.v.) or to a mountain spur, i.e., a ridge that extends laterally from a mountain (HALOT 1145 s.v. *קֶרֶן*; H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:180). The expression "son of oil" pictures this hill as one capable of producing olive trees. Isaiah's choice of *קֶרֶן*, a rare word for hill, may have been driven by paronomastic concerns, i.e., because *קֶרֶן* sounds like *כֶּרֶם* (*kerem*, "vineyard").

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or, "dug it up" (so NIV); KJV "fenced it." See HALOT 810 s.v. *עֵיץ*.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "wild grapes," i.e., sour ones (also in v. 4).

**sn** At this point the love song turns sour as the LORD himself breaks in and completes the story (see v. 3-6). In the final

5:3 So now, residents of Jerusalem,<sup>10</sup>  
people<sup>11</sup> of Judah,  
you decide between me and my vineyard!  
5:4 What more can I do for my vineyard  
beyond what I have already done?  
When I waited for it to produce edible  
grapes,  
why did it produce sour ones instead?  
5:5 Now I will inform you  
what I am about to do to my vineyard:  
I will remove its hedge and turn it into  
pasture,<sup>12</sup>  
I will break its wall and allow animals to  
graze there.<sup>13</sup>  
5:6 I will make it a wasteland;  
no one will prune its vines or hoe its  
ground,<sup>14</sup>  
and thorns and briars will grow there.  
I will order the clouds  
not to drop any rain on it.  
5:7 Indeed<sup>15</sup> Israel<sup>16</sup> is the vineyard of the  
LORD who commands armies,  
the people<sup>17</sup> of Judah are the cultivated  
place in which he took delight.  
He waited for justice, but look what he  
got – disobedience!<sup>18</sup>  
He waited for fairness, but look what he  
got – cries for help!<sup>19</sup>

*Disaster is Coming*

5:8 Those who accumulate houses are as  
good as dead,<sup>20</sup>  
those who also accumulate landed  
property<sup>21</sup>

line of v. 2 the love song presented to the LORD becomes a judgment speech by the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "men," but in a generic sense.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and it will become [a place for] grazing." *בָּעֵר* (*ba'ar*, "grazing") is a homonym of the more often used verb "to burn."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and it will become a trampled place" (NASB "trampled ground").

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "it will not be pruned or hoed" (so NASB); ASV and NRSV both similar.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "For" (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the house of Israel" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "men," but in a generic sense.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "but, look, disobedience." The precise meaning of *מִשְׁפָּחָה* (*mishpakhah*), which occurs only here in the OT, is uncertain. Some have suggested a meaning "bloodshed." The term is obviously chosen for its wordplay value; it sounds very much like *מִשְׁפָּט* (*mishpat*, "justice"). The sound play draws attention to the point being made; the people have not met the LORD's expectations.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "but, look, a cry for help." The verb ("he waited") does double duty in the parallelism. *צָעָה* (*tsa'qah*) refers to the cries for help made by the oppressed. It sounds very much like *צְדָקָה* (*ts'daqah*, "fairness"). The sound play draws attention to the point being made; the people have not met the LORD's expectations.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Woe [to] those who make a house touch a house." The exclamation *הוֹי* (*hoy*, "woe, ah") was used in funeral laments (see 1 Kgs 13:30; Jer 22:18; 34:5) and carries the connotation of death.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[who] bring a field near a field."

**sn** This verse does not condemn real estate endeavors per se, but refers to the way in which the rich bureaucrats of Ju-

until there is no land left,<sup>1</sup>  
 and you are the only landowners remain-  
 ing within the land.<sup>2</sup>  
**5:9** The LORD who commands armies told  
 me this:<sup>3</sup>  
 “Many houses will certainly become  
 desolate,  
 large, impressive houses will have no one  
 living in them.<sup>4</sup>  
**5:10** Indeed, a large vineyard<sup>5</sup> will pro-  
 duce just a few gallons,<sup>6</sup>  
 and enough seed to yield several bushels<sup>7</sup>  
 will produce less than a bushel.”<sup>8</sup>  
**5:11** Those who get up early to drink beer  
 are as good as dead,<sup>9</sup>  
 those who keep drinking long after dark  
 until they are intoxicated with wine.<sup>10</sup>  
**5:12** They have stringed instruments,<sup>11</sup>  
 tambourines, flutes,  
 and wine at their parties.  
 So they do not recognize what the LORD  
 is doing,  
 they do not perceive what he is bringing  
 about.<sup>12</sup>  
**5:13** Therefore my<sup>13</sup> people will be

deported<sup>14</sup>  
 because of their lack of understanding.  
 Their<sup>15</sup> leaders will have nothing to eat,<sup>16</sup>  
 their<sup>17</sup> masses will have nothing to drink.<sup>18</sup>  
**5:14** So Death<sup>19</sup> will open up its throat,  
 and open wide its mouth,<sup>20</sup>  
 Zion’s dignitaries and masses will de-  
 scend into it,  
 including those who revel and celebrate  
 within her.<sup>21</sup>  
**5:15** Men will be humiliated,  
 they will be brought low;  
 the proud will be brought low.<sup>22</sup>  
**5:16** The LORD who commands armies  
 will be exalted<sup>23</sup> when he punishes,<sup>24</sup>  
 the sovereign God’s authority will be rec-  
 ognized when he judges.<sup>25</sup>

dah accumulated property by exploiting the poor, in violation of the covenantal principle that the land belonged to God and that every family was to have its own portion of land. See the note at 1:23.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “until the end of the place”; NASB “until there is no more room.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “in my ears, the LORD who commands armies [tra-  
 ditionally, the LORD of hosts].”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “great and good [houses], without a resident.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “a ten-yoke vineyard.” The Hebrew term **בְּיָר** (*tsemed*, “yoke”) is here a unit of square measure. Apparently a ten-yoke vineyard covered the same amount of land it would take ten teams of oxen to plow in a certain period of time. The exact size is unknown.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “one bath.” A bath was a liquid measure. Estimates of its modern equivalent range from approximately six to twelve gallons.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “a homer.” A homer was a dry measure, the exact size of which is debated. Cf. NCV “ten bushels”; CEV “five bushels.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “an ephah.” An ephah was a dry measure; there were ten ephahs in a homer. So this verse envisions major crop failure, where only one-tenth of the anticipated harvest is realized.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] those who arise early in the morning, [who] chase beer.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “[who] delay until dark, [until] wine enflames them.”

**sn** This verse does not condemn drinking per se, but refers to the carousing lifestyle of the rich bureaucrats, made possible by wealth taken from the poor. Their carousing is not the fundamental problem, but in this context it is the disgusting symptom of the real disease – their social injustice.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Two types of stringed instruments are specifically mentioned in the Hebrew text, the **בִּינֹר** (*kinnor*, “zither”) and **נֶבֶל** (*nevel*, “harp”).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “the work of the LORD they do not look at, and the work of his hands they do not see.” God’s “work” can sometimes be his creative deeds, but in this context it is the judgment that he is planning to bring upon his people (cf. v. 19, 26; 10:12; 28:21).

<sup>13</sup> **sn** It is not certain if the prophet or the LORD is speaking at this point.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The suffixed (perfect) form of the verb is used; in this way the coming event is described for rhetorical effect as occurring or as already completed.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The third masculine singular suffix refers back to “my people.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “Their glory will be men of hunger.” **כְּבוֹד** (*kavod*, “glory”) is in opposition to **הַמָּוֶן** (*hamon*, “masses”) and refers here to the rich and prominent members of the nation. Some prefer to reposit **מֵתֵי** (*metyey*, “men of”) as **מֵתֵי** (*mityey*, “dead ones of”).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The third masculine singular suffix refers back to “my people.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “and their masses will be parched [by] thirst.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “Sheol” (so ASV, NASB, NRSV); the underworld, the land of the dead, according to the OT world view. Cf. NAB “the nether world”; TEV, CEV “the world of the dead”; NLT “the grave.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “so Sheol will make wide its throat, and open its mouth without limit.”

**sn** Death is portrayed in both the OT (Prov 1:12; Hab 2:5) and Canaanite myth as voraciously swallowing up its prey. In the myths Death is portrayed as having “a lip to the earth, a lip to the heavens ... and a tongue to the stars.” (G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 69, text 5 ii 2-3.) Death describes his own appetite as follows: “But my appetite is the appetite of lions in the waste...If it is in very truth my desire to consume ‘clay’ [a reference to his human victims], then in truth by the handfuls I must eat it, whether my seven portions [indicating fullness and completeness] are already in the bowl or whether Nahar [the god of the river responsible for ferrying victims from the land of the living to the land of the dead] has to mix the cup.” (Driver, 68-69, text 5 i 14-22).

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “and her splendor and her masses will go down, and her tumult and the one who exults in her.” The antecedent of the four feminine singular pronominal suffixes used in v. 14b is unclear. The likely referent is personified Zion/Jerusalem (see 3:25-26; 4:4-5).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “men are brought down, men are brought low, the eyes of pride are brought low.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Or “elevated”; TEV “the Lord Almighty shows his greatness.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “by judgment/justice.” When God justly punishes the evildoers denounced in the preceding verses, he will be recognized as a mighty warrior.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “The holy God will be set apart by fairness.” In this context God’s holiness is his sovereign royal authority, which implies a commitment to justice (see the note on the phrase “the sovereign king of Israel” in 1:4). When God judges evildoers as they deserve, his sovereignty will be acknowledged.

**sn** The appearance of **מִשְׁפָּט** (*mishpat*, “justice”) and **צְדִיקָה** (*tsedaqah*, “fairness”) here is rhetorically significant, when one recalls v. 7. There God denounces his people for failing to produce a society where “justice” and “fairness” are valued and maintained. God will judge his people for their failure, taking “justice” and “fairness” into his own hands.

5:17 Lambs<sup>4</sup> will graze as if in their pastures,  
amid the ruins the rich sojourners will graze.<sup>2</sup>

5:18 Those who pull evil along using  
cords of emptiness are as good as dead,<sup>3</sup>

who pull sin as with cart ropes.<sup>4</sup>

5:19 They say, “Let him hurry, let him act quickly,<sup>5</sup>  
so we can see;

let the plan of the Holy One of Israel<sup>6</sup>  
take shape<sup>7</sup> and come to pass,

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “young rams”; NIV, NCV “sheep”; NLT “flocks.”

<sup>2</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and ruins, fatlings, resident foreigners, will eat.” This part of the verse has occasioned various suggestions of emendation. The parallelism is tighter if the second line refers to animals grazing. The translation, “amid the ruins the fatlings and young sheep graze,” assumes an emendation of “resident foreigners” (גֵּרִים, *garim*) to “young goats/sheep” (גְּדִיִּים, *gēdayim*) – confusion of dalet and resh is quite common – and understands “fatlings” and “young sheep” taken as a compound subject or as in apposition as the subject of the verb. However, no emendations are necessary if the above translation is correct. The meaning of מְכֻרִים (*mekhim*) has a significant impact on one’s textual decision and translation. The noun can refer to a sacrificial (“fat”) animal as it does in its only other occurrence (Ps 66:15). However, it could signify the rich of the earth (“the fat ones of the earth”; Ps 22:29 [MT 30]) using a different word for “fatness” (דָּשֵׁן, *dashen*). If so, it serves a figurative reference to the rich. Consequently, the above translation coheres with the first half of the verse. Just as the sheep are out of place grazing in these places (“as in their pasture”), the sojourners would not have expected to have the chance to eat in these locations. Both animals and itinerant foreigners would eat in places not normal for them.

**sn** The image completes the picture begun in v. 14 and adds to the irony. When judgment comes, Sheol will eat up the sinners who frequent the feasts; then the banqueting halls will lie in ruins and only sheep will eat there.

<sup>3</sup> **sn** See the note at v. 8.

<sup>4</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “Woe to those who pull evil with the ropes of emptiness, and, as [with] ropes of a cart, sin.” Though several textual details are unclear, the basic idea is apparent. The sinners are so attached to their sinful ways (compared here to a heavy load) that they strain to drag them along behind them. If שָׁוְיָא (shav’, “emptiness”) is retained, it makes a further comment on their lifestyle, denouncing it as one that is devoid of what is right and destined to lead to nothing but destruction. Because “emptiness” does not form a very tight parallel with “cart” in the next line, some emend שָׁוְיָא (she, “sheep”) and עֵגֶל (agalah, “cart”) to עֵגֶל (egol, “calf”): “Those who pull evil along with a sheep halter are as good as dead who pull sin with a calf rope” (following the lead of the LXX and improving the internal parallelism of the verse). In this case, the verse pictures the sinners pulling sin along behind them as one pulls an animal with a halter. For a discussion of this view, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:163, n. 1. Nevertheless, this emendation is unnecessary. The above translation emphasizes the folly of the Israelites who hold on to their sin (and its punishment) even while they hope for divine intervention.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “let his work hurry, let it hasten.” The pronoun “his” refers to God, as the parallel line makes clear. The reference to his “work” alludes back to v. 12, which refers to his “work” of judgment. With these words the people challenged the prophet’s warning of approaching judgment. They were in essence saying that they saw no evidence that God was about to work in such a way.

<sup>6</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “draw near” (so NASB); NRSV “hasten to fulfillment.”

then we will know it!”

5:20 Those who call evil good and good evil are as good as dead,<sup>8</sup>  
who turn darkness into light and light into darkness,

who turn bitter into sweet and sweet into bitter.<sup>9</sup>

5:21 Those who think they are wise are as good as dead,<sup>10</sup>  
those who think they possess understanding.<sup>11</sup>

5:22 Those who are champions<sup>12</sup> at drinking wine are as good as dead,<sup>13</sup>  
who display great courage when mixing strong drinks.

5:23 They pronounce the guilty innocent for a payoff,  
they ignore the just cause of the innocent.<sup>14</sup>

5:24 Therefore, as flaming fire<sup>15</sup> devours straw,  
and dry grass disintegrates in the flames,  
so their root will rot,  
and their flower will blow away like dust.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] those who call.” See the note at v. 8.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** In this verse the prophet denounces the perversion of moral standards. Darkness and bitterness are metaphors for evil; light and sweetness symbolize uprightness.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] the wise in their own eyes.” See the note at v. 8.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “[who] before their faces are understanding.”

**sn** Verses 18-21 contain three “woe-sayings” that are purely accusatory and have no formal announcement of judgment attached (as in the “woe-sayings” recorded in vv. 8-17). While this lack of symmetry is odd, it has a clear rhetorical purpose. Having established a pattern in vv. 8-17, the prophet deviates from it in vv. 18-21 to grab his audience’s attention. By placing the “woes” in rapid succession and heaping up the accusatory elements, he highlights the people’s guilt and introduces an element of tension and anticipation. One is reasonably certain that judgment will come, and when it does, it will be devastating. This anticipated devastation is described in frightening detail after the sixth and final woe (see vv. 22-30).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The language used here is quite sarcastic and paves the way for the shocking description of the enemy army in vv. 25-30. The rich leaders of Judah are nothing but “party animals” who are totally incapable of withstanding real warriors.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to]....” See the note at v. 8.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “and the just cause of the innocent ones they turn aside from him.”

**sn** In vv. 22-23 the prophet returns to themes with which he opened his speech. The accusatory elements of vv. 8, 11-12, 18-23 are arranged in a chiasmic manner: (A) social injustice (8), (B) carousing (11-12a), (C) spiritual insensitivity (12b) // (C’) spiritual insensitivity (18-21), (B’) carousing (22), (A’) social injustice (23).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “a tongue of fire” (so NASB), referring to a tongue-shaped flame.

<sup>16</sup> **sn** They are compared to a flowering plant that withers quickly in a hot, arid climate.



For they have rejected the law of the LORD who commands armies, they have spurned the commands<sup>4</sup> of the Holy One of Israel.<sup>2</sup>

**5:25** So the LORD is furious<sup>3</sup> with his people; he lifts<sup>4</sup> his hand and strikes them. The mountains shake, and corpses lie like manure<sup>5</sup> in the middle of the streets.

Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.<sup>6</sup>

**5:26** He lifts a signal flag for a distant nation,<sup>7</sup> he whistles for it to come from the far regions of the earth. Look, they<sup>8</sup> come quickly and swiftly.

**5:27** None tire or stumble, they don't stop to nap or sleep. They don't loosen their belts, or unstrap their sandals to rest.<sup>9</sup>

**5:28** Their arrows are sharpened, and all their bows are prepared.<sup>10</sup>

The hooves of their horses are hard as flint,<sup>11</sup> and their chariot wheels are like a wind-storm.<sup>12</sup>

**5:29** Their roar is like a lion's; they roar like young lions. They growl and seize their prey; they drag it away and no one can come to the rescue.

**5:30** At that time<sup>13</sup> they will growl over their prey,<sup>14</sup> it will sound like sea waves crashing

against rocks.<sup>15</sup> One will look out over the land and see the darkness of disaster, clouds will turn the light into darkness.<sup>16</sup>

### Isaiah's Commission

**6:1** In the year of King Uzziah's death,<sup>17</sup> I saw the sovereign master<sup>18</sup> seated on a high, elevated throne. The hem of his robe filled the temple. **6:2** Seraphs<sup>19</sup> stood over him; each one had six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet,<sup>20</sup> and they used the remaining two to fly. **6:3** They called out to one another, "Holy, holy, holy<sup>21</sup> is the Lord who commands armies!<sup>22</sup> His majestic splendor fills the entire earth!" **6:4** The sound of

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "like the growling of the sea."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "and one will gaze toward the land, and look, darkness of distress, and light will grow dark by its [the land's?] clouds."

**sn** The motif of light turning to darkness is ironic when compared to v. 20. There the sinners turn light (= moral/ethical good) to darkness (= moral/ethical evil). Now ironically the LORD will turn light (= the sinners' sphere of existence and life) into darkness (= the judgment and death).

<sup>17</sup> **sn** That is, approximately 740 B.C.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in vv. 8, 11 is אֲדֹנָי ('*adonay*).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Hebrew שָׂרָף (*saraf*, "seraph") literally means "burning one," perhaps suggesting that these creatures had a fiery appearance (cf. TEV, CEV "flaming creatures"; NCV "heavenly creatures of fire"). Elsewhere in the OT the word "seraph" refers to poisonous snakes (Num 21:6; Deut 8:15; Isa 14:29; 30:6). Perhaps they were called "burning ones" because of their appearance or the effect of their venomous bites, which would cause a victim to burn up with fever. It is possible that the seraphs seen by Isaiah were at least partially serpentine in appearance. Though it might seem strange for a snake-like creature to have wings, two of the texts where "seraphs" are snakes describe them as "flying" (Isa 14:29; 30:6), perhaps referring to their darting movements. See the note at 14:29.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** Some understand "feet" here as a euphemistic reference to the genitals.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Some have seen a reference to the Trinity in the seraphs' threefold declaration, "holy, holy, holy." This proposal has no linguistic or contextual basis and should be dismissed as allegorical. Hebrew sometimes uses repetition for emphasis. (See *IBHS* 233-34 §12.5a; and *GKC* 431-32 §133.k.) By repeating the word "holy," the seraphs emphasize the degree of the Lord's holiness. For another example of threefold repetition for emphasis, see Ezek 21:27 (Heb. v. 32). (Perhaps Jer 22:29 provides another example.)

**sn** Or "The Lord who commands armies has absolute sovereign authority!" The basic sense of the word "holy" is "set apart from that which is commonplace, special, unique." In this context the Lord's holiness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as the ruler of the world. He is "set apart" from the world over which he rules. Note the emphasis on the elevated position of his throne in v. 1 and his designation as "the king" in v. 5. At the same time his holiness encompasses his moral authority, which derives from his royal position. As king he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to live; indeed his very own character sets the standard for proper behavior. He is "set apart" from his subjects in a moral sense as well. He sets the standard; they fall short of it. Note that in v. 5 Isaiah laments that he is morally unworthy to be in the king's presence.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Perhaps in this context, the title has a less militaristic connotation and pictures the Lord as the ruler of the heavenly assembly. See the note at 1:9.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "the word."

<sup>2</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "the anger of the LORD rages."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or "extends"; KJV, ASV "he hath stretched forth."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or "garbage" (NCV, CEV, NLT); NAB, NASB, NIV "refuse."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "in all this his anger is not turned, and still his hand is outstretched."

<sup>7</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has literally, "for nations from a distance." The following verses use singular forms to describe this nation, so the final *mem* (ם) לַגּוֹיִם (*l'goyim*) may be enclitic or dittographic. In the latter case one could read לַגּוֹיִם מֵרָחוֹק (*l'goy merakhoq*, "for a nation from a distance"; see Deut 28:49; Joel 3:8). Another possibility is to emend the text from לַגּוֹיִם מֵרָחוֹק (*l'goyim merakhoq*) לַגּוֹיִם מִמֶּרְחָק (*l'goy mimmerkhaq*, "for a nation from a distant place") a phrase which occurs in Jer 5:15. In this case an error of misdivision has occurred in MT, the *mem* of the prefixed preposition being accidentally taken as a plural ending on the preceding word.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "he." Singular forms are used throughout vv. 26-30 to describe this nation, but for stylistic reasons the translation uses the plural for these collective singulars.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "and the belt on his waist is not opened, and the thong of his sandals is not torn in two."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "bent" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); NIV "are strung."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "regarded like flint."

<sup>12</sup> **sn** They are like a windstorm in their swift movement and in the way they kick up dust.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "over it"; the referent (the prey) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

their voices shook the door frames,<sup>1</sup> and the temple was filled with smoke.

**6:5** I said, “Too bad for me! I am destroyed,<sup>2</sup> for my lips are contaminated by sin,<sup>3</sup> and I live among people whose lips are contaminated by sin.<sup>4</sup> My eyes have seen the king, the LORD who commands armies.”<sup>5</sup> **6:6** But then one of the seraphs flew toward me. In his hand was a hot coal he had taken from the altar with tongs. **6:7** He touched my mouth with it and said, “Look, this coal has touched your lips. Your evil is removed; your sin is forgiven.”<sup>6</sup> **6:8** I heard the voice of the sovereign master say, “Whom will I send? Who will go on our behalf?”<sup>7</sup> I answered, “Here I am, send me!”<sup>8</sup> **6:9** He said, “Go and tell these people:

‘Listen continually, but don’t understand!  
Look continually, but don’t perceive!’

**6:10** Make the hearts of these people calloused;  
make their ears deaf and their eyes blind!  
Otherwise they might see with their eyes  
and hear with their ears,  
their hearts might understand and they  
might repent and be healed.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** On the phrase אמות הדפוסים (*‘ammot hassippim*, “pivots of the frames”) see HALOT 763 s.v. פך.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Isaiah uses the suffixed (perfect) form of the verb for rhetorical purposes. In this way his destruction is described as occurring or as already completed. Rather than understanding the verb as derived from דָּמָה (*damah*, “be destroyed”), some take it from a proposed homonymic root דָּמָה, which would mean “be silent.” In this case, one might translate, “I must be silent.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a man unclean of lips am I.” Isaiah is not qualified to praise the king. His lips (the instruments of praise) are “unclean” because he has been contaminated by sin.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and among a nation unclean of lips I live.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Perhaps in this context, the title has a less militaristic connotation and pictures the LORD as the ruler of the heavenly assembly. See the note at 1:9.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or “ritually cleansed,” or “atoned for” (NIV).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for us.” The plural pronoun refers to the LORD, the seraphs, and the rest of the heavenly assembly.

<sup>8</sup> **sn** Do we take this commission at face value? Does the LORD really want to prevent his people from understanding, repenting, and being healed? Verse 9, which ostensibly records the content of Isaiah’s message, is clearly ironic. As far as we know, Isaiah did not literally proclaim these exact words. The Hebrew imperative forms are employed rhetorically and anticipate the response Isaiah will receive. When all is said and done, Isaiah might as well preface and conclude every message with these ironic words, which, though imperative in form, might be paraphrased as follows: “You continually hear, but don’t understand; you continually see, but don’t perceive.” Isaiah might as well command them to be spiritually insensitive, because, as the preceding and following chapters make clear, the people are bent on that anyway. (This ironic command is comparable to saying to a particularly recalcitrant individual, “Go ahead, be stubborn!”) Verse 10b is also clearly sarcastic. On the surface it seems to indicate Isaiah’s hardening ministry will prevent genuine repentance. But, as the surrounding chapters clearly reveal, the people were hardly ready or willing to repent. Therefore, Isaiah’s preaching was not needed to prevent repentance! Verse 10b reflects the people’s attitude and might be paraphrased accordingly: “Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their mind, repent, and be restored, and they certainly wouldn’t want that, would they?” Of course, this sarcastic statement may also reveal that the LORD himself is now bent on judgment, not reconciliation. Just as Pharaoh’s rejection

**6:11** I replied, “How long, sovereign master?” He said,  
“Until cities are in ruins and unpopulated,  
and houses are uninhabited,  
and the land is ruined and devastated,  
**6:12** and the LORD has sent the people off  
to a distant place,  
and the very heart of the land is completely abandoned.”<sup>9</sup>  
**6:13** Even if only a tenth of the people  
remain in the land, it will again be destroyed,<sup>10</sup> like one of the large sacred  
trees<sup>11</sup> or an Asherah pole, when a  
sacred pillar on a high place is thrown  
down.<sup>12</sup> That sacred pillar symbolizes

tion of Yahweh’s ultimatum ignited judgment and foreclosed, at least temporarily, any opportunity for repentance, so the LORD may have come to the point where he has decreed to bring judgment before opening the door for repentance once more. The sarcastic statement in verse 10b would be an emphatic way of making this clear. (Perhaps we could expand our paraphrase: “Otherwise they might...repent, and be restored, and they certainly wouldn’t want that, would they? Besides, it’s too late for that!”) Within this sarcastic framework, verse 10a must also be seen as ironic. As in verse 9 the imperative forms should be taken as rhetorical and as anticipating the people’s response. One might paraphrase: “Your preaching will desensitize the minds of these people, make their hearing dull, and blind their eyes.” From the outset the LORD might as well command Isaiah to harden the people, because his preaching will end up having that effect. Despite the use of irony, we should still view this as a genuine, albeit indirect, act of divine hardening. After all, God did not have to send Isaiah. By sending him, he drives the sinful people further from him, for Isaiah’s preaching, which focuses on the LORD’s covenantal demands and impending judgment upon covenantal rebellion, forces the people to confront their sin and then continues to desensitize them as they respond negatively to the message. As in the case of Pharaoh, Yahweh’s hardening is not arbitrarily imposed on a righteous or even morally neutral object. Rather his hardening is an element of his righteous judgment on recalcitrant sinners. Ironically, Israel’s rejection of prophetic preaching in turn expedites disciplinary punishment, and brings the battered people to a point where they might be ready for reconciliation. The prophesied judgment (cf. 6:11-13) was fulfilled by 701 B.C. when the Assyrians devastated the land (a situation presupposed by Isa 1:2-20; see especially vv. 4-9). At that time the divine hardening had run its course and Isaiah is able to issue an ultimatum (1:19-20), one which Hezekiah apparently took to heart, resulting in the sparing of Jerusalem (see Isa 36-39 and cf. Jer 26:18-19 with Mic 3:12). This interpretation, which holds in balance both Israel’s moral responsibility and the LORD’s sovereign work among his people, is consistent with other pertinent texts both within and outside the Book of Isaiah. Isa 3:9 declares that the people of Judah “have brought disaster upon themselves,” but Isa 29:9-10 indicates that the LORD was involved to some degree in desensitizing the people. Zech 7:11-12 looks back to the pre-exilic era (cf. v. 7) and observes that the earlier generations stubbornly hardened their hearts, but Ps 81:11-12, recalling this same period, states that the LORD “gave them over to their stubborn hearts.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and great is the abandonment in the midst of the land.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or “be burned” (NRSV); NIV “laid waste.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like a massive tree or like a big tree” (perhaps, “like a terebinth or like an oak”).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has “which in the felling, a sacred pillar in them.” Some take מַצֵּבֶת (*matsevet*) as “stump,” and translate, “which, when chopped down, have a stump remaining in them.” But elsewhere מַצֵּבֶת refers to a memorial pillar (2 Sam 18:18) and the word resembles מַצֵּבָה (*matsevah*, “sacred pillar”). *bam*, “in them”) may be a corruption of בָּמָה (*bamah*, “high place”; the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has בָּמָה (*ash-*

the special chosen family.”<sup>1</sup>

### Ahaz Receives a Sign

**7:1** During<sup>2</sup> the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel marched up to Jerusalem<sup>3</sup> to do battle, but they were unable to prevail against it.<sup>4</sup>

**7:2** It was reported to the family<sup>5</sup> of David, “Syria has allied with<sup>6</sup> Ephraim.” They and their people were emotionally shaken, just as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.<sup>7</sup> **7:3** So the LORD told Isaiah, “Go out with your son Shear-jashub<sup>8</sup>

and meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.<sup>9</sup> **7:4** Tell him, ‘Make sure you stay calm!<sup>10</sup> Don’t be afraid! Don’t be intimidated<sup>11</sup> by these two stubs of smoking logs,<sup>12</sup> or by the raging anger of Rezin, Syria, and the son of Remaliah. **7:5** Syria has plotted with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah to bring about your demise.<sup>13</sup> **7:6** They say, “Let’s attack Judah, terrorize it, and conquer it.<sup>14</sup> Then we’ll set up the son of Tabeel as its king.”<sup>15</sup> **7:7** For this reason the sovereign master,<sup>16</sup> the LORD, says:

“It will not take place;  
it will not happen.

**7:8** For Syria’s leader is Damascus,  
and the leader of Damascus is Rezin.  
Within sixty-five years Ephraim will no  
longer exist as a nation.<sup>17</sup>

er, “which”) becomes a problem in this case, but one might emend the form to וּבְאֶשְׁרָה (*uk<sup>e</sup> asherah*, “or like an Asherah pole”) and translate, “like one of the large sacred trees or an Asherah pole.” Though the text is difficult, the references to sacred trees and a sacred pillar suggest that the destruction of a high place is in view, an apt metaphor for the judgment of idolatrous Judah.

**1** **tn** Heb “a holy offspring [is] its sacred pillar.” If מַצֵּבֶת (*matsevet*) is taken as “stump,” one can see in this statement a brief glimpse of hope. The tree (the nation) is chopped down, but the stump (a righteous remnant) remains from which God can restore the nation. However, if מַצֵּבֶת is taken as “sacred pillar” (*matsevah*; see the previous note), it is much more difficult to take the final statement in a positive sense. In this case “holy offspring” alludes to God’s ideal for his covenant people, the offspring of the patriarchs. Ironically that “holy” nation is more like a “sacred pillar” and it will be thrown down like a sacred pillar from a high place and its land destroyed like the sacred trees located at such shrines. Understood in this way, the ironic statement is entirely negative in tone, just like the rest of the preceding announcement of judgment. It also reminds the people of their failure; they did not oppose pagan religion, instead they embraced it. Now they will be destroyed in the same way they should have destroyed paganism.

**2** **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

**3** **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**4** **tn** Or perhaps, “but they were unable to attack it.” This statement sounds like a summary of the whole campaign. The following context explains why they were unable to defeat the southern kingdom. The parallel passage (2 Kgs 16:5; cf. Num 22:11; 1 Sam 17:9 for a similar construction) affirms that Syria and Israel besieged Ahaz. Consequently, the statement that “they were not able to battle against them” must refer to the inability to conquer Ahaz.

**5** **tn** Heb “house.” In this context the “house of David” includes King Ahaz, his family, and the royal court. See also Jer 21:12; Zech 12:7-8, 10, 12, for a similar use of the phrase.

**6** **tn** Heb “rests upon.” Most understand the verb as נָח (*nakh*, “rest”), but HALOT 685 s.v. II נָח proposes that this is a hapax legomenon which means “stand by.”

**7** **tn** Heb “and his heart shook and the heart of his people shook, like the shaking of the trees of the forest before the wind.” The singular pronoun “his” is collective, referring to the Davidic house/family. לָבָב (*levav*, “heart”) here refers to the seat of the emotions.

**8** **tn** The name means “a remnant will return.” Perhaps in this context, where the LORD is trying to encourage Ahaz, the name suggests that only a few of the enemy invaders will return home; the rest will be defeated.

**9** **tn** Heb “the field of the washer”; traditionally “the fuller’s field” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); NIV “the Washerman’s Field.”

**10** **tn** Heb “guard yourself and be quiet,” but the two verbs should be coordinated.

**11** **tn** Heb “and let not your heart be weak”; ASV “neither let thy heart be faint.”

**12** **sn** The derogatory metaphor indicates that the power of Rezin and Pekah is ready to die out.

**13** **tn** This sentence opens with the conjunction יָנִי (*ya’an ki*, “because”). Consequently some take vv. 5-6 with what precedes, as another reason why Ahaz might be tempted to fear (see v. 4). However, it is more likely that vv. 5-6 give the basis for the LORD’s announcement in vv. 7-9. The conjunction יָנִי here introduces the basis for judgment (as in 3:16; 8:6; 29:13), which is then followed by the formal announcement of judgment.

**14** **tn** Heb “and let us break it open for ourselves”; NASB “make for ourselves a breach in its walls”; NLT “fight our way into.”

**15** **tn** Heb “and we will make the son of Tabeel king in its midst.”

**sn** The precise identity of this would-be puppet king is unknown. He may have been a Syrian official or the ruler of one of the small neighboring states. See Y. Aharoni, *Land of the Bible*, 370.

**16** **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in vv. 14, 19 is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonay*).

**17** **tn** Heb “Ephraim will be too shattered to be a nation”; NIV “to be a people.”

**sn** This statement is problematic for several reasons. It seems to intrude stylistically, interrupting the symmetry of the immediately preceding and following lines. Furthermore, such a long range prophecy lacks punch in the midst of the immediate crisis. After all, even if Israel were destroyed sometime within the next 65 years, a lot could still happen during that time, including the conquest of Judah and the demise of the Davidic family. Finally the significance of the time frame is uncertain. Israel became an Assyrian province within the next 15 years and ceased to exist as a nation. For these reasons many regard the statement as a later insertion, but why a later editor would include the reference to “65 years” remains a mystery. Some try to relate the prophecy to the events alluded to in Ezra 4:2, 10, which refers to how the Assyrian kings Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal settled foreigners in former Israelite territory, perhaps around 670 B.C. However, even if the statement is referring to these events, it lacks rhetorical punch in its immediate context and has the earmarks of a later commentary that has been merged with the text in the process of transmission.

7:9 Ephraim's leader is Samaria, and Samaria's leader is the son of Remaliah. If your faith does not remain firm, then you will not remain secure."<sup>1</sup>

7:10 The LORD again spoke to Ahaz: 7:11 "Ask for a confirming sign from the LORD your God. You can even ask for something miraculous."<sup>2</sup> 7:12 But Ahaz responded, "I don't want to ask; I don't want to put the LORD to a test."<sup>3</sup> 7:13 So Isaiah replied,<sup>4</sup> "Pay attention,<sup>5</sup> family<sup>6</sup> of David.<sup>7</sup> Do you consider it too insignificant to try the patience of men? Is that why you are also trying the patience of my God? 7:14 For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign.<sup>8</sup> Look, this<sup>9</sup> young woman<sup>10</sup> is about to

conceive<sup>11</sup> and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him<sup>12</sup> Immanuel.<sup>13</sup> 7:15 He will eat sour milk<sup>14</sup> and honey, which will help him know how<sup>15</sup> to reject evil and choose what is right.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "if you do not believe, you will not endure." The verb forms are second plural; the LORD here addresses the entire Davidic family and court. (Verse 4 was addressed to the king.) There is a wordplay in the Hebrew text, designed to draw attention to the alternatives set before the king (cf. 1:20). "Believe" (תִּאֱמֵן, *ta'aminu*) is a Hiphil form of the verb אָמַן (*aman*); "endure" (תִּשְׁמַרְךָ, *te'amenu*) is a Niphal form of this same verb.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "Make it as deep as Sheol or make it high upwards." These words suggest that Ahaz can feel free to go beyond the bounds of ordinary human experience.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Ahaz uses the verb נָסָה (*nasah*, "test") in its negative sense of "challenge, provoke." However, this is false piety, a smokescreen designed to cover up his lack of faith in the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "and he said." The subject is unexpressed, but the reference to "my God" at the end of the verse indicates the prophet is speaking.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The verb is second plural in form, because the prophet addresses the whole family of David. He continues to use the plural in v. 14 (with one exception, see the notes on that verse), but then switches back to the second singular (addressing Ahaz specifically) in vv. 16-17.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "house." See the note at v. 2.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** The address to the "house of David" is designed to remind Ahaz and his royal court of the protection promised to them through the Davidic covenant. The king's refusal to claim God's promise magnifies his lack of faith.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term מֹתָר (*ot*, "sign") can refer to a miraculous event (see v. 11), but it does not carry this sense inherently. Elsewhere in Isaiah the word usually refers to a natural occurrence or an object/person vested with special significance (see 8:18; 19:20; 20:3; 37:30; 55:13; 66:19). Only in 38:7-8, 22 does it refer to a miraculous deed that involves suspending or overriding natural laws. The sign outlined in vv. 14-17 involves God's providential control over events and their timing, but not necessarily miraculous intervention.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "the young woman." The Hebrew article has been rendered as a demonstrative pronoun ("this") in the translation to bring out its force. It is very likely that Isaiah pointed to a woman who was present at the scene of the prophet's interview with Ahaz. Isaiah's address to the "house of David" and his use of second plural forms suggests other people were present, and his use of the second feminine singular verb form ("you will name") later in the verse is best explained if addressed to a woman who is present.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Traditionally, "virgin." Because this verse from Isaiah is quoted in Matt 1:23 in connection with Jesus' birth, the Isaiah passage has been regarded since the earliest Christian times as a prophecy of Christ's virgin birth. Much debate has taken place over the best way to translate this Hebrew term, although ultimately one's view of the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ is unaffected. Though the Hebrew word used here (עַלְמָה, *almah*) can sometimes refer to a woman who is a virgin (Gen 24:43), it does not carry this meaning inherently. The word is simply the feminine form of the corresponding masculine noun עַלְמָה (*elem*, "young man"; cf. 1 Sam 17:56; 20:22). The Aramaic and Ugaritic cognate terms

are both used of women who are not virgins. The word seems to pertain to age, not sexual experience, and would normally be translated "young woman." The LXX translator(s) who later translated the Book of Isaiah into Greek sometime between the second and first century B.C., however, rendered the Hebrew term by the more specific Greek word παρθένος (*parthenos*), which does mean "virgin" in a technical sense. This is the Greek term that also appears in the citation of Isa 7:14 in Matt 1:23. Therefore, regardless of the meaning of the term in the OT context, in the NT Matthew's usage of the Greek term παρθένος clearly indicates that from his perspective a virgin birth has taken place.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Elsewhere the adjective הָרָה (*harah*), when used predicatively, refers to a past pregnancy (from the narrator's perspective, 1 Sam 4:19), to a present condition (Gen 16:11; 38:24; 2 Sam 11:5), and to a conception that is about to occur in the near future (Judg 13:5, 7). (There is some uncertainty about the interpretation of Judg 13:5, 7, however. See the notes to those verses.) In Isa 7:14 one could translate, "the young woman is pregnant." In this case the woman is probably a member of the royal family. Another option, the one followed in the present translation, takes the adjective in an imminent future sense, "the young woman is about to conceive." In this case the woman could be a member of the royal family, or, more likely, the prophetess with whom Isaiah has sexual relations shortly after this (see 8:3).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "and you will call his name." The words "young woman" are supplied in the translation to clarify the identity of the addressee. The verb is normally taken as an archaic third feminine singular form here, and translated, "she will call." However the form (קָרָאתָ, *qara't*) is more naturally understood as second feminine singular, in which case the words would be addressed to the young woman mentioned just before this. In the three other occurrences of the third feminine singular perfect of קָרָא (*qara*, "to call"), the form used is קָרָאתָ (*qar'ah*; see Gen 29:35; 30:6; 1 Chr 4:9). A third feminine singular perfect קָרָאתָ does appear in Deut 31:29 and Jer 44:23, but the verb here is the homonym II קָרָא ("to meet, encounter"). The form קָרָאתָ (from I קָרָא, "to call") appears in three other passages (Gen 16:11; Isa 60:18; Jer 3:4 [Qere]) and in each case is second feminine singular.

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The name *Immanuel* means "God [is] with us."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or, perhaps "cream," frequently, "curds" (NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); KJV, ASV "butter"; CEV "yogurt."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "for his knowing." Traditionally the preposition has been translated in a temporal sense, "when he knows." However, though the preposition לְ (*lamed*) can sometimes have a temporal force, it never carries such a nuance in any of the 40 other passages where it is used with the infinitive construct of יָדַע (*yada*, "to know"). Most often the construction indicates purpose/result. This sense is preferable here. The following context indicates that sour milk and honey will epitomize the devastation that God's judgment will bring upon the land. Cultivated crops will be gone and the people will be forced to live off the milk produced by their goats and the honey they find in the thickets. As the child is forced to eat a steady diet of this sour milk and honey, he will be reminded of the consequences of sin and motivated to make correct moral decisions in order to avoid further outbreaks of divine discipline.



7:16 Here is why this will be so:<sup>1</sup> Before the child knows how to reject evil and choose what is right, the land<sup>2</sup> whose two kings you fear will be desolate.<sup>3</sup> 7:17 The LORD will bring on you, your people, and your father's family a time<sup>4</sup> unlike any since Ephraim departed from Judah – the king of Assyria!<sup>5</sup>

7:18 At that time<sup>6</sup> the LORD will whistle for flies from the distant streams of Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria.<sup>7</sup> 7:19 All of them will come and make their home<sup>8</sup> in the ravines between the cliffs, and in the crevices of the cliffs, in all the thorn bushes, and in all the watering holes.<sup>9</sup> 7:20 At that time<sup>10</sup> the sovereign master will use a razor hired from the banks of

the Euphrates River,<sup>11</sup> the king of Assyria, to shave the head and the pubic hair;<sup>12</sup> it will also shave off the beard. 7:21 At that time<sup>13</sup> a man will keep alive a young cow from the herd and a couple of goats. 7:22 From the abundance of milk they produce,<sup>14</sup> he will have sour milk for his meals. Indeed, everyone left in the heart of the land will eat sour milk and honey. 7:23 At that time<sup>15</sup> every place where there had been a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels will be overrun<sup>16</sup> with thorns and briars. 7:24 With bow and arrow<sup>17</sup> men will hunt<sup>18</sup> there, for the whole land will be covered<sup>19</sup> with thorns and briars. 7:25 They will stay away from all the hills that were cultivated, for fear of the thorns and briars.<sup>20</sup> Cattle will graze there and sheep will trample on them.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “for, because.” The particle introduces the entire following context (vv. 16-25), which explains why Immanuel will be an appropriate name for the child, why he will eat sour milk and honey, and why experiencing such a diet will contribute to his moral development.

<sup>2</sup> **sn** Since “two kings” are referred to later in the verse, the “land” must here refer to Syria-Israel.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “the land will be abandoned, which you fear because of its two kings.” After the verb *קִטַּץ* (*quts*, “loathe, dread”) the phrase *מִפְנֵי* (*mipney*, “from before”) introduces the cause of loathing/dread (see Gen 27:46; Exod 1:12; Num 22:3).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “days” (so KJV, NAB); NASB, NRSV “such days.”

<sup>5</sup> **sn** Initially the prophecy appears to be a message of salvation. Immanuel seems to have a positive ring to it, sour milk and honey elsewhere symbolize prosperity and blessing (see Deut 32:13-14; Job 20:17), verse 16 announces the defeat of Judah's enemies, and verse 17a could be taken as predicting a return to the glorious days of David and Solomon. However, the message turns sour in verses 17b-25. God will be with his people in judgment, as well as salvation. The curds and honey will be signs of deprivation, not prosperity, the relief announced in verse 16 will be short-lived, and the new era will be characterized by unprecedented humiliation, not a return to glory. Because of Ahaz's refusal to trust the LORD, potential blessing would be transformed into a curse, just as Isaiah turns an apparent prophecy of salvation into a message of judgment. Because the words “the king of Assyria” are rather awkwardly tacked on to the end of the sentence, some regard them as a later addition. However, the very awkwardness facilitates the prophet's rhetorical strategy here, as he suddenly turns what sounds like a positive message into a judgment speech. Actually, “the king of Assyria,” stands in opposition to the earlier object “days,” and specifies who the main character of these coming “days” will be.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “in that day” (so KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** Swarming flies are irritating; bees are irritating and especially dangerous because of the pain they inflict with their sting (see Deut 1:44; Ps 118:12). The metaphors are well chosen, for the Assyrians (symbolized by the bees) were much more powerful and dangerous than the Egyptians (symbolized by the flies). Nevertheless both would put pressure on Judah, for Egypt wanted Judah as a buffer state against Assyrian aggression, while Assyrian wanted it as a base for operations against Egypt. Following the reference to sour milk and honey, the metaphor is especially apt, for flies are attracted to dairy products and bees can be found in the vicinity of honey.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “and shall rest” (so KJV, ASV); NASB, NIV, NRSV “and settle.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The meaning of this word (*נַחְלוֹת*, *nahalot*) is uncertain; some understand this as referring to another type of thorn bush. For bibliography, see HALOT 676 s.v. *נַחְלוֹת*.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “in that day” (so ASV, NASB); KJV “in the same day.”

### *A Sign-Child is Born*

8:1 The LORD told me, “Take a large tablet<sup>22</sup> and inscribe these words<sup>23</sup> on it with an ordinary

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “the river” (so KJV); NASB “the Euphrates.” The name of the river has been supplied in the present translation for clarity.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “the hair of the feet.” The translation assumes that the word “feet” is used here as a euphemism for the genitals. See BDB 920 s.v. *רַגְלֵי*.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “in that day.” The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated, see note on 2:2.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “in that day.” The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “will become” (so NASB); NAB “shall be turned to.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “with arrows and a bow.” The more common English idiom is “bow[s] and arrow[s].”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “go” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “go hunting.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “will be” (so NASB, NRSV).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “and all the hills which were hoed with a hoe, you will not go there [for] fear of the thorns and briars.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “and it will become a pasture for cattle and a trampling place for sheep.”

**sn** At this point one is able to summarize the content of the “sign” (vv. 14-15) as follows: A young woman known to be present when Isaiah delivered this message to Ahaz (perhaps a member of the royal family or the prophetess mentioned in 8:3) would soon give birth to a boy whom the mother would name Immanuel, “God is with us.” Eventually Immanuel would be forced to eat sour milk and honey, which would enable him to make correct moral decisions. How would this situation come about and how would it constitute a sign? Before this situation developed, the Israelites and Syrians would be defeated. But then the LORD would usher in a period of time unlike any since the division of the kingdom almost 200 years before. The Assyrians would overrun the land, destroy the crops, and force the people to subsist on goats' milk and honey. At that time, as the people saw Immanuel eating his sour milk and honey, the Davidic family would be forced to acknowledge that God was indeed with them. He was present with them in the Syrian-Israelite crisis, fully capable of rescuing them, but he was also present with them in judgment, disciplining them for their lack of trust. The moral of the story is quite clear: Failure to appropriate God's promises by faith can turn potential blessing into disciplinary judgment.

<sup>22</sup> **sn** Probably made of metal, wood, or leather. See HALOT 193 s.v. *טַבְּלֵטָה*.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “write” (so KJV, ASV, NIV, NRSV).

stylus.<sup>1</sup> ‘Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.’<sup>2</sup> **8:2** Then I will summon<sup>3</sup> as my reliable witnesses Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah.” **8:3** I then had sexual relations with the prophetess; she conceived and gave birth to a son. The LORD told me, “Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, **8:4** for before the child knows how to cry out, ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria<sup>4</sup> will be carried off by the king of Assyria.”<sup>5</sup>

**8:5** The LORD spoke to me again: **8:6** “These people<sup>6</sup> have rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah<sup>7</sup> and melt in fear over Rezin and the son of Remaliah.<sup>8</sup> **8:7** So look, the sovereign master<sup>9</sup> is bringing up against them the turbulent and mighty waters of the Euphrates River<sup>10</sup> – the

king of Assyria and all his majestic power. It will reach flood stage and overflow its banks.<sup>11</sup> **8:8** It will spill into Judah, flooding and engulfing, as it reaches to the necks of its victims. He will spread his wings out over your entire land,<sup>12</sup> O Immanuel.”<sup>13</sup>

**8:9** You will be broken,<sup>14</sup> O nations;  
you will be shattered!<sup>15</sup>

Pay attention, all you distant lands of the earth!

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “with the stylus of a man.” The significance of the qualifying genitive “a man” is uncertain. For various interpretations see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:219, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “quickly, [the] plunder; it hurries, [the] loot.” The first word (מָהֵר, *maher*) is either a Piel imperative (“hurry [to]”) or infinitive (“hurrying,” or “quickly”). The third word (רָשָׁת, *krash*) is either a third masculine singular perfect or a masculine singular participle, in either case from the root רוּשַׁת (*krush*, “hurry”). Perhaps it is best to translate, “One hastens to the plunder, one hurries to the loot.” In this case מָהֵר is understood as an infinitive functioning as a verb, the subject of רוּשַׁת is taken as indefinite, and the two nouns are understood as adverbial accusatives. As we discover in v. 3, this is the name of the son to be born to Isaiah through the prophetess.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The form in the text is a cohortative with prefixed *vav* (ו), suggesting that the LORD is announcing what he will do. Some prefer to change the verb to an imperative, “and summon as witnesses,” a reading that finds support from the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>. Another option is to point the prefixed conjunction as a *vav* consecutive and translate, “So I summoned as witnesses.” In this case Isaiah is recalling his response to the LORD’s commission. In any case, the reference to witnesses suggests that the name and the child who bears it will function as signs.

<sup>4</sup> **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** The child’s name foreshadows what will happen to Judah’s enemies; when their defeat takes place, the child will be a reminder that God predicted the event and brought it to pass. As such the child will be a reminder of God’s protective presence with his people.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text begins with “because.” In the Hebrew text vv. 6-7 are one long sentence, with v. 6 giving the reason for judgment and v. 7 formally announcing it.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** The phrase “waters of Shiloah” probably refers to a stream that originated at the Gihon Spring and supplied the city of Jerusalem with water. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:225. In this context these waters stand in contrast to the flood waters of Assyria and symbolize God’s presence and blessings.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of v. 6 has been debated. The translation above assumes that “these people” are the residents of Judah and that מַסּוֹת (*masos*) is alternate form of מַסּוֹת (*masos*, “despair, melt”; see HALOT 606 s.v. מַסּוֹת). In this case vv. 7-8 in their entirety announce God’s disciplinary judgment on Judah. However, “these people” could refer to the Israelites and perhaps also the Syrians (cf. v. 4). In this case מַסּוֹת probably means “joy.” One could translate, “and rejoice over Rezin and the son of Remaliah.” In this case v. 7a announces the judgment of Israel, with vv. 7b-8 then shifting the focus to the judgment of Judah.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonay*).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the mighty and abundant waters of the river.” The referent of “the river” here, the Euphrates River, has been specified in the translation for clarity. As the immediately fol-

lowing words indicate, these waters symbolize the Assyrian king and his armies which will, as it were, inundate the land.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “it will go up over all its stream beds and go over all its banks.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the spreading out of his wings [will be over] the fullness of the breadth of your land.” The metaphor changes here from raging flood to predatory bird.

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The appearance of the name *Immanuel* (“God is with us”) is ironic at this point, for God is present with his people in judgment. *Immanuel* is addressed here as if he has already been born and will see the judgment occur. This makes excellent sense if his birth has just been recorded. There are several reasons for considering *Immanuel* and *Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz* one and the same. **8:3** is a birth account which could easily be understood as recording the fulfillment of the birth prophecy of **7:14**. The presence of a formal record/witnesses (**8:1-2**) suggests a sign function for the child (cf. **7:14**). As in **7:14-16**, the removal of Judah’s enemies would take place before the child reached a specified age (cf. **8:4**). Both **7:17-25** and **8:7-8** speak of an Assyrian invasion of Judah which would follow the defeat of Israel/Syria. The major objection to this view is the fact that different names appear, but such a phenomenon is not without parallel in the OT (cf. **Gen 35:18**). The name *Immanuel* may emphasize the basic fact of God’s presence, while the name *Maher* focuses on the specific nature of God’s involvement. In **7:14** the mother is viewed as naming the child, while in **8:3** Isaiah is instructed to give the child’s name, but one might again point to **Gen 35:18** for a precedent. The sign child’s age appears to be different in **8:4** than in **7:15-16**, but **7:15-16** pertains to the judgment on Judah, as well as the defeat of Israel/Syria (cf. vv. **17-25**), while **8:4** deals only with the downfall of Israel/Syria. Some argue that the suffixed form “your land” in **8:3** points to a royal referent (a child of Ahaz or the Messiah), but usage elsewhere shows that the phrase does not need to be so restricted. While the suffix can refer to the king of a land (cf. **Num 20:17**; **21:22**; **Deut 2:27**; **Judg 11:17, 19**; **2 Sam 24:13**; **1 Kgs 11:22**; **Isa 14:20**), it can also refer to one who is a native of a particular land (cf. **Gen 12:1**; **32:9**; **Jonah 1:8**). (See also the use of “his land” in **Isa 13:14** [where the suffix refers to a native of a land] and **37:7** [where it refers to a king].)

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The verb רָשַׁת (*ra’u*) is a Qal imperative, masculine plural from רָשַׁת (*ra’u*, “break”). Elsewhere both transitive (**Job 34:24**; **Ps 2:9**; **Jer 15:12**) and intransitive (**Prov 25:19**; **Jer 11:16**) senses are attested for the Qal of this verb. Because no object appears here, the form is likely intransitive: “be broken.” In this case the imperative is rhetorical (like “be shattered” later in the verse) and equivalent to a prediction, “you will be broken.” On the rhetorical use of the imperative in general, see *IBHS* 572 §34.4c; *GKC* 324 §110.c.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The imperative form (*Heb* “be shattered”) is rhetorical and expresses the speaker’s firm conviction of the outcome of the nations’ attack. See the note on “be broken.”

Get ready for battle, and you will be shattered!

Get ready for battle, and you will be shattered!<sup>1</sup>

**8:10** Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted!

Issue your orders, but they will not be executed!<sup>2</sup>

For God is with us!<sup>3</sup>

### *The Lord Encourages Isaiah*

**8:11** Indeed this is what the LORD told me. He took hold of me firmly and warned me not to act like these people.<sup>4</sup>

**1 tn** The initial imperative (“get ready for battle”) acknowledges the reality of the nations’ hostility; the concluding imperative (*Heb* “be shattered”) is rhetorical and expresses the speakers’ firm conviction of the outcome of the nations’ attack. (See the note on “be broken.”) One could paraphrase, “Okay, go ahead and prepare for battle since that’s what you want to do, but your actions will backfire and you’ll be shattered.” This rhetorical use of the imperatives is comparable to saying to a child who is bent on climbing a high tree, “Okay, go ahead, climb the tree and break your arm!” What this really means is: “Okay, go ahead and climb the tree since that’s what you really want to do, but your actions will backfire and you’ll break your arm.” The repetition of the statement in the final two lines of the verse gives the challenge the flavor of a taunt (ancient Israelite “trash talking,” as it were).

**2 tn** *Heb* “speak a word, but it will not stand.”

**3 sn** In these vv. 9-10 the tone shifts abruptly from judgment to hope. Hostile nations like Assyria may attack God’s people, but eventually they will be destroyed, for God is with his people, sometimes to punish, but ultimately to vindicate. In addition to being a reminder of God’s presence in the immediate crisis faced by Ahaz and Judah, Immanuel (whose name is echoed in this concluding statement) was a guarantee of the nation’s future greatness in fulfillment of God’s covenantal promises. Eventually God would deliver his people from the hostile nations (vv. 9-10) through another child, an ideal Davidic ruler who would embody God’s presence in a special way (see 9:6-7). Jesus the Messiah is the fulfillment of the Davidic ideal prophesied by Isaiah, the one whom Immanuel foreshadowed. Through the miracle of the incarnation he is literally “God with us.” Matthew realized this and applied Isaiah’s ancient prophecy of Immanuel’s birth to Jesus (Matt 1:22-23). The first Immanuel was a reminder to the people of God’s presence and a guarantee of a greater child to come who would manifest God’s presence in an even greater way. The second Immanuel is “God with us” in a heightened and infinitely superior sense. He “fulfills” Isaiah’s Immanuel prophecy by bringing the typology intended by God to realization and by filling out or completing the pattern designed by God. Of course, in the ultimate fulfillment of the type, the incarnate Immanuel’s mother must be a virgin, so Matthew uses a Greek term (παρθένος, *parthenos*), which carries that technical meaning (in contrast to the Hebrew word לַמְּאָלָה [*almah*], which has the more general meaning “young woman”). Matthew draws similar analogies between NT and OT events in 2:15, 18. The linking of these passages by analogy is termed “fulfillment.” In 2:15 God calls Jesus, his perfect Son, out of Egypt, just as he did his son Israel in the days of Moses, an historical event referred to in Hos 11:1. In so doing he makes it clear that Jesus is the ideal Israel prophesied by Isaiah (see Isa 49:3), sent to restore wayward Israel (see Isa 49:5, cf. Matt 1:21). In 2:18 Herod’s slaughter of the infants is another illustration of the oppressive treatment of God’s people by foreign tyrants. Herod’s actions are analogous to those of the Assyrians, who deported the Israelites, causing the personified land to lament as inconsolably as a mother robbed of her little ones (Jer 31:15).

**4 tc** *Heb* “with strength of hand and he warned me from walking in the way of these people, saying.” Some want to

**8:12** “Do not say, ‘Conspiracy,’ every time these people say the word.<sup>5</sup>”

Don’t be afraid of what scares them; don’t be terrified.

**8:13** You must recognize the authority of the LORD who commands armies.<sup>6</sup>

He is the one you must respect; he is the one you must fear.<sup>7</sup>

**8:14** He will become a sanctuary,<sup>8</sup> but a stone that makes a person trip, and a rock that makes one stumble – to the two houses of Israel.<sup>9</sup>

He will become<sup>10</sup> a trap and a snare to the residents of Jerusalem.<sup>11</sup>

**8:15** Many will stumble over the stone and the rock,<sup>12</sup>

and will fall and be seriously injured, and will be ensnared and captured.”

**8:16** Tie up the scroll as legal evidence,<sup>13</sup> seal the official record of God’s instructions and give it to my followers.<sup>14</sup>

change the pointing of the suffix and thereby emend the Qal imperfect פִּינִי (*yisʿfreni*, “he was warning me”) to the more common Piel perfect פִּינִי (*yisʿfrani*, “he warned me”). Others follow the lead of the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and read יִפְרִי (*yisʿfreni*, “he was turning me aside,” a Hiphil imperfect from פִּיר, *sur*).

**5 tn** *Heb* “Do not say, ‘Conspiracy,’ with respect to all which these people say, ‘Conspiracy.’” The verb translated “do not say” is second masculine plural, indicating that this exhortation is directed to Isaiah and other followers of the LORD (see v. 16).

**6 sn** The background of this command is uncertain. Perhaps the “conspiracy” in view is the alliance between Israel and Syria. Some of the people may even have thought that individuals in Judah were plotting with Israel and Syria to overthrow the king.

**6 tn** *Heb* “the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts], him you must set apart.” The word order is emphatic, with the object being placed first.

**7 tn** *Heb* “he is your [object of] fear, he is your [object of] terror.” The roots יָרָא (*yareʿ*) and יָרָע (*arats*) are repeated from v. 12b.

**8 tn** Because the metaphor of protection (“sanctuary”) does not fit the negative mood that follows in vv. 14b-15, some contend that מִקְדָּשׁ (*miqdash*, “sanctuary”) is probably a corruption of an original מִוֶּקֶשׁ (*moqesh*, “snare”), a word that appears in the next line (cf. NAB and H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:355-56). If the MT reading is retained (as in the above translation), the fact that Yahweh is a sanctuary wraps up the point of v. 13 and stands in contrast to God’s treatment of those who rebel against him (the rest of v. 14).

**9 sn** The two “houses” of Israel (= the patriarch Jacob) are the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.

**10 tn** These words are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. הִיָּהוּהוּ (*hayaḥuḥ*, “and he will be”) does double duty in the parallel structure of the verse.

**11 map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**12 tn** *Heb* “over them” (so NASB); NCV “over this rock.”

**13 tn** *Heb* “tie up [the] testimony.” The “testimony” probably refers to the prophetic messages God has given him. When the prophecies are fulfilled, he will be able to produce this official, written record to confirm the authenticity of his ministry and to prove to the people that God is sovereign over events.

**14 tn** *Heb* “seal [the] instruction among my followers.” The “instruction” probably refers to the prophet’s exhortations and warnings. When the people are judged for the sins, the prophet can produce these earlier messages and essentially say, “I told you so.” In this way he can authenticate his ministry and impress upon the people the reality of God’s authority

8:17 I will wait patiently for the LORD, who has rejected the family of Jacob;<sup>1</sup> I will wait for him.

8:18 Look, I and the sons whom the LORD has given me<sup>2</sup> are reminders and object lessons<sup>3</sup> in Israel, sent from the LORD who commands armies, who lives on Mount Zion.

*Darkness Turns to Light as an Ideal King Arrives*

8:19<sup>4</sup> They will say to you, “Seek oracles at the pits used to conjure up underworld spirits, from the magicians who chirp and mutter incantations.<sup>5</sup> Should people not seek oracles from their gods, by asking the dead about the destiny of the living?”<sup>6</sup> 8:20 Then you must recall the LORD’s instructions and the prophetic testimony of what would happen.<sup>7</sup> Certainly they say such things because their minds are spiritually darkened.<sup>8</sup> 8:21 They will pass through the land<sup>9</sup>

over them.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “who hides his face from the house of Jacob.”

<sup>2</sup> **sn** This refers to Shear-jashub (7:3) and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (8:1, 3).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or “signs and portents” (NAB, NRSV). The names of all three individuals has symbolic value. Isaiah’s name (which meant “the LORD delivers”) was a reminder that the LORD was the nation’s only source of protection; Shear-jashub’s name was meant, at least originally, to encourage Ahaz (see the note at 7:3), and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz’s name was a guarantee that God would defeat Israel and Syria (see the note at 8:4). The word *מוֹפֵת* (*mofet*, “portent”) can often refer to some miraculous event, but in 20:3 it is used, along with its synonym *אוֹת* (“*ot*,” “sign”) of Isaiah’s walking around half-naked as an object lesson of what would soon happen to the Egyptians.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** It is uncertain if the prophet or the LORD is speaking in vv. 19-22. If the latter, then vv. 19-22 resume the speech recorded in vv. 12-15, after the prophet’s response in vv. 16-18.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “inquire of the ritual pits and of the magicians who chirp and mutter.” The Hebrew word *אוֹת* (“*ov*,” “ritual pit”) refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. In 1 Sam 28:7 the witch of Endor is called a *בַּעַלְתֵּי אוֹת* (*ba’alat-ov*, “owner of a ritual pit”). See H. Hoffner, “Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew *’OḲ*,” *JBL* 86 (1967): 385-401.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “Should a nation not inquire of its gods on behalf of the living, (by inquiring) of the dead?” These words appear to be a continuation of the quotation begun in the first part of the verse. *אֱלֹהֵי* (*elohay*) may be translated “its gods” or “its God.” Some take the second half of the verse as the prophet’s (or the LORD’s) rebuke of the people who advise seeking oracles at the ritual pits, but in this case the words “the dead on behalf of the living” are difficult to explain.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “to [the] instruction and to [the] testimony.” The words “then you must recall” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text vv. 19-20a are one long sentence, reading literally, “When they say to you..., to the instruction and to the testimony.” On the identity of the “instruction” and “testimony” see the notes at v. 16.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “If they do not speak according to this word, [it is] because it has no light of dawn.” The literal translation suggests that “this word” refers to the instruction/testimony. However, it is likely that *אִמְ-לוֹ* (*im-lo*) is asseverative here, as in 5:9. In this case “this word” refers to the quotation recorded in v. 19. For a discussion of the problem see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 230, n. 9. The singular pronoun in the second half of the verse is collective, referring back to the nation (see v. 19b).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “he will pass through it.” The subject of the col-

destitute and starving. Their hunger will make them angry,<sup>10</sup> and they will curse their king and their God<sup>11</sup> as they look upward. 8:22 When one looks out over the land, he sees<sup>12</sup> distress and darkness, gloom<sup>13</sup> and anxiety, darkness and people forced from the land.<sup>14</sup> 9:1 (8:23)<sup>15</sup> The gloom will be dispelled for those who were anxious.<sup>16</sup>

In earlier times he<sup>17</sup> humiliated the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali;<sup>18</sup> but now he brings honor<sup>19</sup> to the way of the sea, the region beyond the Jordan, and Galilee of the nations.<sup>20</sup>

lective singular verb is the nation. (See the preceding note.) The immediately preceding context supplies no antecedent for “it” (a third feminine singular suffix in the Hebrew text); the suffix may refer to the land, which would be a reasonable referent with a verb of motion. Note also that *אֶרֶץ* (“*erets*,” “land”) does appear at the beginning of the next verse.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Or “gods” (NAB, NRSV, CEV).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “and behold” (so KJV, ASV, NASB).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of *מְנוּחָה* (*m<sup>e</sup>nuḥa*) is uncertain; the word occurs only here. See BDB 734 s.v. *מְנוּחָה*.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “ and darkness, pushed.” The word *מְנוּדָכָה* (*m<sup>e</sup>nudakh*) appears to be a Pual participle from *נָדַח* (“push”), but the Piel is unattested for this verb and the Pual occurs only here.

<sup>15</sup> **sn** In the Hebrew text (*BHS*) the chapter division comes one verse later than in the English Bible; 9:1 (8:23 HT). Thus 9:2-21 in the English Bible is 9:1-20 in the Hebrew text. Beginning with **10:1** the verse numbers in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible are again the same.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads, “Indeed there is no gloom for the one to whom there was anxiety for her.” The feminine singular pronominal suffix “her” must refer to the land (cf. vv. 22a, 23b). So one could translate, “Indeed there will be no gloom for the land which was anxious.” In this case the statement introduces the positive message to follow. Some assume an emendation of *לוֹ* (*lo*, “no”) to *לוֹ* (*lo*, “to him”) and of *לָהּ* (*lah*, “to her”) to *לוֹ* (*lo*, “to him”), yielding this literal reading: “indeed there is gloom for him, for the one to whom there was anxiety for him.” In this case the statement concludes the preceding description of judgment.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The LORD must be understood as the subject of the two verbs in this verse.

<sup>18</sup> **sn** The statement probably alludes to the Assyrian conquest of Israel in ca. 734-733 B.C., when Tiglath-pileser III annexed much of Israel’s territory and reduced Samaria to a puppet state.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb Just as in earlier times he humiliated..., [in] the latter times he has brought honor.” The main verbs in vv. 1b-4 are Hebrew perfects. The prophet takes his rhetorical stance in the future age of restoration and describes future events as if they have already occurred. To capture the dramatic effect of the original text, the translation uses the English present or present perfect.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** These three geographical designations may refer to provinces established by the Assyrians in 734-733 B.C. The “way of the sea” is the province of Dor, along the Mediterranean coast, the “region beyond the Jordan” is the province of Gilead in Transjordan, and “Galilee of the nations” (a title that alludes to how the territory had been overrun by foreigners) is the province of Megiddo located west of the Sea of Galilee. See Y. Aharoni, *Land of the Bible*, 374.



9:2 (9:1) The people walking in darkness see a bright light;<sup>4</sup> light shines on those who live in a land of deep darkness.<sup>2</sup>

9:3 You<sup>3</sup> have enlarged the nation; you give them great joy.<sup>4</sup> They rejoice in your presence as harvesters rejoice; as warriors celebrate<sup>5</sup> when they divide up the plunder.

9:4 For their oppressive yoke and the club that strikes their shoulders, the cudgel the oppressor uses on them,<sup>6</sup> you have shattered, as in the day of Midian's defeat.<sup>7</sup>

9:5 Indeed every boot that marches and shakes the earth<sup>8</sup> and every garment dragged through blood is used as fuel for the fire.

9:6 For a child has been<sup>9</sup> born to us, a son has been given to us. He shoulders responsibility and is called:<sup>10</sup> Extraordinary Strategist,<sup>11</sup> Mighty God,<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The Hebrew perfect (translated "has been born" and "has been given") is used here as the prophet takes a rhetorical stance in the future. See the note at 9:1.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or "and dominion was on his shoulders and he called his name." The prefixed verbs with *vav* (ו) consecutive are used with the same rhetorical sense as the perfects in v. 6a. See the preceding note. There is great debate over the syntactical structure of the verse. No subject is indicated for the verb "he called." If all the titles that follow are ones given to the king, then the subject of the verb must be indefinite, "one calls." However, some have suggested that one to three of the titles that follow refer to God, not the king. For example, the traditional punctuation of the Hebrew text suggests the translation, "and the Extraordinary Strategist, the Mighty God calls his name, 'Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'"

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Some have seen two titles here ("Wonderful" and "Counselor," cf. KJV, ASV). However, the pattern of the following three titles (each contains two elements) and the use of the roots פָּלַא (*pala'*) and יָעִין (*ya'its*) together in Isa 25:1 (cf. כִּי יַעֲיִן הַפְּלִיא עֲנָה) and 28:29 (cf. הַפְּלִיא עֲנָה) suggest otherwise. The term יָעִין (*yo'ets*) could be taken as appositional (genitive or otherwise) of species ("a wonder, i.e., a wonder as a counselor," cf. NAB "Wonder-Counselor") or as a substantival participle for which פָּלַא provides the direct object ("one who counsels wonders"). יָעִין is used as a royal title elsewhere (cf. Mic 4:9). Here it probably refers to the king's ability to devise military strategy, as suggested by the context (cf. vv. 3-4 and the following title יָעִין אֵל, 'el gibor). In Isa 11:2 (also a description of this king) עֲנָה (*'etsah*) is linked with גִּבּוּר (*g'vurah*, the latter being typically used of military might, cf. BDB 150 s.v.). Note also עֲנָה וְגִבּוּר לְמִלְחָמָה in Isa 36:5. פָּלַא (*pele'*) is typically used of God (cf. however Lam 1:9). Does this suggest the deity of the messianic ruler? The NT certainly teaches he is God, but did Isaiah necessarily have this in mind over 700 years before his birth? Since Isa 11:2 points out that this king will receive the spirit of the LORD, which will enable him to counsel, it is possible to argue that the king's counsel is "extraordinary" because it finds its source in the divine spirit. Thus this title does not necessarily suggest that the ruler is deity.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** גִּבּוּר (*gibbor*) is probably an attributive adjective ("mighty God"), though one might translate "God is a warrior" or "God is mighty." Scholars have interpreted this title in two ways. A number of them have argued that the title portrays the king as God's representative on the battlefield, whom God empowers in a supernatural way (see J. H. Hayes and S. A. Irvine, *Isaiah*, 181-82). They contend that this sense seems more likely in the original context of the prophecy. They would suggest that having read the NT, we might in retrospect interpret this title as indicating the coming king's deity, but it is unlikely that Isaiah or his audience would have understood the title in such a bold way. Ps 45:6 addresses the Davidic king as "God" because he ruled and fought as God's representative on earth. Ancient Near Eastern art and literature picture gods training kings for battle, bestowing special weapons, and intervening in battle. According to Egyptian propaganda, the Hittites described Rameses II as follows: "No man is he who is among us, it is Seth great-of-strength, Baal in person; Not deeds of man are these his doings. They are of one who is unique" (See Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:67). According to proponents of this view, Isa 9:6 probably envisions a similar kind of response when friends and foes alike look at the Davidic king in full battle regalia. When the king's enemies oppose him on the battlefield, they are, as it were, fighting against God himself. The other option is to regard this title as a reference to God, confronting Isaiah's readers with the divinity of this promised "child." The use of this same title that clearly refers to God in a later passage (Isa 10:21) supports this interpretation. Other passages depict

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The darkness symbolizes judgment and its effects (see 8:22); the light represents deliverance and its effects, brought about by the emergence of a conquering Davidic king (see vv. 3-6).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Traditionally צֶלְמַת (*tsalmavet*) has been interpreted as a compound noun, meaning "shadow of death" (so KJV, ASV, NIV), but usage indicates that the word, though it sometimes refers to death, means "darkness." The term should probably be repointed as an abstract noun צֶלְמוֹת (*tsalmut*). See the note at Ps 23:4.

<sup>3</sup> **sn** The LORD is addressed directly in vv. 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> **tc** The Hebrew consonantal text reads "You multiply the nation, you do not make great the joy." The particle לֹא (*lo'*, "not") is obviously incorrect; the marginal reading has לוֹ (*lo*, "to him"). In this case, one should translate, "You multiply the nation, you increase his (i.e., their) joy." However, the parallelism is tighter if one emends לוֹ הַגֵּי לוֹ (*hagoy lo*, "the nation, to him") to הַגֵּי לוֹ (*haggilah*, "the joy," a noun attested in Isa 65:18), which corresponds to הַשִּׂמְחָה (*hasimkhah*, "the joy") later in the verse (H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:386). As attractive as this reading is, it has no textual evidence supporting it. The MT reading (accepting the marginal reading "to him" for the negative particle "not") affirms that Yahweh caused the nation to grow in population and increased their joy.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "as they are happy." The word "warriors" is supplied in the translation to clarify the word picture. This last simile comes close to reality, for vv. 4-5 indicate that the people have won a great military victory over their oppressors.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the scepter of the oppressor against him." The singular pronouns are collective, referring to the people. The oppressed nation is compared to an ox weighed down by a heavy yoke and an animal that is prodded and beaten.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** This alludes to Gideon's victory over Midian (Judg 7-8), when the LORD delivered Israel from an oppressive foreign invader.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Indeed every boot marching with shaking." On the meaning of שָׁעוֹן (*s'e'on*, "boot") and the related denominative verb, both of which occur only here, see HALOT 738 s.v. שָׁעוֹן.

Everlasting Father,<sup>1</sup>  
Prince of Peace.<sup>2</sup>

9:7 His dominion will be vast<sup>3</sup>  
and he will bring immeasurable  
prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

He will rule on David's throne  
and over David's kingdom,<sup>5</sup>  
establishing it<sup>6</sup> and strengthening it  
by promoting justice and fairness,<sup>7</sup>  
from this time forward and forevermore.  
The LORD's intense devotion to his  
people<sup>8</sup> will accomplish this.

Yahweh as the great God and great warrior (Deut 10:17; Jer 32:18). Although this connection of a child who is born with deity is unparalleled in any earlier biblical texts, Isaiah's use of this title to make this connection represents Isaiah's attempt (at God's behest) to advance Israel in their understanding of the ideal Davidic king for whom they long.

**1 tn** This title must not be taken in an anachronistic Trinitarian sense. (To do so would be theologically problematic, for the "Son" is the messianic king and is distinct in his person from God the "Father.") Rather, in its original context the title pictures the king as the protector of his people. For a similar use of "father" see Isa 22:21 and Job 29:16. This figurative, idiomatic use of "father" is not limited to the Bible. In a Phoenician inscription (ca. 850-800 B.C.) the ruler Kilamuwa declares: "To some I was a father, to others I was a mother." In another inscription (ca. 800 B.C.) the ruler Azitawadda boasts that the god Baal made him "a father and a mother" to his people. (See ANET 499-500.) The use of "everlasting" might suggest the deity of the king (as the one who has total control over eternity), but Isaiah and his audience may have understood the term as royal hyperbole emphasizing the king's long reign or enduring dynasty (for examples of such hyperbolic language used of the Davidic king, see 1 Kgs 1:31; Pss 21:4-6; 61:6-7; 72:5, 17). The New Testament indicates that the hyperbolic language (as in the case of the title "Mighty God") is literally realized in the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy, for Jesus will rule eternally.

**2 tn** This title pictures the king as one who establishes a safe socio-economic environment for his people. It hardly depicts him as a meek individual, for he establishes peace through military strength (as the preceding context and the first two royal titles indicate). His people experience safety and prosperity because their invincible king destroys their enemies. See Pss 72 and 144 for parallels to these themes.

**3 tc** The Hebrew text has לַמְּבָרָה (*l'marbeh*), which is a corrupt reading. לַמְּ is dittographic; note the preceding word, שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*). The corrected text reads literally, "great is the dominion."

**4 tn** Heb "and to peace there will be no end" (KJV and ASV both similar). On the political and socio-economic sense of שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*) in this context, see the note at v. 6 on "Prince of Peace."

**5 tn** Heb "over the throne of David, and over his kingdom." The referent of the pronoun "his" (i.e., David) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

**6 tn** The feminine singular pronominal suffix on this form and the following one (translated "it" both times) refers back to the grammatically feminine noun "kingdom."

**7 tn** Heb "with/by justice and fairness"; ASV "with justice and with righteousness."

**8 tn** Heb "the zeal of the LORD." In this context the LORD's "zeal" refers to his intense devotion to and love for his people which prompts him to vindicate them and to fulfill his promises to David and the nation.

### God's Judgment Intensifies

9:8<sup>9</sup> The sovereign master<sup>10</sup> decreed judgment<sup>11</sup> on Jacob,  
and it fell on Israel.<sup>12</sup>

9:9 All the people were aware<sup>13</sup> of it,  
the people of Ephraim and those living in  
Samaria.<sup>14</sup>

Yet with pride and an arrogant attitude,  
they said,<sup>15</sup>

9:10 "The bricks have fallen,  
but we will rebuild with chiseled stone;  
the sycamore fig trees have been cut  
down,

but we will replace them with cedars."<sup>16</sup>

9:11 Then the LORD provoked<sup>17</sup> their adversaries  
to attack them,<sup>18</sup>

**9 sn** The following speech (9:8-10:4) assumes that God has already sent judgment (see v. 9), but it also announces that further judgment is around the corner (10:1-4). The speech seems to describe a series of past judgments on the northern kingdom which is ready to intensify further in the devastation announced in 10:1-4. It may have been written prior to the Assyrian conquest of the northern kingdom in 734-733 B.C., or sometime between that invasion and the downfall of Samaria in 722 B.C. The structure of the speech displays four panels, each of which ends with the refrain, "Through all this, his anger did not subside; his hand remained outstretched" (9:12b; 17b; 21b; 10:4b): Panel I: (A) Description of past judgment (9:8); (B) Description of the people's attitude toward past judgment (9:9-10); (C) Description of past judgment (9:11-12a); (D) Refrain (9:12b); Panel II: (A) Description of the people's attitude toward past judgment (9:13); (B) Description of past judgment (9:14-17a); (C) Refrain (9:17b); Panel III: (A) Description of past judgment (9:18-21a); (B) Refrain (9:21b); Panel IV: (A) Woe oracle announcing future judgment (10:1-4a); (B) Refrain (10:4b).

**10 tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in v. 17 is אֲדֹנָי (*adonay*).

**11 tn** Heb "sent a word" (so KJV, ASV, NRSV); NASB "sends a message."

**12 tn** The present translation assumes that this verse refers to judgment that had already fallen. Both verbs (perfects) are taken as indicating simple past; the vav (ו) on the second verb is understood as a simple vav conjunctive. Another option is to understand the verse as describing a future judgment (see 10:1-4). In this case the first verb is a perfect of certitude; the vav on the second verb is a vav consecutive.

**13 tn** The translation assumes that vv. 9-10 describe the people's response to a past judgment (v. 8). The perfect is understood as indicating simple past and the vav (ו) is taken as conjunctive. Another option is to take the vav on the perfect as consecutive and translate, "all the people will know."

**14 tn** Heb "and the people, all of them, knew; Ephraim and the residents of Samaria."

**15 tn** Heb "with pride and arrogance of heart, saying."

**16 sn** Though judgment (see v. 8) had taken away the prosperity they did have (symbolized by the bricks and sycamore fig trees), they arrogantly expected the future to bring even greater prosperity (symbolized by the chiseled stone and cedars).

**17 tn** The translation assumes that the prefixed verb with vav (ו) consecutive continues the narrative of past judgment.

**18 tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, "adversaries of Rezin against him [i.e., them]." The next verse describes how the Syrians (over whom Rezin ruled, see 7:1, 8) and the Philistines encroached on Israel's territory. Since the Syrians and Israelites were allies by 735 B.C. (see 7:1), the hostilities described probably occurred earlier, while Israel was still pro-Assyrian. In this case one might understand the phrase צָרֵי רֶזַן (*tsarei rezin*, "adversaries of Rezin") as meaning "adversaries sent from Rezin." However, another option, the one chosen in the translation above, is to emend the phrase to צָרֵי (*tsarayv*, "his [i.e., their] adversaries"). This creates tighter parallelism

he stirred up<sup>1</sup> their enemies –  
**9:12** Syria from the east,  
 and the Philistines from the west,  
 they gobbled up Israelite territory.<sup>2</sup>  
 Despite all this, his anger does not sub-  
 side,  
 and his hand is ready to strike again.<sup>3</sup>  
**9:13** The people did not return to the one  
 who struck them,  
 they did not seek reconciliation<sup>4</sup> with the  
 LORD who commands armies.  
**9:14** So the LORD cut off Israel's head and  
 tail,  
 both the shoots and stalk<sup>5</sup> in one day.  
**9:15** The leaders and the highly respected  
 people<sup>6</sup> are the head,  
 the prophets who teach lies are the tail.  
**9:16** The leaders of this nation were mis-  
 leading people,  
 and the people being led were destroyed.<sup>7</sup>  
**9:17** So the sovereign master was not  
 pleased<sup>8</sup> with their young men,  
 he took no pity<sup>9</sup> on their orphans and  
 widows;  
 for the whole nation was godless<sup>10</sup> and  
 did wicked things,<sup>11</sup>

every mouth was speaking disgraceful  
 words.<sup>12</sup>  
 Despite all this, his anger does not subside,  
 and his hand is ready to strike again.<sup>13</sup>  
**9:18** For<sup>14</sup> evil burned like a fire,<sup>15</sup>  
 it consumed thorns and briars;  
 it burned up the thickets of the forest,  
 and they went up in smoke.<sup>16</sup>  
**9:19** Because of the anger of the LORD  
 who commands armies, the land was  
 scorched,<sup>17</sup>  
 and the people became fuel for the fire.<sup>18</sup>  
 People had no compassion on one an-  
 other.<sup>19</sup>  
**9:20** They devoured<sup>20</sup> on the right, but  
 were still hungry,  
 they ate on the left, but were not satisfied.  
 People even ate<sup>21</sup> the flesh of their own  
 arm!<sup>22</sup>  
**9:21** Manasseh fought against<sup>23</sup> Ephraim,  
 and Ephraim against Manasseh;  
 together they fought against Judah.  
 Despite all this, his anger does not subside,

with the next line (note “his [i.e., their] enemies”). The phrase in the Hebrew text may be explained as virtually dittographic.

**1** **tn** The prefixed verbal form is understood as a preterite, used, as is often the case in poetry, without *vav* consecutive. Note that prefixed forms with *vav* consecutive both precede (וַיִּשְׁגֹּב, *vaysaggev*, “and he provoked”) and follow in v. 12 (וַיִּאֲכַל, *vayyo'khalu*, “and they devoured”) this verb.

**2** **tn** *Heb* “and they devoured Israel with all the mouth”; NIV “with open mouth”; NLT “With bared fangs.”

**3** **tn** *Heb* “in all this his anger is not turned, and still his hand is outstretched.” One could translate in the past tense here (and in 9:17b and 21b), but the appearance of the refrain in 10:4b, where it follows a woe oracle prophesying a future judgment, suggests it is a dramatic portrait of the judge which did not change throughout this period of past judgment and will remain unchanged in the future. The English present tense is chosen to best reflect this dramatic mood. (See also 5:25b, where the refrain appears following a dramatic description of coming judgment.)

**4** **tn** This verse describes the people's response to the judgment described in vv. 11-12. The perfects are understood as indicating simple past.

**5** **sn** The metaphor in this line is that of a reed being cut down.

**6** **tn** *Heb* “the elder and the one lifted up with respect to the face.” For another example of the Hebrew idiom, see 2 Kgs 5:1.

**7** **tn** *Heb* “and the ones being led were swallowed up.” Instead of taking מִבְּלָעִים (*m<sup>b</sup>balla'im*) from בָּלַע (*balā*), “to swallow”), HALOT 1:34 s.v. בָּלַע proposes a rare homonymic root בָּלַע (“confuse”) here.

**8** **tn** The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has לֹא יִדְוֹל (“he did not spare”) which is an obvious attempt to tighten the parallelism (note “he took no pity” in the next line). Instead of taking שָׂמַח (*samakh*) in one of its well attested senses (“rejoice over, be pleased with”), some propose, with support from Arabic, a rare homonymic root meaning “be merciful.”

**9** **tn** The translation understands the prefixed verbs יִשְׂמַח (*yismakh*) and יִרְחֵם (*y<sup>r</sup>rakhem*) as preterites without *vav* (ו) consecutive. (See v. 11 and the note on “he stirred up.”)

**10** **tn** Or “defiled”; cf. ASV “profane”; NAB “profaned”; NIV “ungodly.”

**11** **tn** מֵרָע (*mera'*) is a Hiphil participle from רָעַע (*ra'a'*, “be evil”). The intransitive Hiphil has an exhibitive force here, indicating that they exhibited outwardly the evidence of an inward

condition by committing evil deeds.

**12** **tn** Or “foolishness” (NASB), here in a moral-ethical sense.

**13** **tn** *Heb* “in all this his anger is not turned, and still his hand is outstretched.”

**sn** See the note at 9:12.

**14** **tn** Or “Indeed” (cf. NIV “Surely”). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

**15** **sn** Evil was uncontrollable and destructive, and so can be compared to a forest fire.

**16** **tn** *Heb* “and they swirled [with] the rising of the smoke” (cf. NRSV).

**17** **tn** The precise meaning of the verb עָתַם (*'<sup>e</sup>tam*), which occurs only here, is uncertain, though the context strongly suggests that it means “burn, scorch.”

**18** **sn** The uncontrollable fire of the people's wickedness (v. 18) is intensified by the fire of the LORD's judgment (v. 19). God allows (or causes) their wickedness to become self-destructive as civil strife and civil war break out in the land.

**19** **tn** *Heb* “men were not showing compassion to their brothers.” The idiom “men to their brothers” is idiomatic for reciprocity. The prefixed verbal form is either a preterite without *vav* (ו) consecutive or an imperfect used in a customary sense, describing continual or repeated behavior in past time.

**20** **tn** Or “cut.” The verb חָזַר (*gazar*) means “to cut.” If it is understood here, then one might paraphrase, “They slice off meat on the right.” However, HALOT 187 s.v. חָזַר, proposes here a rare homonym meaning “to devour.”

**21** **tn** The prefixed verbal form is either a preterite without *vav* consecutive or an imperfect used in a customary sense, describing continual or repeated behavior in past time.

**22** **tn** Some suggest that זָרְעוֹ (*z<sup>r</sup>'o*, “his arm”) be reinterpreted זָרְעוֹ (*zar'o*, “his offspring”). In either case, the metaphor is that of a desperately hungry man who resorts to an almost unthinkable act to satisfy his appetite. He eats everything he can find to his right, but still being unsatisfied, then turns to his left and eats everything he can find there. Still being desperate for food, he then resorts to eating his own flesh (or offspring, as this phrase is metaphorically understood by some English versions, e.g., NIV, NCV, TEV, NLT). The reality behind the metaphor is the political turmoil of the period, as the next verse explains. There was civil strife within the northern kingdom; even the descendants of Joseph were at each other's throats. Then the northern kingdom turned on their southern brother, Judah.

**23** **tn** The words “fought against” are supplied in the translation both here and later in this verse for stylistic reasons.

and his hand is ready to strike again.<sup>4</sup>

**10:1** Those who enact unjust policies are as good as dead,<sup>2</sup> those who are always instituting unfair regulations,<sup>3</sup>

**10:2** to keep the poor from getting fair treatment, and to deprive<sup>4</sup> the oppressed among my people of justice, so they can steal what widows own, and loot what belongs to orphans.<sup>5</sup>

**10:3** What will you do on judgment day,<sup>6</sup> when destruction arrives from a distant place?

To whom will you run for help?  
Where will you leave your wealth?

**10:4** You will have no place to go, except to kneel with the prisoners, or to fall among those who have been killed.<sup>7</sup>

Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.<sup>8</sup>

### The Lord Turns on Arrogant Assyria

**10:5** Assyria, the club I use to vent my anger, is as good as dead,<sup>9</sup>

a cudgel with which I angrily punish.<sup>10</sup>

**10:6** I sent him<sup>11</sup> against a godless<sup>12</sup> nation, I ordered him to attack the people with whom I was angry,<sup>13</sup> to take plunder and to carry away loot,

to trample them down<sup>14</sup> like dirt in the streets.

**10:7** But he does not agree with this, his mind does not reason this way,<sup>15</sup> for his goal is to destroy, and to eliminate many nations.<sup>16</sup>

**10:8** Indeed,<sup>17</sup> he says:

“Are not my officials all kings?”

**10:9** Is not Calneh like Carchemish?

Hamath like Arpad?

Samaria like Damascus?<sup>18</sup>

**10:10** I overpowered kingdoms ruled by idols,<sup>19</sup>

whose carved images were more impressive than Jerusalem’s<sup>20</sup> or Samaria’s.

**10:11** As I have done to Samaria and its idols,

so I will do to Jerusalem and its idols.”<sup>21</sup>

**10:12** But when<sup>22</sup> the sovereign master<sup>23</sup> finishes judging<sup>24</sup> Mount Zion and Jerusalem, then I<sup>25</sup> will punish the king of Assyria for what he has proudly planned and for the arrogant attitude he displays.<sup>26</sup> **10:13** For he says:

“By my strong hand I have accomplished this,

by my strategy that I devised.

I invaded the territory of nations,<sup>27</sup>

and looted their storehouses.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “in all this his anger is not turned, and still his hand is outstretched” (KJV and ASV both similar); NIV “his hand is still upraised.”

**sn** See the note at 9:12.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] those who decree evil decrees.” On ווי (hoy, “woe, ah”) see the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “[to] the writers who write out harm.” The participle and verb are in the Piel, suggesting repetitive action.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or “rob” (ASV, NASB, NCV, NRSV); KJV “take away the right from the poor.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “so that widows are their plunder, and they can loot orphans.”

**sn** On the socio-economic background of vv. 1-2, see the note at 1:23.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “the day of visitation” (so KJV, ASV), that is, the day when God arrives to execute justice on the oppressors.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “except one kneels in the place of the prisoner, and in the place of the slain [who] fall.” On the force of בָּלִיתִי (bilii, “except”) and its logical connection to what precedes, see BDB 116 s.v. בָּלִיתִי. On the force of תַּחַת (takhat, “in the place of”) here, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:258, n. 6.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “in all this his anger was not turned, and still his hand was outstretched”; KJV, ASV, NRSV “his had is stretched out still.”

**sn** See the note at 9:12.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] Assyria, the club of my anger.” On ווי (hoy, “woe, ah”) see the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “a cudgel is he, in their hand is my anger.” It seems likely that the final mem (ם) on בְּיָדָם (b<sup>e</sup>yadam) is not a pronominal suffix (“in their hand”), but an enclitic mem. If so, one can translate literally, “a cudgel is he in the hand of my anger.”

<sup>11</sup> **sn** Throughout this section singular forms are used to refer to Assyria; perhaps the king of Assyria is in view (see v. 12).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or “defiled”; cf. ASV “profane”; NAB “impious”; NCV “separated from God.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “and against the people of my anger I ordered him.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “to make it [i.e., the people] a trampled place.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “but he, not so does he intend, and his heart, not so does it think.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “for to destroy [is] in his heart, and to cut off nations, not a few.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>18</sup> **sn** *Calneh ... Carchemish ... Hamath ... Arpad ... Samaria ... Damascus.* The city states listed here were conquered by the Assyrians between 740-717 B.C. The point of the rhetorical questions is that no one can stand before Assyria’s might. On the geographical, rather than chronological arrangement of the cities, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:264, n. 4.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “Just as my hand found the kingdoms of the idol[s].” The comparison is expanded in v. 11a (note “as”) and completed in v. 11b (note “so”).

<sup>20</sup> **map** For the location of Jerusalem see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** The statement is constructed as a rhetorical question in the Hebrew text: “Is it not [true that] just as I have done to Samaria and its idols, so I will do to Jerusalem and its idols?”

**sn** This statement indicates that the prophecy dates sometime between 722-701 B.C.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in vv. 16, 23, 24, 33 is אֲדֹנָי (‘adonay).

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “his work on/against.” Cf. NAB, NASB, NRSV “on”; NIV “against.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** The LORD is speaking here, as in vv. 5-6a.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb “I will visit [judgment] on the fruit of the greatness of the heart of the king of Assyria, and on the glory of the height of his eyes.” The proud Assyrian king is likened to a large, beautiful fruit tree.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb “removed the borders of nations”; cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV “boundaries.”



Like a mighty conqueror,<sup>1</sup> I brought down rulers.<sup>2</sup>

**10:14** My hand discovered the wealth of the nations, as if it were in a nest, as one gathers up abandoned eggs, I gathered up the whole earth. There was no wing flapping, or open mouth chirping.<sup>3</sup>

**10:15** Does an ax exalt itself over the one who wields it, or a saw magnify itself over the one who cuts with it?<sup>4</sup> As if a scepter should brandish the one who raises it, or a staff should lift up what is not made of wood!

**10:16** For this reason<sup>5</sup> the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, will make his healthy ones emaciated.<sup>6</sup> His majestic glory will go up in smoke.<sup>7</sup>

**10:17** The Light of Israel<sup>8</sup> will become a fire, their Holy One<sup>9</sup> will become a flame; it will burn and consume the Assyrian king's<sup>10</sup> briars and his thorns in one day.

**10:18** The splendor of his forest and his orchard will be completely destroyed,<sup>11</sup> as when a sick man's life ebbs away.<sup>12</sup>

**10:19** There will be so few trees left in his forest, a child will be able to count them.<sup>13</sup>

**10:20** At that time<sup>14</sup> those left in Israel, those who remain of the family<sup>15</sup> of Jacob, will no longer rely on a foreign leader that abuses them.<sup>16</sup> Instead they will truly<sup>17</sup> rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.<sup>18</sup> **10:21** A remnant will come back, a remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.<sup>19</sup> **10:22** For though your people, Israel, are as numerous as<sup>20</sup> the sand on the seashore, only a remnant will come back.<sup>21</sup> Destruction has been decreed;<sup>22</sup> just punishment<sup>23</sup> is about to engulf you.<sup>24</sup> **10:23** The sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, is certainly ready to carry out the decreed destruction throughout the land.<sup>25</sup>

melting, may here mean "waste away" or "despair." נָסַס (*na-sas*), which appears only here, may mean "be sick" or "stagger, despair." See BDB 651 s.v. I נָסַס and HALOT 703 s.v. I נָסַס. One might translate the line literally, "like the wasting away of one who is sick" (cf. NRSV "as when an invalid wastes away").

**13 tn** Heb "and the rest of the trees of his forest will be counted, and a child will record them."

**14 tn** Or "in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

**15 tn** Heb "house" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

**16 tn** Heb "on one who strikes him down." This individual is the king ("foreign leader") of the oppressing nation (which NLT specifies as "the Assyrians").

**17 tn** Or "sincerely"; KJV, ASV, NAB, NRSV "in truth."

**18 sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

**19 tn** The referent of גִּבּוֹר: אֵל (*el gibbor*, "mighty God") is uncertain. The title appears only here and in 9:6, where it is one of the royal titles of the coming ideal Davidic king. (Similar titles appear in Deut 10:17 and Neh 9:32 ["the great, mighty, and awesome God"] and in Jer 32:18 ["the great and mighty God"]. Both titles refer to God.) Though Hos 3:5 pictures Israel someday seeking "David their king," and provides some support for a messianic interpretation of Isa 10:21, the Davidic king is not mentioned in the immediate context of Isa 10:21 (see Isa 11, however). The preceding verse mentions Israel relying on the LORD, so it is likely that the title refers to God here.

**20 tn** Heb "are like."

**21 sn** The twofold appearance of the statement "a remnant will come back" (שְׂאֵר יָשׁוּב, *she'ar yashuv*) in vv. 21-22 echoes and probably plays off the name of Isaiah's son Shear-jashub (see 7:3). In its original context the name was meant to encourage Ahaz (see the note at 7:3), but here it has taken on new dimensions. In light of Ahaz's failure and the judgment it brings down on the land, the name Shear-jashub now foreshadows the destiny of the nation. According to vv. 21-22, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that a remnant of God's people will return; the bad news is that only a remnant will be preserved and come back. Like the name Immanuel, this name foreshadows both judgment (see the notes at 7:25 and 8:8) and ultimate restoration (see the note at 8:10).

**22 tn** Or "predetermined"; cf. ASV, NASB "is determined"; TEV "is in store."

**23 tn** Heb נִדְרָהּ (*ts'daqah*) often means "righteousness," but here it refers to God's just judgment.

**24 tn** Or "is about to overflow."

**25 tn** Heb "Indeed (or perhaps "for") destruction and what is decreed the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, is about to accomplish in the middle of all the land." The phrase כִּלְאָה וְהִרְחָהּ (*khala' venekheratsah*, "destruction and what is decreed") is a hendiadys; the two terms express

**1 tc** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has כְּאִבִּיר (*ke'abir*, "like a strong one"); the marginal reading (*Qere*) is כְּבִיר (*kavir*, "mighty one").

**2 tn** Heb "and I brought down, like a strong one, ones sitting [or "living"]." The participle יוֹשְׁבִים (*yoshvim*, "ones sitting") could refer to the inhabitants of the nations, but the translation assumes that it refers to those who sit on thrones, i.e., rulers. See BDB 442 s.v. יָשַׁב and HALOT 444 s.v. יָשַׁב.

**3 sn** The Assyrians' conquests were relatively unopposed, like robbing a bird's nest of its eggs when the mother bird is absent.

**4 tn** Heb "the one who pushes it back and forth"; KJV "him that shaketh it"; ASV "him that wieldeth it."

**5 sn** The irrational arrogance of the Assyrians (v. 15) will prompt the judgment about to be described.

**6 tn** Heb "will send leanness against his healthy ones"; NASB, NIV "will send a wasting disease."

**7 tc** Heb "and in the place of his glory burning will burn, like the burning of fire." The highly repetitive text (יָקַדְ יִקַּד כִּיִּקַּד אֵשׁ, *yeqad yiqad kiqad 'esh*) may be dittographic; if the second consonantal sequence יִקַּד is omitted, the text would read "and in the place of his glory, it will burn like the burning of fire."

**8 tn** In this context the "Light of Israel" is a divine title (note the parallel title "Holy One"). The title points to God's royal splendor, which overshadows and, when transformed into fire, destroys the "majestic glory" of the king of Assyria (v. 16b).

**9 sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

**10 tn** Heb "his." In vv. 17-19 the Assyrian king and his empire is compared to a great forest and orchard that are destroyed by fire (symbolic of the LORD).

**11 tn** Heb "from breath to flesh it will destroy." The expression "from breath to flesh" refers to the two basic components of a person, the immaterial (life's breath) and the material (flesh). Here the phrase is used idiomatically to indicate totality.

**12 tn** The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. מָסַס (*masas*), which is used elsewhere of substances dissolving or

**10:24** So<sup>4</sup> here is what the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, says: “My people who live in Zion, do not be afraid of Assyria, even though they beat you with a club and lift their cudgel against you as Egypt did.<sup>2</sup> **10:25** For very soon my fury<sup>3</sup> will subside, and my anger will be directed toward their destruction.” **10:26** The LORD who commands armies is about to beat them<sup>4</sup> with a whip, similar to the way he struck down Midian at the rock of Oreb.<sup>5</sup> He will use his staff against the sea, lifting it up as he did in Egypt.<sup>6</sup>

**10:27** At that time<sup>7</sup>  
the LORD will remove their burden from  
your shoulders,<sup>8</sup>  
and their yoke from your neck;  
the yoke will be taken off because your  
neck will be too large.<sup>9</sup>

one idea, with the second qualifying the first.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “therefore.” The message that follows is one of encouragement, for it focuses on the eventual destruction of the Assyrians. Consequently “therefore” relates back to vv. 5-21, not to vv. 22-23, which must be viewed as a brief parenthesis in an otherwise positive speech.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “in the way [or “manner”] of Egypt.”

<sup>3</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has simply “fury,” but the pronominal element can be assumed on the basis of what immediately follows (see “my anger” in the clause). It is possible that the suffixed *yod* (י) has been accidentally dropped by virtual haplography. Note that a *vav* (ו) is prefixed to the form that immediately follows; *yod* and *vav* are very similar in later script phases.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “him” (so KJV, ASV, NASB); the singular refers to the leader or king who stands for the entire nation. This is specified by NCV, CEV as “the Assyrians.”

<sup>5</sup> **sn** According to Judg 7:25, the Ephraimites executed the Midianite general Oreb at a rock which was subsequently named after the executed enemy.

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and his staff [will be] against the sea, and he will lift it in the way [or “manner”] of Egypt.” If the text is retained, “the sea” symbolizes Assyria’s hostility, the metaphor being introduced because of the reference to Egypt. The translation above assumes an emendation of עַל הַיָּם (*al hayyam*, “against the sea”) to עַל הַיָּבֵשׁ (*alehem*, “against them”). The proposed shift from the third singular pronoun (note “beat him” earlier in the verse) to the plural is not problematic, for the singular is collective. Note that a third plural pronoun is used at the end of v. 25 (“their destruction”). The final phrase, “in the way/manner of Egypt,” probably refers to the way in which God used the staff of Moses to bring judgment down on Egypt.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “in that day” (KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “he [i.e., the LORD] will remove his [i.e. Assyria’s] burden from upon your shoulder.”

<sup>9</sup> **tc** The meaning of this line is uncertain. The Hebrew text reads literally, “and the yoke will be destroyed (or perhaps, “pulled down”) because of fatness.” Perhaps this is a bizarre picture of an ox growing so fat that it breaks the yoke around its neck or can no longer fit into its yoke. Fatness would symbolize the LORD’s restored blessings; the removal of the yoke would symbolize the cessation of Assyrian oppression. Because of the difficulty of the metaphor, many prefer to emend the text at this point. Some emend חֲבֹב (*v<sup>e</sup>khubbol*, “and it will be destroyed,” a perfect with prefixed *vav*), to יִחְבֹּל (*yikhbol*, “[it] will be destroyed,” an imperfect), and take the verb with what precedes, “and their yoke will be destroyed from your neck.” Proponents of this view (cf. NAB, NRSV) then emend עַל (*ol*, “yoke”) to עָלָה (*alah*, “he came up”) and understand this verb as introducing the following description of the Assyrian invasion (vv. 28-32): מִפְּנֵי שָׁמֶן (*mipp<sup>e</sup>ney-shamen*, “because

**10:28**<sup>10</sup> They<sup>11</sup> attacked<sup>12</sup> Aiath, moved through Migron, depositing their supplies at Micmath.

**10:29** They went through the pass, spent the night at Geba.

Ramah trembled, Gibeath of Saul ran away.

**10:30** Shout out, daughter of Gallim! Pay attention, Laishah!

Answer her, Anathoth!<sup>13</sup>

**10:31** Madmenah flees, the residents of Gebim have hidden.

**10:32** This very day, standing in Nob, they shake their fist at Daughter Zion’s mountain<sup>14</sup> – at the hill of Jerusalem.

**10:33** Look, the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies,

of fatness”) is then emended to read “from before Rimmon” (NAB, NRSV), “from before Samaria,” or “from before Jeshimon.” Although this line may present difficulties, it appears best to regard the line as a graphic depiction of God’s abundant blessings on his servant nation.

<sup>10</sup> **sn** Verses 28-31 display a staccato style; the statements are short and disconnected (no conjunctions appear in the Hebrew text). The translation to follow strives for a choppy style that reflects the mood of the speech.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “he,” that is, the Assyrians (as the preceding context suggests). Cf. NCV “The army of Assyria.”

**sn** Verses 28-32 describe an invasion of Judah from the north. There is no scholarly consensus on when this particular invasion took place, if at all. J. H. Hayes and S. A. Irvine (*Isaiah*, 209-10) suggest the text describes the Israelite-Syrian invasion of Judah (ca. 735 B.C.), but this proposal disregards the preceding context, which prophesies the destruction of Assyria. Some suggest that this invasion occurred in conjunction with Sargon’s western campaign of 713-711 B.C., but there is no historical evidence of such an invasion at that time. Many others identify the invasion as Sennacherib’s in 701 B.C., but historical records indicate Sennacherib approached Jerusalem from the southwest. J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:274-75) prefers to see the description as rhetorical and as not corresponding to any particular historical event, but Hayes and Irvine argue that the precise geographical details militate against such a proposal. Perhaps it is best to label the account as rhetorical-prophetic. The prophecy of the invasion was not necessarily intended to be a literal itinerary of the Assyrians’ movements; rather its primary purpose was to create a foreboding mood. Geographical references contribute to this purpose, but they merely reflect how one would expect an Assyrian invasion to proceed, not necessarily how the actual invasion would progress. Despite its rhetorical nature, the prophecy does point to the invasion of 701 B.C., as the announcement of the invaders’ downfall in vv. 33-34 makes clear; it was essentially fulfilled at that time. For further discussion of the problem, see R. E. Clements, *Isaiah* (NCBC), 117-19. On the geographical details of the account, see Y. Aharoni, *Land of the Bible*, 393.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “came against,” or “came to.”

<sup>13</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads “Poor [is] Anathoth.” The parallelism is tighter if עָנִיָּה (*aniyyah*, “poor”) is emended to עֲנִיָּה (*aniha*, “answer her”). Note how the preceding two lines have an imperative followed by a proper name.

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has “a mountain of a house (בֵּית, *bet*), Zion,” but the marginal reading (*Qere*) correctly reads “the mountain of the daughter (בַּת, *bat*) of Zion.” On the phrase “Daughter Zion,” see the note on the same phrase in 1:8.

is ready to cut off the branches with terrifying power.<sup>1</sup>

The tallest trees<sup>2</sup> will be cut down, the loftiest ones will be brought low.

**10:34** The thickets of the forest will be chopped down with an ax, and mighty Lebanon will fall.<sup>3</sup>

*An Ideal King Establishes a Kingdom of Peace*

**11:1** A shoot will grow out of Jesse's<sup>4</sup> root stock, a bud will sprout<sup>5</sup> from his roots.

**11:2** The LORD's spirit will rest on him<sup>6</sup> – a spirit that gives extraordinary wisdom,<sup>7</sup> a spirit that provides the ability to execute plans,<sup>8</sup> a spirit that produces absolute loyalty to the LORD.<sup>9</sup>

**11:3** He will take delight in obeying the LORD.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads "with terrifying power," or "with a crash." מַעֲרִיבָה (*ma'aratsah*, "terrifying power" or "crash") occurs only here. Several have suggested an emendation to מַעֲרִיבָה (*ma'atsad*, "ax") parallel to "ax" in v. 34; see HALOT 615 s.v. מַעֲרִיבָה and H. Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 1:448.

**sn** As in vv. 12 (see the note there) and 18, the Assyrians are compared to a tree/forest in vv. 33-34.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the exalted of the height." This could refer to the highest branches (cf. TEV) or the tallest trees (cf. NIV, NRSV).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has, "and Lebanon, by/as [?] a mighty one, will fall." The translation above takes the preposition בְּ (*bet*) prefixed to "mighty one" as indicating identity, "Lebanon, as a mighty one, will fall." In this case "mighty one" describes Lebanon. (In Ezek 17:23 and Zech 11:2 the adjective is used of Lebanon's cedars.) Another option is to take the preposition as indicating agency and interpret "mighty one" as a divine title (see Isa 33:21). One could then translate, "and Lebanon will fall by [the agency of] the Mighty One."

<sup>4</sup> **sn** The text mentions David's father Jesse, instead of the great king himself. Perhaps this is done for rhetorical reasons to suggest that a new David, not just another disappointing Davidic descendant, will arise. Other prophets call the coming ideal Davidic king "David" or picture him as the second coming of David, as it were. See Jer 30:9; Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hos 3:5; and Mic 5:2 (as well as the note there).

<sup>5</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has יִפְרֶה (*yifreh*, "will bear fruit," from פָּרָה, *parah*), but the ancient versions, as well as the parallelism suggest that יִפְרָח (*yifrahk*, "will sprout", from פָּרַח, *parakh*) is the better reading here. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:276, n. 2.

<sup>6</sup> **sn** Like David (1 Sam 16:13), this king will be energized by the LORD's spirit.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a spirit of wisdom and understanding." The synonyms are joined here to emphasize the degree of wisdom he will possess. His wisdom will enable him to make just legal decisions (v. 3). A very similar phrase occurs in Eph 1:17.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a spirit of counsel [or "strategy"] and strength." The construction is a hendiadys; the point is that he will have the strength/ability to execute the plans/strategies he devises. This ability will enable him to suppress oppressors and implement just policies (v. 4).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD." "Knowledge" is used here in its covenantal sense and refers to a recognition of God's authority and a willingness to submit to it. See Jer 22:16. "Fear" here refers to a healthy respect for God's authority which produces obedience. Taken together the two terms emphasize the single quality of loyalty to the LORD. This loyalty guarantees that he will make just legal decisions and implement just policies (vv. 4-5).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, "and his smelling is in the fear of the LORD." In Amos 5:21 the Hiphil of רָיַח (*ruakh*, "smell") carries the nuance of "smell with delight, get plea-

sure from." There the LORD declares that he does not "smell with delight" (i.e., get pleasure from) Israel's religious assemblies, which probably stand by metonymy for the incense offered during these festivals. In Isa 11:3 there is no sacrificial context to suggest such a use, but it is possible that "the fear of the LORD" is likened to incense. This coming king will get the same kind of delight from obeying (fearing) the LORD, as a deity does in the incense offered by worshipers. Some regard such an explanation as strained in this context, and prefer to omit this line from the text as a virtual dittograph of the preceding statement.

He will not judge by mere appearances,<sup>11</sup> or make decisions on the basis of hearsay.<sup>12</sup>

**11:4** He will treat the poor fairly,<sup>13</sup> and make right decisions<sup>14</sup> for the downtrodden of the earth.<sup>15</sup>

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,<sup>16</sup>

and order the wicked to be executed.<sup>17</sup>

**11:5** Justice will be like a belt around his waist,

integrity will be like a belt around his hips.<sup>18</sup>

integrity will be like a belt around his hips.<sup>18</sup>

sure from." There the LORD declares that he does not "smell with delight" (i.e., get pleasure from) Israel's religious assemblies, which probably stand by metonymy for the incense offered during these festivals. In Isa 11:3 there is no sacrificial context to suggest such a use, but it is possible that "the fear of the LORD" is likened to incense. This coming king will get the same kind of delight from obeying (fearing) the LORD, as a deity does in the incense offered by worshipers. Some regard such an explanation as strained in this context, and prefer to omit this line from the text as a virtual dittograph of the preceding statement.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "by what appears to his eyes"; KJV "after the sight of his eyes"; NIV "by what he sees with his eyes."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "by what is heard by his ears"; NRSV "by what his ears hear."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "with justice" (so NAB) or "with righteousness" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "make decisions with rectitude"; cf. ASV, NRSV "and decide with equity."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "land" (NAB, NCV, CEV). It is uncertain if the passage is picturing universal dominion or focusing on the king's rule over his covenant people. The reference to God's "holy mountain" in v. 9 and the description of renewed Israelite conquests in v. 14 suggest the latter, though v. 10 seems to refer to a universal kingdom (see 2:2-4).

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, "and he will strike the earth with the scepter of his mouth." Some have suggested that in this context אֶרֶץ (*eret*, "earth") as an object of judgment seems too broad in scope. The parallelism is tighter if one emends the word to אֵרִיס (*arits*, "potentate, tyrant"). The phrase "scepter of his mouth" refers to the royal (note "scepter") decrees that he proclaims with his mouth. Because these decrees will have authority and power (see v. 2) behind them, they can be described as "striking" the tyrants down. Nevertheless, the MT reading may not need emending. Isaiah refers to the entire "earth" as the object of God's judgment in several places without specifying the wicked as the object of the judgment (Isa 24:17-21; 26:9, 21; 28:22; cf. 13:11).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and by the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked." The "breath of his lips" refers to his speech, specifically in this context his official decrees that the wicked oppressors be eliminated from his realm. See the preceding note.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Justice will be the belt [or "undergarment"] on his waist, integrity the belt [or "undergarment"] on his hips." The point of the metaphor is uncertain. If a belt worn outside the robe is in view, then the point might be that justice/integrity will be readily visible or that these qualities will give support to his rule. If an undergarment is in view, then the idea might be that these characteristics support his rule or that they are basic to everything else.

**11:6** A wolf will reside<sup>1</sup> with a lamb, and a leopard will lie down with a young goat;  
an ox and a young lion will graze together,<sup>2</sup>

as a small child leads them along.

**11:7** A cow and a bear will graze together, their young will lie down together.<sup>3</sup>

A lion, like an ox, will eat straw.

**11:8** A baby<sup>4</sup> will play over the hole of a snake;<sup>5</sup> over the nest<sup>6</sup> of a serpent an infant<sup>7</sup> will put his hand.<sup>8</sup>

**11:9** They will no longer injure or destroy on my entire royal mountain.<sup>9</sup>

For there will be universal submission to the LORD's sovereignty, just as the waters completely cover the sea.<sup>10</sup>

### *Israel is Reclaimed and Reunited*

**11:10** At that time<sup>11</sup> a root from Jesse<sup>12</sup> will stand like a signal flag for the nations. Nations

will look to him for guidance,<sup>13</sup> and his residence will be majestic. **11:11** At that time<sup>14</sup> the sovereign master<sup>15</sup> will again lift his hand<sup>16</sup> to reclaim<sup>17</sup> the remnant of his people<sup>18</sup> from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros,<sup>19</sup> Cush,<sup>20</sup> Elam, Shinar,<sup>21</sup> Hamath, and the seacoasts.<sup>22</sup>

**11:12** He will lift a signal flag for the nations;

he will gather Israel's dispersed people<sup>23</sup> and assemble Judah's scattered people from the four corners of the earth.

**11:13** Ephraim's jealousy will end,<sup>24</sup> and Judah's hostility<sup>25</sup> will be eliminated. Ephraim will no longer be jealous of

Judah, and Judah will no longer be hostile toward Ephraim.

**11:14** They will swoop down<sup>26</sup> on the Philistine hills to the west;<sup>27</sup>

together they will loot the people of the east.

They will take over Edom and Moab,<sup>28</sup> and the Ammonites will be their subjects.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The verb גור (*gur*) normally refers to living as a dependent, resident foreigner in another society.

<sup>2</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads, "and an ox, and a young lion, and a fatling together." Since the preceding lines refer to two animals and include a verb, many emend וּמְרִי' (um'ri', "and the fatling") to an otherwise unattested verb יִמְרֵ' (yim'u, "they will graze"); cf. NAB, TEV, CEV. One of the Qumran copies of Isaiah confirms this suggestion (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>). The present translation assumes this change.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "and a cow and a bear will graze – together – they will lie down, their young." This is a case of pivot pattern; יַחְדָּו (*yakhddav*, "together") goes with both the preceding and following statements.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "one sucking," i.e., still being nursed by his mother.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "cobra" (cf. NAB, NASB, NIV, NCV); KJV, ASV, NRSV "asp."

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has the otherwise unattested מְאֻרָה (*m'urat*, "place of light"), i.e., opening of a hole. Some prefer to emend to מְעָרָה (*m'arat*, "cave, den").

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "one who is weaned" (cf. KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>8</sup> **sn** The transformation of the animal kingdom depicted here typifies what will occur in human society under the just rule of the ideal king (see vv. 3-5). The categories "predator-prey" (i.e., oppressor-oppressed) will no longer exist.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "in all my holy mountain." In the most basic sense the LORD's "holy mountain" is the mountain from which he rules over his kingdom (see Ezek 28:14, 16). More specifically it probably refers to Mount Zion/Jerusalem or to the entire land of Israel (see Pss 2:6; 15:1; 43:3; Isa 56:7; 57:13; Ezek 20:40; Ob 16; Zeph 3:11). If the LORD's universal kingdom is in view in this context (see the note on "earth" at v. 4), then the phrase would probably be metonymic here, standing for God's worldwide dominion (see the next line).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "for the earth will be full of knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." The translation assumes that a universal kingdom is depicted here, but אֲרֵץ (*erets*) could be translated "land" (see the note at v. 4). "Knowledge of the LORD" refers here to a recognition of the LORD's sovereignty which results in a willingness to submit to his authority. See the note at v. 2.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>12</sup> **sn** See the note at v. 1.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "a root from Jesse, which stands for a signal flag of the nations, of him nations will inquire" [or "seek"].

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonai*).

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads, "the sovereign master will again, a second time, his hand." The auxiliary verb יוֹסִיף (*yosif*), which literally means "add," needs a main verb to complete it. Consequently many emend שְׁנִית (*shenit*, "a second time") to an infinitive. Some propose the form שְׁנוֹת (*shannot*, a Piel infinitive construct from שָׁנָה, *shannah*) and relate it semantically to an Arabic cognate meaning "to be high." If the Hebrew text is retained a verb must be supplied. "Second time" would allude back to the events of the Exodus (see vv. 15-16).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or "acquire"; KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV "recover."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "the remnant of his people who remain."

<sup>19</sup> **sn** Perhaps a reference to Upper (i.e., southern) Egypt (so NIV, NLT; NCV "South Egypt").

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Or "Ethiopia" (NAB, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or "Babylonia" (NIV, NCV, TEV, NLT).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "the islands of the sea."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Or "the banished of Israel," i.e., the exiles.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb "turn aside"; KJV, NASB, NRSV "depart."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb "hostile ones of Judah." Elsewhere when the substantival participle of צָרָר (*tsarar*) takes a pronominal suffix or appears in a construct relationship, the following genitive is objective. (For a list of texts see BDB 865 s.v. III צָרָר.) In this case the phrase "hostile ones of Judah" means "those who are hostile toward Judah," i.e., Judah's enemies. However, the parallel couplet that follows suggests that Judah's hostility toward Ephraim is in view. In this case "hostile ones of Judah" means "hostile ones from Judah." The translation above assumes the latter, giving the immediate context priority over general usage.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb "fly." Ephraim/Judah are compared to a bird of prey.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb "on the shoulder of Philistia toward the sea." This refers to the slopes of the hill country west of Judah. See HALOT 506 s.v. בְּתָר.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Heb "Edom and Moab [will be the place of] the outstretching of their hand," i.e., included in their area of jurisdiction (see HALOT 648 s.v. מְשִׁיבֵי/הוּ).



11:15 The LORD will divide<sup>1</sup> the gulf<sup>2</sup> of the Egyptian Sea;<sup>3</sup> he will wave his hand over the Euphrates River<sup>4</sup> and send a strong wind,<sup>5</sup> he will turn it into seven dried-up streams,<sup>6</sup> and enable them to walk across in their sandals.

11:16 There will be a highway leading out of Assyria for the remnant of his people,<sup>7</sup> just as there was for Israel, when<sup>8</sup> they went up from the land of Egypt.

12:1 At that time<sup>9</sup> you will say: "I praise you, O LORD, for even though you were angry with me, your anger subsided, and you consoled me.

12:2 Look, God is my deliverer!<sup>10</sup> I will trust in him<sup>11</sup> and not fear. For the LORD gives me strength and protects me,<sup>12</sup>

he has become my deliverer."<sup>13</sup>

12:3 Joyfully you will draw water from the springs of deliverance.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The verb is usually understood as "put under the ban, destroy," or emended to *חָרַב* (*kharav*, "dry up"). However, HALOT 354 s.v. *חָרַב* proposes a homonymic root meaning "divide."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "tongue" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>3</sup> **sn** That is, the Red Sea.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the river"; capitalized in some English versions (e.g., ASV, NASB, NRSV) as a reference to the Euphrates River.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "with the [?] of his wind" [or "breath"]. The Hebrew term *עַיִם* (*ayam*) occurs only here. Some attempt to relate the word to an Arabic root and translate, "scorching [or "hot"] wind." This interpretation fits especially well if one reads "dry up" in the previous line. Others prefer to emend the form to *עֲצֵם* (*otsem*, "strong"). See HALOT 817 s.v. *עֲצֵם*.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "seven streams." The Hebrew term *נַחַל* (*nakhal*, "stream") refers to a wadi, or seasonal stream, which runs during the rainy season, but is otherwise dry. The context (see v. 15b) here favors the translation, "dried up streams." The number seven suggests totality and completeness. Here it indicates that God's provision for escape will be thorough and more than capable of accommodating the returning exiles.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and there will be a highway for the remnant of his people who remain, from Assyria."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in the day" (so KJV).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or "salvation" (KJV, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The words "in him" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>12</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, "for my strength and protection [is] the LORD, the LORD (*Heb* "Yah, Yahweh)." The word *יְהוָה* (*ye-hvah*) is probably dittographic or explanatory here (note that the short form of the name *יְה*, *yah*, precedes, and that the graphically similar *יְהִי* [*yah'hi*] follows). Exod 15:2, the passage from which the words of v. 2b are taken, has only *יְהוָה*. The word *זִמְרָה* (*zimrat*) is traditionally understood as meaning "song," in which case one might translate, "for the LORD gives me strength and joy" (i.e., a reason to sing); note that in v. 5 the verb *זָמַר* (*zamar*, "sing") appears. Many recent commentators, however, have argued that the noun is here instead a homonym, meaning "protection" or "strength." See HALOT 274 s.v. *זָמַר*.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "salvation" (so many English versions, e.g., KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB "my savior."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or "salvation" (so many English versions, e.g., KJV,

12:4 At that time<sup>15</sup> you will say:

"Praise the LORD!

Ask him for help!<sup>16</sup>

Publicize his mighty acts among the nations!

Make it known that he is unique!<sup>17</sup>

12:5 Sing to the LORD, for he has done magnificent things,

let this be known<sup>18</sup> throughout the earth!

12:6 Cry out and shout for joy, O citizens of Zion, for the Holy One of Israel<sup>19</sup> acts mightily<sup>20</sup> among you!"

### *The Lord Will Judge Babylon*

13:1<sup>21</sup> This is a message about Babylon that God revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz.<sup>22</sup>

13:2<sup>23</sup> On a bare hill raise a signal flag, shout to them, wave your hand, so they might enter the gates of the princes!

13:3 I have given orders to my chosen soldiers;<sup>24</sup>

I have summoned the warriors through whom I will vent my anger,<sup>25</sup> my boasting, arrogant ones.<sup>26</sup>

13:4<sup>27</sup> There is a loud noise on the mountains –

NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); CEV "victory."

**sn** Water is here a metaphor for renewed life; the springs symbolize the restoration of God's favor.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "call in his name," i.e., "invoke his name."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "bring to remembrance that his name is exalted." The LORD's "name" stands here for his character and reputation.

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The translation follows the marginal reading (*Qere*), which is a Hophal participle from *יָדַע* (*yada'*), understood here in a gerundive sense.

<sup>19</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Or "is great" (TEV). However, the context emphasizes his mighty acts of deliverance (cf. NCV), not some general or vague character quality.

<sup>21</sup> **sn** Isa 13-23 contains a series of judgment oracles against various nations. It is likely that Israel, not the nations mentioned, actually heard these oracles. The oracles probably had a twofold purpose. For those leaders who insisted on getting embroiled in international politics, these oracles were a reminder that Judah need not fear foreign nations or seek international alliances for security reasons. For the righteous remnant within the nation, these oracles were a reminder that Israel's God was indeed the sovereign ruler of the earth, worthy of his people's trust.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "The message [traditionally, "burden"] [about] Babylon which Isaiah son of Amoz saw."

<sup>23</sup> **sn** The LORD is speaking here (see v. 3).

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "my consecrated ones," i.e., those who have been set apart by God for the special task of carrying out his judgment.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "my warriors with respect to my anger."

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the boasting ones of my pride"; cf. ASV, NASB, NRSV "my proudly exulting ones."

<sup>27</sup> **sn** In vv. 4-10 the prophet appears to be speaking, since the LORD is referred to in the third person. However, since the LORD refers to himself in the third person later in this chapter (see v. 13), it is possible that he speaks throughout the chapter.

it sounds like a large army!<sup>1</sup>  
 There is great commotion among the  
 kingdoms<sup>2</sup> –  
 nations are being assembled!  
 The LORD who commands armies is muster-  
 ing  
 forces for battle.  
**13:5** They come from a distant land,  
 from the horizon.<sup>3</sup>  
 It is the LORD with his instruments of  
 judgment,<sup>4</sup>  
 coming to destroy the whole earth.<sup>5</sup>  
**13:6** Wail, for the LORD's day of judg-  
 ment<sup>6</sup> is near;  
 it comes with all the destructive power of  
 the sovereign Judge.<sup>7</sup>

**13:7** For this reason all hands hang limp,<sup>8</sup>  
 every human heart loses its courage.<sup>9</sup>  
**13:8** They panic –  
 cramps and pain seize hold of them  
 like those of a woman who is straining to  
 give birth.  
 They look at one another in astonish-  
 ment;  
 their faces are flushed red.<sup>10</sup>  
**13:9** Look, the LORD's day of judgment<sup>11</sup> is  
 coming;  
 it is a day of cruelty and savage, raging  
 anger,<sup>12</sup>  
 destroying<sup>13</sup> the earth<sup>14</sup>  
 and annihilating its sinners.  
**13:10** Indeed the stars in the sky and their  
 constellations  
 no longer give out their light;<sup>15</sup>  
 the sun is darkened as soon as it rises,  
 and the moon does not shine.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a sound, a roar [is] on the mountains, like many people."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a sound, tumult of kingdoms."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the end of the sky."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or "anger"; cf. KJV, ASV "the weapons of his indignation."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "land" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NLT). Even though the heading and subsequent context (see v. 17) indicate Babylon's judgment is in view, the chapter has a cosmic flavor that suggests that the coming judgment is universal in scope. Perhaps Babylon's downfall occurs in conjunction with a wider judgment, or the cosmic style is poetic hyperbole to emphasize the magnitude and importance of the coming event.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the day of the LORD" (so KJV, NAB).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "like destruction from the sovereign Judge it comes." The comparative preposition (כִּי, *kî*) has here the rhetorical nuance, "in every way like." The point is that the destruction unleashed will have all the earmarks of divine judgment. One could paraphrase, "it comes as only destructive divine judgment can." On this use of the preposition in general, see GKC 376 §118.x.

**sn** The divine name used here is שַׁדַּי (*shaddai*, "Shaddai"). Shaddai (or El Shaddai) is the sovereign king/judge of the world who grants life/blesses and kills/judges. In Genesis he blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants. Outside Genesis he both blesses/protects and takes away life/happiness. The patriarchs knew God primarily as El Shaddai (Exod 6:3). While the origin and meaning of this name is uncertain (see discussion below) its significance is clear. The name is used in contexts where God appears as the source of fertility and life. In Gen 17:1-8 he appears to Abram, introduces himself as El Shaddai, and announces his intention to make the patriarch fruitful. In the role of El Shaddai God repeats these words (now elevated to the status of a decree) to Jacob (35:11). Earlier Isaac had pronounced a blessing upon Jacob in which he asked El Shaddai to make Jacob fruitful (28:3). Jacob later prays that his sons will be treated with mercy when they return to Egypt with Benjamin (43:14). The fertility theme is not as apparent here, though one must remember that Jacob viewed Benjamin as the sole remaining son of the favored and once-barren Rachel (cf. 29:31; 30:22-24; 35:16-18). It is quite natural that he would appeal to El Shaddai to preserve Benjamin's life, for it was El Shaddai's miraculous power which made it possible for Rachel to give him sons in the first place. In 48:3 Jacob, prior to blessing Joseph's sons, tells him how El Shaddai appeared to him at Bethel (cf. chapter 28) and promised to make him fruitful. When blessing Joseph on his deathbed Jacob refers to Shaddai (we should probably read "El Shaddai," along with a few Hebrew MSS, the Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX, and Syriac) as the one who provides abundant blessings, including "blessings of the breast and womb" (49:25). (The direct association of the name with שְׁדַיִם [*shadayim*, "breasts"] suggests the name might mean "the one of the breast" [i.e., the one who gives fertility], but the juxtaposition is probably better explained as wordplay. Note the wordplay involving the name

and the root שָׁדַד [*shaddad*, "destroy"] here in Isa 13:6 and in Joel 1:15.) Outside Genesis the name Shaddai (minus El, "God") is normally used when God is viewed as the sovereign king who blesses/protects or curses/brings judgment. The name appears in the introduction to two of Balaam's oracles (Num 24:4, 16) of blessing upon Israel. Naomi employs the name when accusing the LORD of treating her bitterly by taking the lives of her husband and sons (Ruth 1:20-21). In Ps 68:14; Isa 13:6; and Joel 1:15 Shaddai judges his enemies through warfare, while Ps 91:1 depicts him as the protector of his people. (In Ezek 1:24 and 10:5 the sound of the cherubs' wings is compared to Shaddai's powerful voice. The reference may be to the mighty divine warrior's battle cry which accompanies his angry judgment.) Last but not least, the name occurs 31 times in the Book of Job. Job and his "friends" assume that Shaddai is the sovereign king of the world (11:7; 37:23a) who is the source of life (33:4b) and is responsible for maintaining justice (8:3; 34:10-12; 37:23b). He provides abundant blessings, including children (22:17-18; 29:4-6), but can also discipline, punish, and destroy (5:17; 6:4; 21:20; 23:16). It is not surprising to see the name so often in this book, where the theme of God's justice is primary and even called into question (24:1; 27:2). The most likely proposal is that the name means "God, the one of the mountain" (an Akkadian cognate means "mountain," to which Heb. שָׁד [*shad*, "breast"] is probably related). For a discussion of proposed derivations see T. N. D. Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 70-71. The name may originally depict God as the sovereign judge who, in Canaanite style, rules from a sacred mountain. Isa 14:13 and Ezek 28:14, 16 associate such a mountain with God, while Ps 48:2 refers to Zion as "Zaphon," the Canaanite Olympus from which the high god El ruled. (In Isa 14 the Canaanite god El may be in view. Note that Isaiah pictures pagan kings as taunting the king of Babylon, suggesting that pagan mythology may provide the background for the language and imagery.)

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "drop"; KJV "be faint"; ASV "be feeble"; NAB "fall helpless."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "melts" (so NAB).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "their faces are faces of flames." Their faces are flushed with fear and embarrassment.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the day of the LORD."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[with] cruelty, and fury, and rage of anger." Three synonyms for "anger" are piled up at the end of the line to emphasize the extraordinary degree of divine anger that will be exhibited in this judgment.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "making desolate."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or "land" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NLT).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "do not flash forth their light."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "does not shed forth its light."

13:11<sup>1</sup> I will punish the world for its evil,<sup>2</sup> and wicked people for their sin. I will put an end to the pride of the insolent, I will bring down the arrogance of tyrants.<sup>3</sup>

13:12 I will make human beings more scarce than pure gold, and people more scarce<sup>4</sup> than gold from Ophir.

13:13 So I will shake the heavens,<sup>5</sup> and the earth will shake loose from its foundation,<sup>6</sup> because of the fury of the LORD who commands armies, in the day he vents his raging anger.<sup>7</sup>

13:14 Like a frightened gazelle<sup>8</sup> or a sheep with no shepherd, each will turn toward home,<sup>9</sup> each will run to his homeland.

13:15 Everyone who is caught will be stabbed; everyone who is seized<sup>10</sup> will die<sup>11</sup> by the sword.

13:16 Their children will be smashed to pieces before their very eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives raped.

13:17 Look, I am stirring up the Medes to attack them;<sup>12</sup> they are not concerned about silver, nor are they interested in gold.<sup>13</sup>

13:18 Their arrows will cut young men to ribbons;<sup>14</sup> they have no compassion on a person's offspring,<sup>15</sup> they will not<sup>16</sup> look with pity on children.

13:19 Babylon, the most admired<sup>17</sup> of kingdoms, the Chaldeans' source of honor and pride,<sup>18</sup> will be destroyed by God just as Sodom and Gomorrah were.<sup>19</sup>

13:20 No one will live there again; no one will ever reside there again.<sup>20</sup> No bedouin<sup>21</sup> will camp<sup>22</sup> there, no shepherds will rest their flocks<sup>23</sup> there.

13:21 Wild animals will rest there, the ruined<sup>24</sup> houses will be full of hyenas.<sup>25</sup> Ostriches will live there, wild goats will skip among the ruins.<sup>26</sup>

13:22 Wild dogs will yip in her ruined fortresses, jackals will yelp in the once-splendid palaces.<sup>27</sup> Her time is almost up,<sup>28</sup> her days will not be prolonged.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>17</sup> tn Or "most beautiful" (NCV, TEV).

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb "the beauty of the pride of the Chaldeans."

<sup>sn</sup> The Chaldeans were a group of tribes who lived in southern Mesopotamia. The established the so-called neo-Babylonian empire in the late seventh century B.C. Their most famous king, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Judah in 605 B.C. and destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "and Babylon...will be like the overthrow by God of Sodom and Gomorrah." On מַהֲפֶקֶת (*mahpekhat*, "overthrow") see the note on the word "destruction" in 1:7.

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb "she will not be inhabited forever, and she will not be dwelt in to generation and generation (i.e., forever)." The LORD declares that Babylon, personified as a woman, will not be inhabited. In other words, her people will be destroyed and the Chaldean empire will come to a permanent end.

<sup>21</sup> tn Or "Arab" (NAB, NASB, NIV); cf. CEV, NLT "nomads."

<sup>22</sup> tn יָהֵל (*yahel*) is probably a corrupted form of יְהַלֵּךְ (*ye'ehal*). See GKC 186 §68.k.

<sup>23</sup> tn The words "their flocks" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The Hebrew text does not supply the object here, but see Jer 33:12.

<sup>24</sup> tn The word "ruined" is supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>25</sup> tn The precise referent of this word is uncertain. See HALOT 29 s.v. מְדַי. Various English versions translate as "owls" (e.g., NAB, NASB), "wild dogs" (NCV); "jackals" (NIV); "howling creatures" (NRSV, NLT).

<sup>26</sup> tn Heb "will skip there."

<sup>27</sup> tc The Hebrew text reads literally, "wild dogs will yip among his widows, and jackals in the palaces of pleasure." The verb "yip" is supplied in the second line; it does double duty in the parallel structure. "His widows" makes little sense in this context; many emend the form אֲלִמְנוֹתָי (*almnotay*) to the graphically similar אֲרַמְנוֹתָי (*armnoteha*, "her fortresses"), a reading that is assumed in the present translation. The use of "widows" may represent an intentional wordplay on "fortresses," indicating that the fortresses are like dejected widows (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:308, n. 1).

<sup>28</sup> tn Heb "near to come is her time."

<sup>29</sup> sn When was the prophecy of Babylon's fall fulfilled? Some argue that the prophecy was fulfilled in 689 B.C. when the Assyrians under Sennacherib sacked and desecrated the city (this event is alluded to in 23:13). This may have been an initial phase in the fulfillment of the prophecy, but the reference to the involvement of the Medes (v. 17) and the suggestion that Babylon's demise will bring about the restoration of Israel (14:1-2) indicate that the fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians in 538 B.C. is the primary focus of the prophecy. (After all, the LORD did reveal to Isaiah that the Chaldeans [not the Assyrians] would someday conquer Jerusalem and take the people into exile [see 39:5-7].) However, the vivid picture of destruction in vv. 15-22 raises a problem. The Medes

<sup>1</sup> sn The LORD is definitely speaking (again?) at this point. See the note at v. 4.

<sup>2</sup> tn Or "I will bring disaster on the world." Hebrew רָעָה (*ra'ah*) could refer to the judgment (i.e., disaster, calamity) or to the evil that prompts it. The structure of the parallel line favors the latter interpretation.

<sup>3</sup> tn Or perhaps, "the violent"; cf. NASB, NIV "the ruthless."

<sup>4</sup> tn The verb is supplied in the translation from the first line. The verb in the first line ("I will make scarce") does double duty in the parallel structure of the verse.

<sup>5</sup> tn Or "the sky." The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "from its place" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NCV).

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "and in the day of the raging of his anger."

<sup>8</sup> tn Or "like a gazelle being chased." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "his people" (cf. KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV) or "his nation" (cf. TEV "their own countries").

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "carried off," i.e., grabbed from the fleeing crowd. See HALOT 764 s.v. סָפַד.

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "will fall" (so KJV, NIV, NRSV); NLT "will be run through with a sword."

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "against them"; NLT "against Babylon."

<sup>13</sup> sn They cannot be bought off, for they have a lust for bloodshed.

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "and bows cut to bits young men." "Bows" stands by metonymy for arrows.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "the fruit of the womb."

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "their eye does not." Here "eye" is a metonymy for the whole person.

**14:1** The LORD will certainly have compassion on Jacob;<sup>1</sup> he will again choose Israel as his special people<sup>2</sup> and restore<sup>3</sup> them to their land. Resident foreigners will join them and unite with the family<sup>4</sup> of Jacob. **14:2** Nations will take them and bring them back to their own place. Then the family of Jacob will make foreigners their servants as they settle in the LORD's land.<sup>5</sup> They will make their captors captives and rule over the ones who oppressed them. **14:3** When the LORD gives you relief from your suffering and anxiety,<sup>6</sup> and from the hard labor which you were made to perform, **14:4** you will taunt the king of Babylon with these words:<sup>7</sup>

“Look how the oppressor has met his end!  
Hostility<sup>8</sup> has ceased!

**14:5** The LORD has broken the club of the wicked,  
the scepter of rulers.

**14:6** It<sup>9</sup> furiously struck down nations  
with unceasing blows.<sup>10</sup>

It angrily ruled over nations,  
oppressing them without restraint.<sup>11</sup>

**14:7** The whole earth rests and is quiet;  
they break into song.

**14:8** The evergreens also rejoice over your demise,<sup>12</sup>  
as do the cedars of Lebanon, singing,<sup>13</sup>  
“Since you fell asleep,<sup>14</sup>  
no woodsman comes up to chop us  
down!”<sup>15</sup>

**14:9** Sheol<sup>16</sup> below is stirred up about you,  
ready to meet you when you arrive.  
It rouses<sup>17</sup> the spirits of the dead for you,  
all the former leaders of the earth;<sup>18</sup>  
it makes all the former kings of the na-  
tions  
rise from their thrones.<sup>19</sup>

**14:10** All of them respond to you, saying:  
“You too have become weak like us!  
You have become just like us!

**14:11** Your splendor<sup>20</sup> has been brought  
down to Sheol,  
as well as the sound of your stringed in-  
struments.<sup>21</sup>

You lie on a bed of maggots,  
with a blanket of worms over you.<sup>22</sup>

**14:12** Look how you have fallen from the  
sky,  
O shining one, son of the dawn!<sup>23</sup>

and Persians did not destroy the city; in fact Cyrus' takeover of Babylon, though preceded by a military campaign, was relatively peaceful and even welcomed by some Babylonian religious officials. How then does one explain the prophecy's description of the city's violent fall? As noted above, the events of 689 B.C. and 538 B.C. may have been merged in the prophecy. However, it is more likely that the language is stylized and exaggerated for rhetorical effect. See Isa 34:1:1-15; Jer 50:39-40 (describing Babylon's fall in 538 B.C.); 51:36-37 (describing Babylon's fall in 538 B.C.); Zeph 2:13-15; the extra-biblical Sefire treaty curses; and Ashurbanipal's description of the destruction of Elam in his royal annals. In other words, the events of 538 B.C. essentially, though not necessarily literally, fulfill the prophecy.

**1** **tn** The sentence begins with *כִּי* (*ki*), which is understood as asseverative (“certainly”) in the translation. Another option is to translate, “For the LORD will have compassion.” In this case one of the reasons for Babylon's coming demise (13:22b) is the LORD's desire to restore his people.

**2** **tn** The words “as his special people” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

**3** **tn** Or “settle” (NASB, NIV, NCV, NLT).

**4** **tn** *Heb* “house.”

**5** **tn** *Heb* “and the house of Jacob will take possession of them [i.e., the nations], on the land of the LORD, as male servants and female servants.”

**6** **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

**7** **tn** *Heb* “you will lift up this taunt over the king of Babylon, saying.”

**8** **tc** The word in the Hebrew text (*מַדְהֵבָה*, *madhevah*) is unattested elsewhere and of uncertain meaning. Many (following the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) assume a *dalet-resh* (ד-ר) confusion and emend the form to *מַרְהֵבָה* (*marhevah*, “onslaught”). See HALOT 548 s.v. II *מַרְהֵבָה* and HALOT 633 s.v. *מַרְהֵבָה*.

**9** **tn** Or perhaps, “he” (cf. KJV; NCV “the king of Babylon”). The present translation understands the referent of the pronoun (“it”) to be the “club/scepter” of the preceding line.

**10** **tn** *Heb* “it was striking down nations in fury [with] a blow without ceasing.” The participle (“striking down”) suggests repeated or continuous action in past time.

**11** **tn** *Heb* “it was ruling in anger nations [with] oppression without restraint.” The participle (“ruling”) suggests repeated or continuous action in past time.

**12** **tn** *Heb* “concerning you.”

**13** **tn** The word “singing” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. Note that the personified trees speak in the second half of the verse.

**14** **tn** *Heb* “lay down” (in death); cf. NAB “laid to rest.”

**15** **tn** *Heb* “the [wood]cutter does not come up against us.”

**16** **sn** Sheol is the proper name of the subterranean world which was regarded as the land of the dead.

**17** **tn** *Heb* “arousing.” The form is probably a Polel infinitive absolute, rather than a third masculine singular perfect, for Sheol is grammatically feminine (note “stirred up”). See GKC 466 §145.t.

**18** **tn** *Heb* “all the rams of the earth.” The animal epithet is used metaphorically here for leaders. See HALOT 903 s.v. *קַדְרִים*.

**19** **tn** *Heb* “lifting from their thrones all the kings of the nations.” *הִקִּים* (*heqim*, a Hiphil perfect third masculine singular) should be emended to an infinitive absolute (*הִקִּים*, *haqem*). See the note on “rouses” earlier in the verse.

**20** **tn** Or “pride” (NCV, CEV); KJV, NIV, NRSV “pomp.”

**21** **tn** Or “harps” (NAB, NIV, NRSV).

**22** **tn** *Heb* “under you maggots are spread out, and worms are your cover.”

**23** **tn** The Hebrew text has *הֵלֵל בֶּן־שַׁחַר* (*helel ben-shakhar*, “Helel son of Shachar”), which is probably a name for the morning star (Venus) or the crescent moon. See HALOT 245 s.v. *הֵלֵל*.

**sn** What is the background for the imagery in vv. 12-15? This whole section (vv. 4b-21) is directed to the king of Babylon, who is clearly depicted as a human ruler. Other kings of the earth address him in vv. 9ff., he is called “the man” in v. 16, and, according to vv. 19-20, he possesses a physical body. Nevertheless the language of vv. 12-15 has led some to see a dual referent in the taunt song. These verses, which appear to be spoken by other pagan kings to a pagan king (cf. vv. 9-11), contain several titles and motifs that resemble those of Canaanite mythology, including references to Helel son of Shachar, the stars of El, the mountain of assembly, the recesses of Zaphon, and the divine title Most High. Apparently these verses allude to a mythological story about a minor god (Helel son of Shachar) who tried to take over Zaphon, the mountain of the gods. His attempted coup failed and he was hurled down to the underworld. The king of Babylon is taunted for having similar unrealized delusions of grandeur. Some Christians have seen an allusion to the fall of Satan here, but this seems contextually unwarranted (see J. Martin, “Isaiah,”



You have been cut down to the ground,  
O conqueror<sup>1</sup> of the nations!<sup>2</sup>

**14:13** You said to yourself,<sup>3</sup>

“I will climb up to the sky.

Above the stars of El<sup>4</sup>

I will set up my throne.

I will rule on the mountain of assembly  
on the remote slopes of Zaphon.<sup>5</sup>

**14:14** I will climb up to the tops<sup>6</sup> of the  
clouds;

I will make myself like the Most High!<sup>7</sup>”

**14:15** But you were brought down<sup>8</sup> to  
Sheol,

to the remote slopes of the Pit.<sup>9</sup>

**14:16** Those who see you stare at you,  
they look at you carefully, thinking:<sup>10</sup>

“Is this the man who shook the earth,  
the one who made kingdoms tremble?”

**14:17** Is this the one who made the world  
like a desert,

who ruined its<sup>11</sup> cities,  
and refused to free his prisoners so they  
could return home?”<sup>12</sup>

**14:18**<sup>13</sup> As for all the kings of the nations,

all of them<sup>14</sup> lie down in splendor,<sup>15</sup>  
each in his own tomb.<sup>16</sup>

**14:19** But you have been thrown out of  
your grave

like a shoot that is thrown away.<sup>17</sup>

You lie among<sup>18</sup> the slain,  
among those who have been slashed by  
the sword,

among those headed for<sup>19</sup> the stones of  
the Pit,<sup>20</sup>

as if you were a mangled corpse.<sup>21</sup>

**14:20** You will not be buried with them,<sup>22</sup>  
because you destroyed your land  
and killed your people.

The offspring of the wicked  
will never be mentioned again.

**14:21** Prepare to execute<sup>23</sup> his sons  
for the sins their ancestors have commit-  
ted.<sup>24</sup>

They must not rise up and take posses-  
sion of the earth,  
or fill the surface of the world with cit-  
ies.”<sup>25</sup>

**14:22** “I will rise up against them,”  
says the LORD who commands armies.

“I will blot out all remembrance of Baby-  
lon and destroy all her people,<sup>26</sup>  
including the offspring she produces,”<sup>27</sup>  
says the LORD.

**14:23** “I will turn her into a place that is  
overrun with wild animals<sup>28</sup>

BKCOT, 1061).

**1 tn** Some understand the verb to from *חָלַשׁ* (*khalash*, “to weaken”), but HALOT 324 s.v. חָלַשׁ proposes a homonym here, meaning “to defeat.”

**2 sn** In this line the taunting kings hint at the literal identity of the king, after likening him to the god Helel and a tree. The verb *גָּדַע* (*gada*, “cut down”) is used of chopping down trees in 9:10 and 10:33.

**3 tn** *Heb* “you, you said in your heart.”

**4 sn** In Canaanite mythology the stars of El were astral deities under the authority of the high god El.

**5 sn** *Zaphon*, the Canaanite version of Olympus, was the “mountain of assembly” where the gods met.

**6 tn** *Heb* “the high places.” This word often refers to the high places where pagan worship was conducted, but here it probably refers to the “backs” or tops of the clouds. See HALOT 136 s.v. *בָּתָּיִם*.

**7 sn** Normally in the OT the title “Most High” belongs to the God of Israel, but in this context, where the mythological overtones are so strong, it probably refers to the Canaanite high god El.

**8 tn** The prefixed verb form is taken as a preterite. Note the use of perfects in v. 12 to describe the king’s downfall.

**9 tn** The Hebrew term *בּוֹר* (*bor*, “cistern”) is sometimes used metaphorically to refer to the place of the dead or the entrance to the underworld.

**10 tn** The word “thinking” is supplied in the translation in order to make it clear that the next line records their thoughts as they gaze at him.

**11 tc** The pronominal suffix is masculine, even though its antecedent appears to be the grammatically feminine noun “world.” Some have suggested that the form *אֲרָיִם* (*arayim*, plural noun with third masculine singular suffix) should be emended to *אֲרָהָה* (*areha*, plural noun with third feminine singular suffix). This emendation may be unnecessary in light of other examples of lack of agreement a suffix and its antecedent noun.

**12 tn** *Heb* “and his prisoners did not let loose to [their] homes.” This really means, “he did not let loose his prisoners and send them back to their homes.” On the elliptical style, see GKC 366 §117.o.

**13 sn** It is unclear where the quotation of the kings, begun in v. 10b, ends. However, the reference to the “kings of the nations” in v. 18 (see also v. 9) seems to indicate that the quotation has ended at this point and that Israel’s direct taunt (cf. vv. 4b-10a) has resumed. In fact the references to the “kings of the nations” may form a stylistic inclusio or frame around

the quotation.

**14 tc** The phrase “all of them” does not appear in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>.

**15 sn** This refers to the typically extravagant burial of kings.

**16 tn** *Heb* “house” (so KJV, ASV), but in this context a tomb is in view. Note the verb “lie down” in the preceding line and the reference to a “grave” in the next line.

**17 tn** *Heb* “like a shoot that is abhorred.” The simile seems a bit odd; apparently it refers to a small shoot that is trimmed from a plant and tossed away. Some prefer to emend *נֶטֶר* (*netser*, “shoot”); some propose *נֶפֶל* (*nefel*, “miscarriage”). In this case one might paraphrase: “like a horrible-looking fetus that is delivered when a woman miscarries.”

**18 tn** *Heb* “are clothed with.”

**19 tn** *Heb* “those going down to.”

**20 tn** *Heb* *בּוֹר* (*bor*) literally means “cistern”; cisterns were constructed from stones. On the metaphorical use of “cistern” for the underworld, see the note at v. 15.

**21 tn** *Heb* “like a trampled corpse.” Some take this line with what follows.

**22 tn** *Heb* “you will not be united with them in burial” (so NASB).

**23 tn** Or “the place of slaughter for.”

**24 tn** *Heb* “for the sin of their fathers.”

**25 sn** J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:320, n. 10) suggests that the garrison cities of the mighty empire are in view here.

**26 tn** *Heb* “I will cut off from Babylon name and remnant” (ASV, NAB, and NRSV all similar).

**27 tn** *Heb* “descendant and child.”

**28 tn** *Heb* “I will make her into a possession of wild animals.” It is uncertain what type of animal *קִפּוֹד* (*qipod*) refers to. Some suggest a rodent (cf. NASB, NRSV “hedghog”), others an owl (cf. NAB, NIV, TEV).

and covered with pools of stagnant water. I will get rid of her, just as one sweeps away dirt with a broom,<sup>7a</sup> says the LORD who commands armies.

**14:24<sup>2</sup>** The LORD who commands armies makes this solemn vow:

“Be sure of this:

Just as I have intended, so it will be; just as I have planned, it will happen.

**14:25** I will break Assyria<sup>3</sup> in my land, I will trample them<sup>4</sup> underfoot on my hills.

Their yoke will be removed from my people, the burden will be lifted from their shoulders.<sup>5</sup>

**14:26** This is the plan I have devised for the whole earth; my hand is ready to strike all the nations.<sup>6</sup>

**14:27** Indeed,<sup>7</sup> the LORD who commands armies has a plan, and who can possibly frustrate it?

His hand is ready to strike, and who can possibly stop it?<sup>8</sup>

#### *The Lord Will Judge the Philistines*

**14:28** In the year King Ahaz died,<sup>9</sup> this message was revealed.<sup>10</sup>

**14:29** Don't be so happy, all you Philistines, just because the club that beat you has been broken!<sup>11</sup>

For a viper will grow out of the serpent's root, and its fruit will be a darting adder.<sup>12</sup>

**14:30** The poor will graze in my pastures;<sup>13</sup> the needy will rest securely.

But I will kill your root by famine; it will put to death all your survivors.<sup>14</sup>

**14:31** Wail, O city gate!

Cry out, O city!

Melt with fear,<sup>15</sup> all you Philistines!

For out of the north comes a cloud of smoke,

and there are no stragglers in its ranks.<sup>16</sup>

**14:32** How will they respond to the messengers of this nation?<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, the LORD has made Zion secure; the oppressed among his people will find safety in her.

#### *The Lord Will Judge Moab*

**15:1** Here is a message about Moab: Indeed, in a night it is devastated, Ar of Moab is destroyed!

Indeed, in a night it is devastated, Kir of Moab is destroyed!

**15:2** They went up to the temple,<sup>18</sup> the people of Dibon went up to the high places to lament.<sup>19</sup>

Because of what happened to Nebo and Medeba,<sup>20</sup> Moab wails.

Every head is shaved bare, every beard is trimmed off.<sup>21</sup>

**15:3** In their streets they wear sackcloth; on their roofs and in their town squares

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “I will sweep her away with the broom of destruction.”

<sup>2</sup> **sn** Having announced the downfall of the Chaldean empire, the LORD appends to this prophecy a solemn reminder that the Assyrians, the major Mesopotamian power of Isaiah's day, would be annihilated, foreshadowing what would subsequently happen to Babylon and the other hostile nations.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “to break Assyria.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “him.” This is a collective singular referring to the nation, or a reference to the king of Assyria who by metonymy stands for the entire nation.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “and his [i.e., Assyria's] yoke will be removed from them [the people?], and his [Assyria's] burden from his [the nation's?] shoulder will be removed.” There are no antecedents in this oracle for the suffixes in the phrases “from them” and “from his shoulder.” Since the LORD's land and hills are referred to in the preceding line and the statement seems to echo 10:27, it is likely that God's people are the referents of the suffixes; the translation uses “my people” to indicate this.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “and this is the hand that is outstretched over all the nations.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “For” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “His hand is outstretched and who will turn it back?”

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Perhaps 715 B.C., but the precise date is uncertain.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “this oracle came.”

<sup>11</sup> **sn** The identity of this “club” (also referred to as a “serpent” in the next line) is uncertain. It may refer to an Assyrian king, or to Ahaz. For discussion see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:331-32. The viper/adder referred to in the second half of the verse is his successor.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “flying burning one.” The designation “burning

one” may allude to the serpent's appearance or the effect of its poisonous bite. (See the note at 6:2.) The qualifier “flying” probably refers to the serpent's quick, darting movements, though one might propose a homonym here, meaning “biting.” (See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:332, n. 18.) Some might think in terms of a mythological flying, fire breathing dragon (cf. NAB “a flying saraph”; CEV “a flying fiery dragon”), but this proposal does not make good sense in 30:6, where the phrase “flying burning one” appears again in a list of desert animals.

<sup>13</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, “the firstborn of the poor will graze.” “Firstborn” may be used here in an idiomatic sense to indicate the very poorest of the poor. See BDB 114 s.v. בְּכוֹר. The translation above assumes an emendation of בְּכוֹרֵי (b<sup>h</sup>khorey, “firstborn of”) to בְּכָרֵי (bekharay, “in my pastures”).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “your remnant” (so NAB, NRSV).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “despair” (see HALOT 555 s.v. מָוֹן). The form מָוֹן (nā-mog) should be taken here as an infinitive absolute functioning as an imperative. See GKC 199-200 §72.v.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “and there is no one going alone in his appointed places.” The meaning of this line is uncertain. בָּוֶדֶד (boded) appears to be a participle from בָּדַד (badad, “be separate”; see BDB 94 s.v. בָּדַד). מוֹעֵד (mo'ad) may mean “assembly” or, by extension, “multitude” (see HALOT 558 s.v. מוֹעֵד), but the referent of the third masculine pronominal suffix attached to the noun is unclear. It probably refers to the “nation” mentioned in the next line.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The question forces the Philistines to consider the dilemma they will face – surrender and oppression, or battle and death.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “house.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “even Dibon [to] the high places to weep.” The verb “went up” does double duty in the parallel structure.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “over [or “for”] Nebo and over [or “for”] Medeba.”

<sup>21</sup> **sn** Shaving the head and beard were outward signs of mourning and grief.

all of them wail,  
they fall down weeping.

**15:4** The people of<sup>1</sup> Heshbon and Elealeh  
cry out,  
their voices are heard as far away as Ja-  
haz.

For this reason Moab's soldiers shout in  
distress;  
their courage wavers.<sup>2</sup>

**15:5** My heart cries out because of Moab's  
plight,<sup>3</sup>  
and for the fugitives<sup>4</sup> stretched out<sup>5</sup> as  
far as Zoar and Eglath Shelishiyah.

For they weep as they make their way up  
the ascent of Luhith;  
they loudly lament their demise on the  
road to Horonaim.<sup>6</sup>

**15:6** For the waters of Nimrim are gone;<sup>7</sup>  
the grass is dried up,  
the vegetation has disappeared,  
and there are no plants.

**15:7** For this reason what they have made  
and stored up,  
they carry over the Stream of the Poplars.

**15:8** Indeed, the cries of distress echo  
throughout Moabite territory;  
their wailing can be heard in Eglaim and  
Beer Elim.<sup>8</sup>

**15:9** Indeed, the waters of Dimon<sup>9</sup> are full  
of blood!

Indeed, I will heap even more trouble on  
Dimon.<sup>10</sup>

A lion will attack<sup>11</sup> the Moabite fugitives  
and the people left in the land.

**16:1** Send rams as tribute to the ruler of  
the land,<sup>12</sup>

from Sela in the desert<sup>13</sup>  
to the hill of Daughter Zion.

**16:2** At the fords of the Arnon<sup>14</sup>  
the Moabite women are like a bird  
that flies about when forced from its  
nest.<sup>15</sup>

**16:3** "Bring a plan, make a decision!<sup>16</sup>  
Provide some shade in the middle of the  
day!<sup>17</sup>

Hide the fugitives! Do not betray<sup>18</sup> the one  
who tries to escape!

**16:4** Please let the Moabite fugitives live<sup>19</sup>  
among you.

Hide them<sup>20</sup> from the destroyer!"  
Certainly<sup>21</sup> the one who applies pressure  
will cease,<sup>22</sup>

the destroyer will come to an end,  
those who trample will disappear<sup>23</sup> from  
the earth.

**16:5** Then a trustworthy king will be es-  
tablished;

he will rule in a reliable manner,  
this one from David's family.<sup>24</sup>

He will be sure to make just decisions  
and will be experienced in executing  
justice.<sup>25</sup>

**12 tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, "Send [a plural impera-  
tival form is used] a ram [to] the ruler of the land." The term  
כר (*kar*, "ram") should be emended to the plural כרים (*karim*).  
The singular form in the text is probably the result of haplogra-  
phy; note that the next word begins with a *mem* (ם).

**13 tn** The Hebrew text has "toward [across?] the desert."

**14 tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a dis-  
course particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future"  
in 2:2.

**15 tn Heb** "like a bird fleeing, thrust away [from] a nest, the  
daughters of Moab are [at] the fords of Arnon."

**16 sn** It is unclear who is being addressed in this verse. Per-  
haps the prophet, playing the role of a panic stricken Moabite  
refugee, requests the leaders of Judah (the imperatives are  
plural) to take pity on the fugitives.

**17 tn Heb** "Make your shade like night in the midst of noon-  
day." "Shade" here symbolizes shelter, while the heat of  
noonday represents the intense suffering of the Moabites. By  
comparing the desired shade to night, the speaker visualizes  
a huge dark shadow cast by a large tree that would provide  
relief from the sun's heat.

**18 tn Heb** "disclose, uncover."

**19 tn** That is, "live as resident foreigners."

**20 tn Heb** "Be a hiding place for them."

**21 tn** The present translation understands כִּי (*ki*) as asse-  
verative, but one could take it as explanatory ("for," KJV, NASB)  
or temporal ("when," NAB, NRSV). In the latter case, v. 4b  
would be logically connected to v. 5.

**22 tn** A perfect verbal form is used here and in the next two  
lines for rhetorical effect; the demise of the oppressor(s) is  
described as if it had already occurred.

**23 tc** The Hebrew text has, "they will be finished, the one who  
tramples, from the earth." The plural verb form תִּמְּוּ, (*tammu*,  
"disappear") could be emended to agree with the singular  
subject רַמְּסִים (*romes*, "the one who tramples") or the participle  
can be emended to a plural (רַמְּסִים) to agree with  
the verb. The translation assumes the latter. Haplography  
of *mem* (ם) seems likely; note that the word after רַמְּסִים begins  
with a *mem*.

**24 tn Heb** "and a throne will be established in faithfulness,  
and he will sit on it in reliability, in the tent of David."

**25 tn Heb** "one who judges and seeks justice, and one ex-  
perienced in fairness." Many understand מִשְׁחִיר (*mish'hir*) to mean

**1 tn** The words "the people of" are supplied in the transla-  
tion for clarification.

**2 tc** The Hebrew text has, "For this reason the soldiers  
of Moab shout, his inner being quivers for him." To achieve  
tighter parallelism, some emend the first line, changing הֲלָחֲטוּ  
(*khahutse*, "soldiers") to הֲלָחֲטוּ (the *loins*) and יָרִיעוּ  
(*yari'u*, "they shout," from רִיעָה, *ria'*) to יָרִיעוּ (the *loins*),  
a verb from יָרַע (*yara'*), which also appears in the next line. One  
can then translate v. 4b as "For this reason the insides of the  
Moabites quiver, their whole body shakes" (cf. NAB, NRSV).

**3 tn Heb** "for Moab." For rhetorical purposes the speaker  
(the LORD?, see v. 9) plays the role of a mourner.

**4 tn** The vocalization of the Hebrew text suggests "the  
bars of her gates," but the form should be pointed to yield,  
"her fugitives." See HALOT 156-57 s.v. בָּרֵיחַ, and BDB 138 s.v.  
בָּרֵיחַ.

**5 tn** The words "are stretched out" are supplied in the  
translation for stylistic reasons.

**6 tn Heb** "For the ascent of Luhith, with weeping they go  
up it; for [on] the road to Horonaim an outcry over shattering  
they raise up."

**7 tn Heb** "are waste places"; cf. NRSV "are a desolation."

**8 tn Heb** "to Eglaim [is] her wailing, and [to] Beer Elim [is]  
her wailing."

**9 tc** The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads "Dibon" instead of  
"Dimon" in this verse.

**10 tn Heb** "Indeed I will place on Dimon added things." Ap-  
parently the LORD is speaking.

**11 tn** The words "will attack" are supplied in the translation  
for clarification.

16:6 We have heard about Moab's pride, their great arrogance, their boasting, pride, and excess.<sup>1</sup> But their boastful claims are empty!<sup>2</sup>

16:7 So Moab wails over its demise<sup>3</sup> – they all wail!

Completely devastated, they moan about what has happened to the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth.<sup>4</sup>

16:8 For the fields of Heshbon are dried up, as well as the vines of Sibmah. The rulers of the nations trample all over its vines, which reach Jazer and spread to the desert;

their shoots spread out and cross the sea. 16:9 So I weep along with Jazer<sup>5</sup> over the vines of Sibmah.

I will saturate you<sup>6</sup> with my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh, for the conquering invaders shout triumphantly over your fruit and crops.<sup>7</sup>

16:10 Joy and happiness disappear from the orchards, and in the vineyards no one rejoices or shouts; no one treads out juice in the wine vats<sup>8</sup> – I have brought the joyful shouts to an end.<sup>9</sup>

16:11 So my heart constantly sighs for Moab, like the strumming of a harp,<sup>10</sup>

my inner being sighs<sup>11</sup> for Kir Hareseth.<sup>12</sup> 16:12 When the Moabites plead with all their might at their high places,<sup>13</sup> and enter their temples to pray, their prayers will be ineffective!<sup>14</sup>

16:13 This is the message the LORD previously announced about Moab. 16:14 Now the LORD makes this announcement: “Within exactly three years<sup>15</sup> Moab's splendor will disappear, along with all her many people; there will be just a few, insignificant survivors left.”<sup>16</sup>

*The Lord Will Judge Damascus*

17:1 Here is a message about Damascus: “Look, Damascus is no longer a city, it is a heap of ruins!

17:2 The cities of Aroer are abandoned.<sup>17</sup> They will be used for herds, which will lie down there in peace.<sup>18</sup>

17:3 Fortified cities will disappear from Ephraim, and Damascus will lose its kingdom.<sup>19</sup> The survivors in Syria will end up like the splendor of the Israelites,”

says the LORD who commands armies.

17:4 “At that time<sup>20</sup> Jacob's splendor will be greatly diminished,<sup>21</sup>

“quick, prompt” (see BDB 555 s.v. פָּרִיר), but HALOT 552 s.v. פָּרִיר offers the meaning “skillful, experienced,” and translates the phrase in v. 5 “zealous for what is right.”

<sup>1</sup> **tn** עֲבָרָה (*evrah*) often means “anger, fury,” but here it appears to refer to boastful outbursts or excessive claims. See HALOT 782 s.v. עֲבָרָה.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “not so his boasting.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “So Moab wails for Moab.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has, “for the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth you [masculine plural] moan, surely destroyed.” The “raisin cakes” could have cultic significance (see Hos 3:1), but the next verse focuses on agricultural disaster, so here the raisin cakes are mentioned as an example of the fine foods that are no longer available (see 2 Sam 6:19; Song 2:5) because the vines have been destroyed by the invader (see v. 8). Some prefer to take אֲשִׁישֵׁי (*ashishe*, “raisin cakes of”) as “men of” (see HALOT 95 s.v. אֲשִׁישֵׁי; cf. NIV). The verb form תִּהְיֶינָה (*tehu*, “you moan”) is probably the result of dittography (note that the preceding word ends in תַּב [ת]) and should be emended to הֵינָה (a perfect, third plural form), “they moan.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “So I weep with the weeping of Jazer.” Once more the speaker (the LORD? – see v. 10b) plays the role of a mourner (see 15:5).

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The form אֲרַוְוֶכְךָ (*arayavekh*) should be emended to אֲרַוְוֶכְךָ (*aravvayekh*; the *vav* [ו] and *yod* [י] have been accidentally transposed) from אֲרַוְוֶכְךָ (*aravah*, “be saturated”).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for over your fruit and over your harvest shouting has fallen.” The translation assumes that the shouting is that of the conqueror (Jer 51:14). Another possibility is that the shouting is that of the harvesters (see v. 10b, as well as Jer 25:30), in which case one might translate, “for the joyful shouting over the fruit and crops has fallen silent.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “wine in the vats the treader does not tread.”

<sup>9</sup> **sn** The LORD appears to be the speaker here. See 15:9.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “so my intestines sigh for Moab like a harp.” The word מִעֵי (*me'ay*, “intestines”) is used here of the seat of the emotions. English idiom requires the word “heart.” The point

of the comparison to a harp is not entirely clear. Perhaps his sighs of mourning resemble a harp in sound, or his constant sighing is like the repetitive strumming of a harp.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The verb is supplied in the translation; “sighs” in the preceding line does double duty in the parallel structure.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Kir Heres” (so ASV, NRSV, TEV, CEV), a variant name for “Kir Hareseth” (see v. 7).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “when he appears, when he grows tired, Moab on the high places, and enters his temple to pray, he will not prevail.” It is possible that “when he grows tired” is an explanatory gloss for the preceding “when he appears.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in three years, like the years of a hired worker.” The three years must be reckoned exactly, just as a hired worker would carefully keep track of the time he had agreed to work for an employer in exchange for a predetermined wage.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the splendor of Moab will be disgraced with all the great multitude, and a small little remnant will not be strong.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Three cities are known by this name in the OT: (1) an Aroer located near the Arnon, (2) an Aroer in Ammon, and (3) an Aroer of Judah. (See BDB 792-93 s.v. אֲרוֹרִי, and HALOT 883 s.v. II אֲרוֹרִי.) There is no mention of an Aroer in Syrian territory. For this reason some want to emend the text here to עִבּוֹת עָרֵיהֶּ עָדֵי אֲדָם (*azuvoṭ 'arayha 'adey 'ad*, “her cities are permanently abandoned”). However, Aroer near the Arnon was taken by Israel and later conquered by the Syrians. (See Josh 12:2; 13:9, 16; Judg 11:26; 2 Kgs 10:33). This oracle pertains to Israel as well as Syria (note v. 3), so it is possible that this is a reference to Israelite and/or Syrian losses in Transjordan.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and they lie down and there is no one scaring [them].”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and kingship from Damascus”; cf. NASB “And sovereignty from Damascus.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in that day” (so KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will be tiny.”



and he will become skin and bones.<sup>1</sup>  
**17:5** It will be as when one gathers the grain harvest, and his hand gleanes the ear of grain. It will be like one gathering the ears of grain in the Valley of Rephaim.  
**17:6** There will be some left behind, like when an olive tree is beaten – two or three ripe olives remain toward the very top, four or five on its fruitful branches,” says the LORD God of Israel.  
**17:7** At that time<sup>2</sup> men will trust in their Creator;<sup>3</sup> they will depend on<sup>4</sup> the Holy One of Israel.<sup>5</sup>  
**17:8** They will no longer trust in<sup>6</sup> the altars their hands made, or depend on the Asherah poles and incense altars their fingers made.<sup>7</sup>  
**17:9** At that time<sup>8</sup> their fortified cities will be like the abandoned summits of the Amorites,<sup>9</sup> which they abandoned because of the Israelites; there will be desolation.  
**17:10** For you ignore<sup>10</sup> the God who rescues you; you pay no attention to your strong protector.<sup>11</sup>  
 So this is what happens:  
 You cultivate beautiful plants and plant exotic vines.<sup>12</sup>

**17:11** The day you begin cultivating, you do what you can to make it grow;<sup>13</sup> the morning you begin planting, you do what you can to make it sprout. Yet the harvest will disappear<sup>14</sup> in the day of disease and incurable pain.  
**17:12** The many nations massing together are as good as dead,<sup>15</sup> those who make a commotion as loud as the roaring of the sea’s waves.<sup>16</sup> The people making such an uproar are as good as dead,<sup>17</sup> those who make an uproar as loud as the roaring of powerful waves.<sup>18</sup>  
**17:13** Though these people make an uproar as loud as the roaring of powerful waves,<sup>19</sup> when he shouts at<sup>20</sup> them, they will flee to a distant land, driven before the wind like dead weeds on the hills, or like dead thistles<sup>21</sup> before a strong gale.  
**17:14** In the evening there is sudden terror;<sup>22</sup> by morning they vanish.<sup>23</sup> This is the fate of those who try to plunder us, the destiny of those who try to loot us!<sup>24</sup>

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in the day of your planting you [?].” The precise meaning of the verb תִּשְׁבְּעִי (*ṯsagsegi*) is unclear. It is sometimes derived from שָׁבַע/שָׁבַע (*svg*, “to fence in”; see BDB 691 s.v. II שָׁבַע). In this case one could translate “you build a protective fence.” However, the parallelism is tighter if one derives the form from שָׁבַע/שָׁבַע (*saga/sagah*, “to grow”); see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:351, n. 4. For this verb, see BDB 960 s.v. שָׁבַע.

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, “a heap of harvest.” However, better sense is achieved if נָדָד (*ned*, “heap”) is emended to a verb. Options include נָדָד (*nad*, Qal perfect third masculine singular from נָדַד [*nadad*, “flee, depart”]), נָדַד (*noded*, Qal active participle from נָדַד), and נָדָד (*nad*, Qal perfect third masculine singular, or participle masculine singular, from נָוַד [*nud*, “wander, flutter”]). See BDB 626 s.v. נָוַד and HALOT 672 s.v. נָוַד. One could translate literally: “[the harvest] departs,” or “[the harvest] flies away.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Woe [to] the massing of the many nations.” The word הוֹי (*hoy*) could be translated as a simple interjection here (“ah!”), but since the following verses announce the demise of these nations, it is preferable to take הוֹי as a funeral cry. See the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like the loud noise of the seas, they make a loud noise.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the uproar of the peoples.” The term הוֹי (*hoy*, “woe, ah”) does double duty in the parallel structure of the verse; the words “are as good as dead” are supplied in the translation to reflect this.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like the uproar of mighty waters they are in an uproar.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the peoples are in an uproar like the uproar of mighty waters.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Or “rebukes.” The verb and related noun are used in theophanies of God’s battle cry which terrifies his enemies. See, for example, Pss 18:15; 76:7; 106:9; Isa 50:2; Nah 1:4, and A. Caquot, *TDOT* 3:49-53.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or perhaps “tumbleweed” (NAB, NIV, CEV); KJV “like a rolling thing.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “at the time of evening, look, sudden terror.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “before morning he is not.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “this is the portion of those who plunder us, and

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the fatness of his flesh will be made lean.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in that day” (so ASV, NASB, NIV); KJV “At that day.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “man will gaze toward his maker.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “his eyes will look toward.”

<sup>5</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he will not gaze toward.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and that which his fingers made he will not see, the Asherah poles and the incense altars.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in that day” (so KJV).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “like the abandonment of the wooded height and the top one.” The following relative clause appears to allude back to the Israelite conquest of the land, so it seems preferable to emend הַרְשֵׁי הָאֲמֹרִית (*hakhoresheh ṯha’amir*, “the wooded height and the top one”) to הַרְשֵׁי הָאֲמֹרִי (*khoreshe ha’amori*, “[like the abandonment] of the wooded heights of the Amorites”).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you have forgotten” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the rocky cliff of your strength you do not remember.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a vine, a strange one.” The substantival adjective זָר (*zar*) functions here as an appositional genitive. It could refer to a cultic plant of some type, associated with a pagan rite. But it is more likely that it refers to an exotic, or imported, type of vine, one that is foreign (i.e., “strange”) to Israel.

*The Lord Will Judge a Distant Land in the South*

**18:1** The land of buzzing wings is as good as dead,<sup>1</sup>

the one beyond the rivers of Cush,

**18:2** that sends messengers by sea, who glide over the water's surface in boats made of papyrus.

Go, you swift messengers, to a nation of tall, smooth-skinned people,<sup>2</sup>

to a people that are feared far and wide,<sup>3</sup> to a nation strong and victorious,<sup>4</sup> whose land rivers divide.<sup>5</sup>

**18:3** All you who live in the world, who reside on the earth, you will see a signal flag raised on the mountains;

you will hear a trumpet being blown.

**18:4** For this is what the LORD has told me: "I will wait<sup>6</sup> and watch from my place, like scorching heat produced by the sunlight,<sup>7</sup>

like a cloud of mist<sup>8</sup> in the heat<sup>9</sup> of

the lot of those who loot us."

**1** **tn** *Heb* "Woe [to] the land of buzzing wings." On הוי (*hoy*, "woe, ah") see the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

**sn** The significance of the qualifying phrase "buzzing wings" is uncertain. Some suggest that the designation points to Cush as a land with many insects. Another possibility is that it refers to the swiftness with which this land's messengers travel (v. 2a); they move over the sea as swiftly as an insect flies through the air. For a discussion of the options, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:359-60.

**2** **tn** The precise meaning of the qualifying terms is uncertain. The *מַשַּׁחֲקִים* (*m<sup>h</sup>mushakh*) appears to be a Pual participle from the verb *מַשַּׁחֲקֵה* (*mashakh*, "to draw, extend"). Lexicographers theorize that it here refers to people who "stretch out," as it were, or are tall. See BDB 604 s.v. *מַשַּׁחֲקֵה*, and HALOT 645-46 s.v. *מַשַּׁחֲקֵה*. *מִרְחֵה* (*morat*) is taken as a Pual participle from *מָרַח* (*marat*), which can mean "to pull out [hair]," in the Qal, "become bald" in the Niphal, and "be wiped clean" in the Pual. Lexicographers theorize that the word here refers to people with bare, or smooth, skin. See BDB 598-99 s.v. *מָרַח*, and HALOT 634-35 s.v. *מָרַח*. These proposed meanings, which are based on etymological speculation, must be regarded as tentative.

**3** **tn** *Heb* "from it and onwards." HALOT 245 s.v. *הַלְּמָחָה* suggests the translation "far and wide."

**4** **tn** Once more the precise meaning of the qualifying terms is uncertain. The expression *גַּבְרֵי* (*gav-gav*) is sometimes related to a proposed Arabic cognate and taken to mean "strength" (see BDB 876 II *جَبْر*). Others, on the basis of Isa 28:10, 13, understand the form as gibberish (literally, "kav, kav") and take it to be a reference to this nation's strange, unknown language. The form *מְבוּחָה* (*m<sup>h</sup>vusah*) appears to be derived from *בוּח* (*bus*, "to trample"), so lexicographers suggest the meaning "trampling" or "subjugation," i.e., a nation that subdues others. See BDB 101 s.v. *בוּח* and HALOT 541 s.v. *מְבוּחָה*. These proposals, which are based on etymological speculation, must be regarded as tentative.

**5** **tn** The precise meaning of the verb *בָּזָא* (*baza*'), which occurs only in this oracle (see also v. 7) in the OT, is uncertain. BDB 102 s.v. suggests "divide" on the basis of alleged Aramaic and Arabic cognates; HALOT 117 s.v., citing an alleged Arabic cognate, suggests "wash away."

**6** **tn** Or "be quiet, inactive"; NIV "will remain quiet."

**7** **tn** *Heb* "like the glowing heat because of light." The precise meaning of the line is uncertain.

**8** **tn** *Heb* "a cloud of dew," or "a cloud of light rain."

**9** **tc** Some medieval Hebrew MSS, with support from the LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and Latin Vulgate, read "the day."

harvest."<sup>10</sup>

**18:5** For before the harvest, when the bud has sprouted, and the ripening fruit appears,<sup>11</sup> he will cut off the unproductive shoots<sup>12</sup> with pruning knives;

he will prune the tendrils.<sup>13</sup>

**18:6** They will all be left<sup>14</sup> for the birds of the hills and the wild animals;<sup>15</sup>

the birds will eat them during the summer, and all the wild animals will eat them during the winter.

**18:7** At that time tribute will be brought to the LORD who commands armies, by a people that are tall and smooth-skinned,

a people that are feared far and wide, a nation strong and victorious, whose land rivers divide.<sup>16</sup>

The tribute<sup>17</sup> will be brought to the place where the LORD who commands armies has chosen to reside, on Mount Zion.<sup>18</sup>

*The Lord Will Judge Egypt*

**19:1** Here is a message about Egypt: Look, the LORD rides on a swift-moving cloud and approaches Egypt.

The idols of Egypt tremble before him; the Egyptians lose their courage.<sup>19</sup>

**19:2** "I will provoke civil strife in Egypt,<sup>20</sup> brothers will fight with each other, as will neighbors, cities, and kingdoms.<sup>21</sup>

**19:3** The Egyptians will panic,<sup>22</sup> and I will confuse their strategy.<sup>23</sup>

They will seek guidance from the idols and from the spirits of the dead,

**10** **sn** It is unclear how the comparisons in v. 4b relate to the preceding statement. How is waiting and watching similar to heat or a cloud? For a discussion of interpretive options, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:362.

**11** **tn** *Heb* "and the unripe, ripening fruit is maturing."

**12** **tn** On the meaning of *זָלְזַל* (*zalzal*, "shoot [of the vine] without fruit buds") see HALOT 272 s.v. *זָלְזַל*.

**13** **tn** *Heb* "the tendrils he will remove, he will cut off."

**14** **tn** *Heb* "they will be left together" (so NASB).

**15** **tn** *Heb* "the beasts of the earth" (so KJV, NASB).

**16** **tn** On the interpretive difficulties of this verse, see the notes at v. 2, where the same terminology is used.

**17** **tn** The words "the tribute" are repeated here in the translation for clarity.

**18** **tn** *Heb* "to the place of the name of the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts], Mount Zion."

**19** **tn** *Heb* "and the heart of Egypt melts within it."

**20** **tn** *Heb* I will provoke Egypt against Egypt" (NAB similar).

**21** **tn** *Heb* "and they will fight, a man against his brother, and a man against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom." Civil strife will extend all the way from the domestic level to the provincial arena.

**22** **tn** *Heb* "and the spirit of Egypt will be laid waste in its midst."

**23** **tn** The verb *בָּלַע* (*bala*'), "confuse" is a homonym of the more common *בָּלַע* (*bala*'), "swallow"; see HALOT 135 s.v. *בָּלַע*.

from the pits used to conjure up underworld spirits, and from the magicians.<sup>1</sup>  
**19:4** I will hand Egypt over to a harsh master;  
 a powerful king will rule over them,<sup>2</sup>  
 says the sovereign master,<sup>2</sup> the LORD  
 who commands armies.  
**19:5** The water of the sea will be dried up,  
 and the river will dry up and be empty.<sup>3</sup>  
**19:6** The canals<sup>4</sup> will stink,<sup>5</sup>  
 the streams of Egypt will trickle and then  
 dry up;  
 the bulrushes and reeds will decay,  
**19:7** along with the plants by the mouth of  
 the river.<sup>6</sup>  
 All the cultivated land near the river  
 will turn to dust and be blown away.<sup>7</sup>  
**19:8** The fishermen will mourn and lament,  
 all those who cast a fishhook into the  
 river,  
 and those who spread out a net on the  
 water's surface will grieve.<sup>8</sup>  
**19:9** Those who make clothes from  
 combed flax will be embarrassed;  
 those who weave will turn pale.<sup>9</sup>  
**19:10** Those who make cloth<sup>10</sup> will be demoralized;<sup>11</sup>  
 all the hired workers will be depressed.<sup>12</sup>  
**19:11** The officials of Zoan are nothing but  
 fools,<sup>13</sup>  
 Pharaoh's wise advisers give stupid advice.  
 How dare you say to Pharaoh,  
 "I am one of the sages,

one well-versed in the writings of the  
 ancient kings?"<sup>14</sup>  
**19:12** But where, oh where, are your wise  
 men?<sup>15</sup>  
 Let them tell you, let them find out  
 what the LORD who commands armies  
 has planned for Egypt.  
**19:13** The officials of Zoan are fools,  
 the officials of Memphis<sup>16</sup> are misled;  
 the rulers<sup>17</sup> of her tribes lead Egypt astray.  
**19:14** The LORD has made them undiscerning;<sup>18</sup>  
 they lead Egypt astray in all she does,  
 so that she is like a drunk sliding around  
 in his own vomit.<sup>19</sup>  
**19:15** Egypt will not be able to do a thing,  
 head or tail, shoots and stalk.<sup>20</sup>  
**19:16** At that time<sup>21</sup> the Egyptians<sup>22</sup> will be like  
 women.<sup>23</sup> They will tremble and fear because the  
 LORD who commands armies brandishes his fist  
 against them.<sup>24</sup> **19:17** The land of Judah will humiliate  
 Egypt. Everyone who hears about Judah  
 will be afraid because of what the LORD who commands  
 armies is planning to do to them.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "they will inquire of the idols and of the spirits of the dead and of the ritual pits and of the magicians." Hebrew אוֹב (ov, "ritual pit") refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. See the note on "incantations" in 8:19.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is אֲדוֹנָי (adonay).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "will dry up and be dry." Two synonyms are joined for emphasis.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "rivers" (so KJV, ASV); NAB, CEV "streams"; TEV "channels."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The verb form appears as a Hiphil in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>; the form in MT may be a so-called "mixed form," reflecting the Hebrew Hiphil stem and the functionally corresponding Aramaic Aphel stem. See HALOT 276 s.v. נָחַר.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "the plants by the river, by the mouth of the river."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "will dry up, [being] scattered, and it will vanish."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "will disappear"; cf. TEV "will be useless."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** BDB 301 s.v. חֹרִי suggests the meaning "white stuff" for חֹרִי (khorî); the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has חֹרִי (khaveru), probably a Qal perfect, third plural form of חָרַר, (khar, "be white, pale"). See HALOT 299 s.v. חָרַר. The latter reading is assumed in the translation above.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Some interpret שְׂתִיתֶיהָ (shatoteha) as "her foundations," i.e., leaders, nobles. See BDB 1011 s.v. שֵׁת. Others, on the basis of alleged cognates in Akkadian and Coptic, reposit the form שְׂתִיתֶיהָ (sh'ti'eha) and translate "her weavers." See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:370.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "crushed." Emotional distress is the focus of the context (see vv. 8-9, 10b).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "sad of soul"; cf. NIV, NLT "sick at heart."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "certainly the officials of Zoan are fools." אַךְ ('akh) can carry the sense, "only, nothing but," or "certainly, surely."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "A son of wise men am I, a son of ancient kings." The term בֵּן (ben, "son of") could refer to literal descent, but many understand the word, at least in the first line, in its idiomatic sense of "member [of a guild]." See HALOT 138 s.v. בֵּן and J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:371. If this is the case, then one can take the word in a figurative sense in the second line as well, the "son of ancient kings" being one devoted to their memory as preserved in their literature.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "Where are they? Where are your wise men?" The juxtaposition of the interrogative pronouns is emphatic. See HALOT 38 s.v. אֵי.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "Noph" (so KJV); most recent English versions substitute the more familiar "Memphis."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "the cornerstone." The singular form should be emended to a plural.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "the LORD has mixed into her midst a spirit of blindness."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "like the going astray of a drunkard in his vomit."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "And there will not be for Egypt a deed, which head and tail, shoot and stalk can do." In 9:14-15 the phrase "head or tail" refers to leaders and prophets, respectively. This interpretation makes good sense in this context, where both leaders and advisers (probably including prophets and diviners) are mentioned (vv. 11-14). Here, as in 9:14, "shoots and stalk" picture a army, which symbolizes the leadership of the nation in its entirety.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "in that day" (so KJV), likewise at the beginning of vv. 18 and 19.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb "Egypt," which stands by metonymy for the country's inhabitants.

<sup>23</sup> **sn** As the rest of the verse indicates, the point of the simile is that the Egyptians will be relatively weak physically and will wilt in fear before the LORD's onslaught.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb "and he will tremble and be afraid because of the brandishing of the hand of the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts], which he brandishes against him." Since according to the imagery here the LORD's "hand" is raised as a weapon against the Egyptians, the term "fist" has been used in the translation.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb "and the land of Judah will become [a source of] shame to Egypt, everyone to whom one mentions it [i.e., the land of Judah] will fear because of the plan of the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] which he is planning against him."

**19:18** At that time five cities<sup>1</sup> in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD who commands armies. One will be called the City of the Sun.<sup>2</sup> **19:19** At that time there will be an altar for the LORD in the middle of the land of Egypt, as well as a sacred pillar<sup>3</sup> dedicated to the LORD at its border. **19:20** It<sup>4</sup> will become a visual reminder in the land of Egypt of<sup>5</sup> the LORD who commands armies. When they cry out to the LORD because of oppressors, he will send them a deliverer and defender<sup>6</sup> who will rescue them. **19:21** The LORD will reveal himself to the Egyptians, and they<sup>7</sup> will acknowledge the LORD's authority<sup>8</sup> at that time.<sup>9</sup> They will present sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and fulfill them. **19:22** The LORD will strike Egypt, striking and then healing them. They will turn to the LORD and he will listen to their prayers<sup>10</sup> and heal them.

**19:23** At that time there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will visit Egypt, and the Egyptians will visit Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together.<sup>11</sup> **19:24** At that time Israel will be the third member of the group, along with Egypt and Assyria, and will be a recipient of blessing<sup>12</sup> in the earth.<sup>13</sup> **19:25** The LORD who commands armies will

pronounce a blessing over the earth, saying,<sup>14</sup> "Blessed be my people, Egypt, and the work of my hands, Assyria, and my special possession,<sup>15</sup> Israel!"

**20:1** The LORD revealed the following message during the year in which King Sargon of Assyria sent his commanding general to Ashdod, and he fought against it and captured it.<sup>16</sup> **20:2** At that time the LORD announced through<sup>17</sup> Isaiah son of Amoz: "Go, remove the sackcloth from your waist and take your sandals off your feet." He did as instructed and walked around in undergarments<sup>18</sup> and barefoot. **20:3** Later the LORD explained, "In the same way that my servant Isaiah has walked around in undergarments and barefoot for the past three years, as an object lesson and omen pertaining to Egypt and Cush, **20:4** so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, both young and old. They will be in undergarments and barefoot, with the buttocks exposed; the Egyptians will be publicly humiliated.<sup>19</sup> **20:5** Those who put their hope in Cush and took pride in Egypt will be afraid and embarrassed.<sup>20</sup> **20:6** At that time<sup>21</sup> those who live on this coast<sup>22</sup> will say, 'Look what has happened to our source of hope to whom we fled for help, expecting to be rescued from the king of Assyria! How can we escape now?'"

### The Lord Will Judge Babylon

**21:1** Here is a message about the Desert by the Sea:<sup>23</sup>

Like strong winds blowing in the south,<sup>24</sup> one invades from the desert,

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The significance of the number "five" in this context is uncertain. For a discussion of various proposals, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:376-77.

<sup>2</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has עִיר הַהָרָס ('ir ha<sup>h</sup>heres, "City of Destruction"; cf. NASB, NIV) but this does not fit the positive emphasis of vv. 18-22. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and some medieval Hebrew MSS read עִיר הַחֶרֶס ('ir ha<sup>h</sup>cheres, "City of the Sun," i.e., Heliopolis). This reading also finds support from Symmachus' Greek version, the Targum, and the Vulgate. See HALOT 257 s.v. חֶרֶס and HALOT 355 s.v. חֶרֶס.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** This word is sometimes used of a sacred pillar associated with pagan worship, but here it is associated with the worship of the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The masculine noun מִזְבֵּחַ (mizbeakh, "altar") in v. 19 is probably the subject of the masculine singular verb הָיָה (hayah) rather than the feminine noun מַצֵּבָה (matsevah, "sacred pillar"), also in v. 19.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "a sign and a witness to the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] in the land of Egypt."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** רִב (riv) is a substantival participle (from רָיַב, riv) meaning "one who strives, contends."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "Egypt." For stylistic reasons, to avoid redundancy, the present translation uses the pronoun ("they") here.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "will know the LORD."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "in that day" (so KJV), likewise at the beginning of vv. 23 and 24.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "he will be entreated." The Niphal has a tolerative sense here, "he will allow himself to be entreated."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The text could be translated, "and Egypt will serve Assyria" (cf. NAB), but subjugation of one nation to the other does not seem to be a theme in vv. 23-25. Rather the nations are viewed as equals before the LORD (v. 25). Therefore it is better to take אִתּוֹ ('et) in v. 23b as a preposition, "together with," rather than the accusative sign. The names of the two countries are understood to refer by metonymy to their respective inhabitants.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "will be a blessing" (so NCV).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "land" (KJV, NAB).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "which the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] will bless [it], saying." The third masculine singular suffix on the form בִּרְכֵי (berakho) should probably be emended to a third feminine singular suffix בִּרְכָה (berakah), for its antecedent would appear to be the feminine noun אֶרֶץ ('eret, "earth") at the end of v. 24.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "my inheritance" (NAB, NASB, NIV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "In the year the commanding general came to Ashdod, when Sargon king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and captured it."

<sup>17</sup> **sn** This probably refers to the Assyrian campaign against Philistia in 712 or 711 B.C.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "spoke by the hand of."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The word used here (עָרֹם, 'arom) sometimes means "naked," but here it appears to mean simply "lightly dressed," i.e., stripped to one's undergarments. See HALOT 883 s.v. עָרֹם. The term also occurs in vv. 3, 4.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "lightly dressed and barefoot, and bare with respect to the buttocks, the nakedness of Egypt."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "and they will be afraid and embarrassed because of Cush their hope and Egypt their beauty."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb "in that day" (so KJV).

<sup>23</sup> **sn** This probably refers to the coastal region of Philistia (cf. TEV).

<sup>24</sup> **sn** The phrase is quite cryptic, at least to the modern reader. Verse 9 seems to indicate that this message pertains to Babylon. Southern Mesopotamia was known as the Sealand in ancient times, because of its proximity to the Persian Gulf. Perhaps the reference to Babylon as a "desert" foreshadows the destruction that would overtake the city, making it like a desolate desert.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Or "in the Negev" (NASB).



from a land that is feared.

**21:2** I have received a distressing message.<sup>1</sup>

“The deceiver deceives,  
the destroyer destroys.  
Attack, you Elamites!

Lay siege, you Medes!

I will put an end to all the groaning!”<sup>2</sup>

**21:3** For this reason my stomach churns;<sup>3</sup>  
cramps overwhelm me  
like the contractions of a woman in labor.  
I am disturbed<sup>4</sup> by what I hear,  
horrified by what I see.

**21:4** My heart palpitates,<sup>5</sup>  
I shake in fear;<sup>6</sup>

the twilight I desired  
has brought me terror.

**21:5** Arrange the table,  
lay out<sup>7</sup> the carpet,  
eat and drink!<sup>8</sup>

Get up, you officers,  
smear oil on the shields!<sup>9</sup>

**21:6** For this is what the sovereign master<sup>10</sup>  
has told me:

“Go, post a guard!

He must report what he sees.

**21:7** When he sees chariots,  
teams of horses,<sup>11</sup>

riders on donkeys,  
riders on camels,  
he must be alert,  
very alert.”

**21:8** Then the guard<sup>12</sup> cries out:

“On the watchtower, O sovereign master,<sup>13</sup>  
I stand all day long;  
at my post  
I am stationed every night.

**21:9** Look what’s coming!

A charioteer,  
a team of horses.”<sup>14</sup>

When questioned, he replies,<sup>15</sup>

“Babylon has fallen, fallen!

All the idols of her gods lie shattered on  
the ground!”

**21:10** O my downtrodden people, crushed  
like stalks on the threshing floor,<sup>16</sup>

what I have heard  
from the LORD who commands armies,  
the God of Israel,  
I have reported to you.

#### *Bad News for Seir*

**21:11** Here is a message about Dumah:<sup>17</sup>

Someone calls to me from Seir.<sup>18</sup>

“Watchman, what is left of the night?  
Watchman, what is left of the night?”<sup>19</sup>

**21:12** The watchman replies,  
“Morning is coming, but then night.<sup>20</sup>

If you want to ask, ask;  
come back again.”<sup>21</sup>

#### *The Lord Will Judge Arabia*

**21:13** Here is a message about Arabia:

In the thicket of Arabia you spend the  
night,  
you Dedanite caravans.

**21:14** Bring out some water for the thirsty.  
You who live in the land of Tema,  
bring some food for the fugitives.

**21:15** For they flee from the swords –  
from the drawn sword  
and from the battle-ready bow  
and from the severity of the battle.

**21:16** For this is what the sovereign master<sup>22</sup>  
has told me: “Within exactly one year<sup>23</sup> all  
the splendor of Kedar will come to an end.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “a severe revelation has been related to me.”

<sup>2</sup> **sn** This is often interpreted to mean “all the groaning” that Babylon has caused others.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “my waist is filled with shaking [or “anguish”].”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “bent over [in pain]”; cf. NRSV “I am bowed down.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “wanders,” perhaps here, “is confused.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “shuddering terrifies me.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of the verb in this line is debated. Some prefer to derive the form from the homonymic צָבַח (*tsafah*, “keep watch”) and translate “post a guard” (cf. KJV “watch in the watchtower”; ASV “set the watch”).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The verbal forms in the first three lines are infinitives absolute, which are functioning here as finite verbs. It is uncertain if the forms should have an imperative or indicative/descriptive force here.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Smearing the shields with oil would make them more flexible and effective in battle. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:394.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in vv. 8, 16 is אֲדֹנָי (*adonay*).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Or “a pair of horsemen.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has, “the lion,” but this makes little sense here. אַרְיֵה (*aryeh*, “lion”) is probably a corruption of an original הַרְאֵה (*har’eh*, “the one who sees”), i.e., the guard mentioned previously in v. 6.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדֹנָי (*adonay*). Some translations take this to refer to the Lord (cf. NAB, NASB, NRSV), while others take it to refer to the guard’s human master (“my lord”; cf. NIV, NLT).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “[with] teams of horses,” or perhaps, “with a pair of horsemen.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “and he answered and said” (so KJV, ASV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “My trampled one, and the son of the threshing floor.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The noun דּוּמָה (*dumah*) means “silence,” but here it is a proper name, probably referring to a site in northern Arabia or to the nation of Edom. See BDB 189 s.v. דּוּמָה. If Dumah was an area in northern Arabia, it would be of interest to the Edomites because of its strategic position on trade routes which they used. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:398.

<sup>18</sup> **sn** Seir is another name for Edom. See BDB 973 s.v. שֵׂעִיר.

<sup>19</sup> **sn** The “night” probably here symbolizes distress and difficult times. See BDB 539 s.v. לַיְלָה.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** Dumah will experience some relief, but it will be short-lived as *night* returns.

<sup>21</sup> **sn** The point of the watchman’s final instructions (“if you want to ask, ask; come again”) is unclear. Perhaps they are included to add realism to the dramatic portrayal. The watchman sends the questioner away with the words, “Feel free to come back and ask again.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדֹנָי (*adonay*).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “in still a year, like the years of a hired worker.” See the note at 16:14.

21:17 Just a handful of archers, the warriors of Kedar, will be left.<sup>1</sup> Indeed,<sup>2</sup> the LORD God of Israel has spoken.

*The Lord Will Judge Jerusalem*

22:1 Here is a message about the Valley of Vision.<sup>3</sup>

What is the reason<sup>4</sup>  
that all of you go up to the rooftops?

22:2 The noisy city is full of raucous sounds;

the town is filled with revelry.<sup>5</sup>  
Your slain were not cut down by the sword;

they did not die in battle.<sup>6</sup>

22:3<sup>7</sup> All your leaders ran away together – they fled to a distant place;  
all your refugees<sup>8</sup> were captured together – they were captured without a single arrow being shot.<sup>9</sup>

22:4 So I say:

“Don’t look at me!<sup>10</sup>  
I am weeping bitterly.  
Don’t try<sup>11</sup> to console me  
concerning the destruction of my defenseless people.”<sup>12</sup>

22:5 For the sovereign master,<sup>13</sup> the LORD who commands armies,

has planned a day of panic, defeat, and confusion.<sup>14</sup>

In the Valley of Vision<sup>15</sup> people shout<sup>16</sup> and cry out to the hill.<sup>17</sup>

22:6 The Elamites picked up the quiver, and came with chariots and horsemen;<sup>18</sup> the men of Kir<sup>19</sup> prepared<sup>20</sup> the shield.<sup>21</sup>

22:7 Your very best valleys were full of chariots;<sup>22</sup>

horsemen confidently took their positions<sup>23</sup> at the gate.

22:8 They<sup>24</sup> removed the defenses<sup>25</sup> of Judah.

At that time<sup>26</sup> you looked for the weapons in the House of the Forest.<sup>27</sup>

22:9 You saw the many breaks in the walls of the City of David;<sup>28</sup> you stored up water in the lower pool.

22:10 You counted the houses in Jerusalem,<sup>29</sup>

and demolished houses so you could have material to reinforce the wall.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the remnant of the number of the bow, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be few.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or “for” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>3</sup> **sn** The following message pertains to Jerusalem. The significance of referring to the city as *the Valley of Vision* is uncertain. Perhaps the Hinnom Valley is in view, but why it is associated with a prophetic revelatory “vision” is not entirely clear. Maybe the Hinnom Valley is called this because the destruction that will take place there is the focal point of this prophetic message (see v. 5).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “What to you, then?”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the boisterous town.” The phrase is parallel to “the noisy city” in the preceding line.

<sup>6</sup> **sn** Apparently they died from starvation during the siege that preceded the final conquest of the city. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:409.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Verse 3 reads literally, “All your leaders ran away, apart from a bow they were captured, all your found ones were captured together, to a distant place they fled.” J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:403, n. 3) suggests that the lines of the verse are arranged chiasmatically; lines 1 and 4 go together, while lines 2 and 3 are parallel. To translate the lines in the order they appear in the Hebrew text is misleading to the English reader, who is likely unfamiliar with, or at least insensitive to, chiasmic parallelism. Consequently, the translation above arranges the lines as follows: line 1 (Hebrew) = line 1 (in translation); line 2 (Hebrew) = line 4 (in translation); line 3 (Hebrew) = line 3 (in translation); line 4 (Hebrew) = line 2 (in translation).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all your found ones.” To achieve tighter parallelism (see “your leaders”) some prefer to emend the form to אַמְּטַיִךְ (*‘ammitsayikh*, “your strong ones”) or to נְעַמְּטַיִךְ (*ne‘ematsayikh*, “your strengthened ones”).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “apart from [i.e., without] a bow they were captured”; cf. NAB, NRSV “without the use of a bow.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “look away from me” (so KJV, ASV, NRSV).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “don’t hurry” (so NCV).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the daughter of my people.” “Daughter” is here used metaphorically to express the speaker’s emotional attachment to his people, as well as their vulnerability and weakness.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in v. 12, 14, 15 is אֲדוֹנָי (*‘adonay*).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “For [there is] a day of panic, and trampling, and confusion for the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The traditional accentuation of the Hebrew text suggests that this phrase goes with what precedes.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of this statement is unclear. Some take קיר (*qir*) as “wall” and interpret the verb to mean “tear down.” However, tighter parallelism (note the reference to crying for help in the next line) is achieved if one takes both the verb and noun from a root, attested in Ugaitic and Arabic, meaning “make a sound.” See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:404, n. 5.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** Perhaps “the hill” refers to the temple mount.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[with] the chariots of men, horsemen.”

<sup>19</sup> **sn** A distant region in the direction of Mesopotamia; see Amos 1:5; 9:7.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Kir uncovers” (so NAB, NIV).

<sup>21</sup> **sn** The Elamites and men of Kir may here symbolize a fierce army from a distant land. If this oracle anticipates a Babylonian conquest of the city (see 39:5-7), then the Elamites and men of Kir are perhaps viewed here as mercenaries in the Babylonian army. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:410.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “taking a stand, take their stand.” The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following finite verb. The translation attempts to bring out this emphasis with the adverb “confidently.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he,” i.e., the enemy invader. NASB, by its capitalization of the pronoun, takes this to refer to the LORD.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “covering.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in that day” (so KJV), likewise at the beginning of v. 12.

<sup>27</sup> **sn** Perhaps this refers to a royal armory, or to Solomon’s “House of the Forest of Lebanon,” where weapons may have been kept (see 1 Kgs 10:16-17).

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the breaks of the City of David, you saw that they were many.”

<sup>29</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>30</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you demolished the houses to fortify the wall.”

**22:11** You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool – but you did not trust in<sup>1</sup> the one who made it;<sup>2</sup>

you did not depend on<sup>3</sup> the one who formed it long ago!

**22:12** At that time the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, called for weeping and mourning, for shaved heads and sackcloth.<sup>4</sup>

**22:13** But look, there is outright celebration!<sup>5</sup>

You say, “Kill the ox and slaughter the sheep, eat meat and drink wine. Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”<sup>6</sup>

**22:14** The LORD who commands armies told me this:<sup>7</sup> “Certainly this sin will not be forgiven as long as you live,”<sup>8</sup> says the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies.

**22:15** This is what the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, says: “Go visit this administrator, Shebna, who supervises the palace,<sup>9</sup> and tell him:<sup>10</sup>

**22:16** ‘What right do you have to be here? What relatives do you have buried here?<sup>11</sup> Why<sup>12</sup> do you chisel out a tomb for yourself here?’

He chisels out his burial site in an elevated place, he carves out his tomb on a cliff.

**22:17** Look, the LORD will throw you far away,<sup>13</sup> you mere man!<sup>14</sup>

He will wrap you up tightly.<sup>15</sup>

**22:18** He will wind you up tightly into a ball

and throw you into a wide, open land.<sup>16</sup>

There you will die, and there with you will be your impressive chariots,<sup>17</sup>

which bring disgrace to the house of your master.<sup>18</sup>

**22:19** I will remove you from<sup>19</sup> your office; you will be thrown down<sup>20</sup> from your position.

**22:20** “At that time<sup>21</sup> I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah. **22:21** I will put your robe on him, tie your belt around him, and transfer your authority to him.<sup>22</sup> He will become a protector of<sup>23</sup> the residents of Jerusalem and of the people<sup>24</sup> of Judah. **22:22** I will place the key<sup>25</sup> to the house of David on his shoulder. When he opens the door, no one can close it; when he closes the door, no one can open it. **22:23** I will fasten him like a peg into a solid place;<sup>26</sup> he will bring honor and respect to his father’s family.<sup>27</sup> **22:24** His father’s family will gain increasing prominence because of him,<sup>28</sup> including the offspring and the offshoots.<sup>29</sup> All the small containers, including the bowls and all the jars will hang from this peg.<sup>30</sup>

“my fellow.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “and the one who wraps you [will] wrap.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “and he will tightly [or “surely”] wind you [with] winding like a ball, to a land broad of hands [i.e., “sides”].”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “and there the chariots of your splendor.”

<sup>18</sup> **sn** Apparently the reference to chariots alludes to Shebna’s excessive pride, which in turn brings disgrace to the royal family.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “I will push you away from.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “he will throw you down.” The shift from the first to third person is peculiar and abrupt, but certainly not unprecedented in Hebrew poetry. See GKC 462 §144.p. The third person may be indefinite (“one will throw you down”), in which case the passive translation is justified.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or “in that day.” The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “and your dominion I will place in his hand.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “a father to.” The Hebrew term אב (“av, “father”) is here used metaphorically of one who protects and supports those under his care and authority, like a father does his family. For another example of this metaphorical use of the word, see Job 29:16.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “house.”

<sup>25</sup> **sn** This may refer to a literal insignia worn by the chief administrator. Even so, it would still symbolize the administrator’s authority to grant or exclude access to the king. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:422.

<sup>26</sup> **sn** The metaphor depicts how secure his position will be.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb “and he will become a glorious throne for the house of his father.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Heb “and all the glory of the house of his father they will hang on him.” The LORD returns to the peg metaphor of v. 23a. Eliakim’s secure position of honor will bring benefits and jobs to many others in the family.

<sup>29</sup> **tn** The precise meaning and derivation of this word are uncertain. Cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV “the issue”; CEV “relatives.”

<sup>30</sup> **tn** Heb “all the small vessels, from the vessels that are bowls to all the vessels that are jars.” The picture is that of a single peg holding the weight of all kinds of containers hung from it.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “look at”; NAB, NRSV “did not look to.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The antecedent of the third feminine singular suffix here and in the next line is unclear. The closest feminine noun is “pool” in the first half of the verse. Perhaps this “old pool” symbolizes the entire city, which had prospered because of God’s provision and protection through the years.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “did not see.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “for baldness and the wearing of sackcloth.” See the note at 15:2.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “happiness and joy.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The prophet here quotes what the fatalistic people are saying. The introductory “you say” is supplied in the translation for clarification; the concluding verb “we die” makes it clear the people are speaking. The six verbs translated as imperatives are actually infinitives absolute, functioning here as finite verbs.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “it was revealed in my ears [by?] the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “Certainly this sin will not be atoned for until you die.” This does not imply that their death will bring atonement; rather it emphasizes that their sin is unpardonable. The statement has the form of an oath.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “who is over the house” (so ASV); NASB “who is in charge of the royal household.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The words “and tell him” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “What to you here? And who to you here?” The point of the second question is not entirely clear. The interpretation reflected in the translation is based on the following context, which suggests that Shebna has no right to think of himself so highly and arrange such an extravagant burial place for himself.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “that you chisel out.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “will throw you with a throwing.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “O man” (so NASB); NAB “mortal man”; NRSV

22:25 “At that time,”<sup>1</sup> says the LORD who commands armies, “the peg fastened into a solid place will come loose. It will be cut off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off.”<sup>2</sup> Indeed,<sup>3</sup> the LORD has spoken.

*The Lord Will Judge Tyre*

23:1 Here is a message about Tyre:  
Wail, you large ships,<sup>4</sup>  
for the port is too devastated to enter!<sup>5</sup>  
From the land of Cyprus<sup>6</sup> this news is  
announced to them.  
23:2 Lament,<sup>7</sup> you residents of the coast,  
you merchants of Sidon<sup>8</sup> who travel over  
the sea,  
whose agents sail over 23:3 the deep waters!<sup>9</sup>  
Grain from the Shihor region,<sup>10</sup>  
crops grown near the Nile<sup>11</sup> she receives;<sup>12</sup>  
she is the trade center<sup>13</sup> of the nations.  
23:4 Be ashamed, O Sidon,  
for the sea<sup>14</sup> says this, O fortress of the  
sea:  
“I have not gone into labor  
or given birth;  
I have not raised young men  
or brought up young women.”<sup>15</sup>

23:5 When the news reaches Egypt,  
they will be shaken by what has hap-  
pened to Tyre.<sup>16</sup>

23:6 Travel to Tarshish!

Wail, you residents of the coast!

23:7 Is this really your boisterous city<sup>17</sup>  
whose origins are in the distant past,<sup>18</sup>  
and whose feet led her to a distant land to  
reside?

23:8 Who planned this for royal Tyre,<sup>19</sup>  
whose merchants are princes,  
whose traders are the dignitaries<sup>20</sup> of the  
earth?

23:9 The LORD who commands armies  
planned it –  
to dishonor the pride that comes from all  
her beauty,<sup>21</sup>  
to humiliate all the dignitaries of the  
earth.

23:10 Daughter Tarshish, travel back to  
your land, as one crosses the Nile;  
there is no longer any marketplace in  
Tyre.<sup>22</sup>

23:11 The LORD stretched out his hand  
over the sea,<sup>23</sup>  
he shook kingdoms;  
he<sup>24</sup> gave the order  
to destroy Canaan’s fortresses.<sup>25</sup>

23:12 He said,  
“You will no longer celebrate,  
oppressed<sup>26</sup> virgin daughter Sidon!  
Get up, travel to Cyprus,

<sup>1</sup> tn Or “In that day” (KJV).

<sup>2</sup> sn Eliakim’s authority, though seemingly secure, will eventually be removed, and with it his family’s prominence.

<sup>3</sup> tn Or “for” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “ships of Tarshish.” This probably refers to large ships either made in or capable of traveling to the distant western port of Tarshish.

<sup>5</sup> tc The Hebrew text reads literally, “for it is destroyed, from a house, from entering.” The translation assumes that the *mem* (ם) בַּיִת (*bayit*) was originally an enclitic *mem* suffixed to the preceding verb. This assumption allows one to take בַּיִת as the subject of the preceding verb. It is used in a metaphorical sense for the port city of Tyre. The preposition *min* (מִן) prefixed to בּוֹיָא (*bo*) indicates negative consequence: “so that no one can enter.” See BDB 583 s.v. בּוֹיָא 7.b.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “the Kittim,” a designation for the people of Cyprus. See HALOT 504-05 s.v. כִּיִּתִּים.

<sup>7</sup> tn Or “keep quiet”; NAB “Silence!”

<sup>8</sup> map For location see Map1-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

<sup>9</sup> tc The Hebrew text (23:2b-3a) reads literally, “merchant of Sidon, the one who crosses the sea, they filled you, and on the deep waters.” Instead of מִלְאֲכָר (*mil'akhar*, “they filled you”) the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads מִלְאֲכָרִים (“your messengers”). The translation assumes an emendation of מִלְאֲכָר to מִלְאֲכָרִים (*mal'akhar*, “his messengers”), taking the *vav* (ו) בְּמַיִם (*uv'mayim*) as improperly placed; instead it should be the final letter of the preceding word.

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “seed of Shihor.” “Shihor” probably refers to the east branch of the Nile. See Jer 2:18 and BDB 1009 s.v. שִׁי־הַדָּוֶה.

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “the harvest of the Nile.”

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb “[is] her revenue.”

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “merchandise”; KJV, ASV “a mart of nations”; NLT “the merchandise mart of the world.”

<sup>14</sup> tn J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:430-31) sees here a reference to Yam, the Canaanite god of the sea. He interprets the phrase מַגְדֵּן הַיָּם (*ma'oz hayyam*, “fortress of the sea”) as a title of Yam, translating “Mighty One of the Sea.” A more traditional view is that the phrase refers to Sidon.

<sup>15</sup> tn Or “virgins” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB).

sn The sea is personified here as a lamenting childless woman. The foreboding language anticipates the following announcement of Tyre’s demise, viewed here as a child of the

sea, as it were.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “they will be in pain at the report of Tyre.”

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb “Is this to you, boisterous one?” The pronoun “you” is masculine plural, like the imperatives in v. 6, so it is likely addressed to the Egyptians and residents of the coast. “Boisterous one” is a feminine singular form, probably referring to the personified city of Tyre.

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “in the days of antiquity [is] her beginning.”

<sup>19</sup> tn The precise meaning of הַמַּגְדֵּן (*hamma'atirah*) is uncertain. The form is a Hiphil participle from עָטַר (*atar*), a denominative verb derived from עָטַרָה (*atarah*, “crown, wreath”). The participle may mean “one who wears a crown” or “one who distributes crowns.” In either case, Tyre’s prominence in the international political arena is in view.

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “the honored” (so NASB, NRSV); NIV “renowned.”

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “the pride of all the beauty.”

<sup>22</sup> tc This meaning of this verse is unclear. The Hebrew text reads literally, “Cross over your land, like the Nile, daughter of Tarshish, there is no more waistband.” The translation assumes an emendation of מַחְזָק (*mezakh*, “waistband”) to מַחְזָז (*makhoz*, “harbor, marketplace”; see Ps 107:30). The term עָבַר (*avar*, “cross over”) is probably used here of traveling over the water (as in v. 6). The command is addressed to personified Tarshish, who here represents her merchants. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has עֲבָדִי (“work, cultivate”) instead of עָבַר (“cross over”). In this case one might translate “Cultivate your land, like they do the Nile region” (cf. NIV, CEV). The point would be that the people of Tarshish should turn to agriculture because they will no longer be able to get what they need through the marketplace in Tyre.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “his hand he stretched out over the sea.”

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb “the LORD.” For stylistic reasons the pronoun (“he”) has been used in the translation here.

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb “concerning Canaan, to destroy her fortresses.” NIV, NLT translate “Canaan” as “Phoenicia” here.

<sup>26</sup> tn Or “violated, raped,” the point being that Daughter Sidon has lost her virginity in the most brutal manner possible.



but you will find no relief there.”<sup>1</sup>

**23:13** Look at the land of the Chaldeans, these people who have lost their identity!<sup>2</sup>

The Assyrians have made it a home for wild animals.

They erected their siege towers,<sup>3</sup> demolished<sup>4</sup> its fortresses, and turned it into a heap of ruins.<sup>5</sup>

**23:14** Wail, you large ships,<sup>6</sup> for your fortress is destroyed!

**23:15** At that time<sup>7</sup> Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years,<sup>8</sup> the typical life span of a king.<sup>9</sup> At the end of seventy years Tyre will try to attract attention again, like the prostitute in the popular song:<sup>10</sup>

**23:16** “Take the harp, go through the city, forgotten prostitute! Play it well, play lots of songs, so you’ll be noticed!”<sup>11</sup>

**23:17** At the end of seventy years<sup>12</sup> the LORD will revive<sup>13</sup> Tyre. She will start making money again by selling her services to all the earth’s kingdoms.<sup>14</sup> **23:18** Her profits and earnings will be set apart for the LORD. They will not be stored up or accumulated, for her profits will be given to those who live in the LORD’s presence and will be used to purchase large quantities of food and beautiful clothes.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “[to the] Kittim, get up, cross over; even there there will be no rest for you.” On “Kittim” see the note on “Cyrus” at v. 1.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “this people [that] is not.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** For the meaning of this word, see HALOT 118 s.v. בָּרוֹן.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or “laid bare.” For the meaning of this word, see HALOT 889 s.v. נָרַר.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** This verse probably refers to the Assyrian destruction of Babylon.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “ships of Tarshish.” See the note at v. 1.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “in that day” (KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>8</sup> **sn** The number *seventy* is probably used in a stereotypical, nonliteral sense here to indicate a long period of time that satisfies completely the demands of God’s judgment.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “like the days of a king.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “At the end of seventy years it will be for Tyre like the song of the prostitute.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “so you will be remembered.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “visit [with favor]” (cf. KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); NIV “will deal with.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “and she will return to her [prostitute’s] wages and engage in prostitution with all the kingdoms of the earth on the face of the earth.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “for eating to fullness and for beautiful covering[s].”

**sn** The point of this verse, which in its blatant nationalism comes precariously close to comparing the LORD to one who controls or manages a prostitute, is that Tyre will become a subject of Israel and her God. Tyre’s commercial profits will be used to enrich the LORD’s people.

### The Lord Will Judge the Earth

**24:1** Look, the LORD is ready to devastate the earth and leave it in ruins; he will mar its surface and scatter its inhabitants.

**24:2** Everyone will suffer – the priest as well as the people,<sup>16</sup>

the master as well as the servant,<sup>17</sup> the elegant lady as well as the female attendant,<sup>18</sup>

the seller as well as the buyer,<sup>19</sup> the borrower as well as the lender,<sup>20</sup> the creditor as well as the debtor.<sup>21</sup>

**24:3** The earth will be completely devastated and thoroughly ransacked.

For the LORD has decreed this judgment.<sup>22</sup>

**24:4** The earth<sup>23</sup> dries up<sup>24</sup> and withers, the world shrivels up and withers; the prominent people of the earth<sup>25</sup> fade away.

**24:5** The earth is defiled by<sup>26</sup> its inhabitants,<sup>27</sup>

for they have violated laws, disregarded the regulation,<sup>28</sup> and broken the permanent treaty.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “and it will be like the people, like the priest.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “like the servant, like his master.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “like the female servant, like her mistress.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “like the buyer, like the seller.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “like the lender, like the borrower.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “like the creditor, just as the one to whom he lends.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “for the LORD has spoken this word.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Some prefer to read “land” here, but the word pair תֵּבֵל/אֶרֶץ (*ereṣ/tevel*) [see the corresponding term in the parallel line] elsewhere clearly designates the earth/world (see 1 Sam 2:8; 1 Chr 16:30; Job 37:12; Pss 19:4; 24:1; 33:8; 89:11; 90:2; 96:13; 98:9; Prov 8:26, 31; Isa 14:16-17; 34:1; Jer 10:12; 51:15; Lam 4:12). According to L. Stadelmann, תֵּבֵל designates “the habitable part of the world” (*The Hebrew Conception of the World* [AnBib], 130).

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Or “mourns” (BDB 5 s.v. אָבַל). HALOT 6-7 lists the homonyms אָבַל (“mourn”) and אָבַל (“dry up”). They propose the second here on the basis of parallelism.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “the height of the people of the earth.” The translation assumes an emendation of the singular form גֵּרוֹם (*m<sup>g</sup>rom*, “height of”) to the plural construct גֵּרוֹמֵי (*m<sup>g</sup>rome*, “high ones of”; note the plural verb at the beginning of the line), and understands the latter as referring to the prominent people of human society.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb “beneath”; cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV “under”; NAB “because of.”

<sup>27</sup> **sn** Isa 26:21 suggests that the earth’s inhabitants defiled the earth by shedding the blood of their fellow human beings. See also Num 35:33-34, which assumes that bloodshed defiles a land.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Heb “moved past [the?] regulation.”

<sup>29</sup> **tn** Or “everlasting covenant” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “the ancient covenant”; CEV “their agreement that was to last forever.”

**sn** For a lengthy discussion of the identity of this covenant/treaty, see R. Chisholm, “The ‘Everlasting Covenant’ and the ‘City of Chaos’: Intentional Ambiguity and Irony in Isaiah 24,” *CTR* 6 (1993): 237-53. In this context, where judgment comes upon both the pagan nations and God’s covenant community, the phrase “permanent treaty” is intentionally ambiguous. For the nations this treaty is the Noachic mandate of Gen 9:1-7 with its specific stipulations and central regula-

24:6 So a treaty curse<sup>1</sup> devours the earth;  
its inhabitants pay for their guilt.<sup>2</sup>

This is why the inhabitants of the earth  
disappear,<sup>3</sup>  
and are reduced to just a handful of  
people.<sup>4</sup>

24:7 The new wine dries up,  
the vines shrivel up,  
all those who like to celebrate<sup>5</sup> groan.

24:8 The happy sound<sup>6</sup> of the tambourines  
stops,  
the revelry of those who celebrate comes  
to a halt,  
the happy sound of the harp ceases.

24:9 They no longer sing and drink wine;<sup>7</sup>  
the beer tastes bitter to those who drink it.

24:10 The ruined town<sup>8</sup> is shattered;  
all of the houses are shut up tight.<sup>9</sup>

24:11 They howl in the streets because of  
what happened to the wine;<sup>10</sup>  
all joy turns to sorrow;<sup>11</sup>

tion (Gen 9:7). By shedding blood, the warlike nations violated this treaty, which promotes population growth and prohibits murder. For Israel, which was also guilty of bloodshed (see Isa 1:15, 21; 4:4), this “permanent treaty” would refer more specifically to the Mosaic Law and its regulations prohibiting murder (Exod 20:13; Num 35:6-34), which are an extension of the Noahic mandate.

<sup>1</sup> **sn** Ancient Near Eastern treaties often had “curses,” or threatened judgments, attached to them. (See Deut 28 for a biblical example of such curses.) The party or parties taking an oath of allegiance acknowledged that disobedience would activate these curses, which typically threatened loss of agricultural fertility as depicted in the following verses.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The verb אָשַׁם (*asham*, “be guilty”) is here used metonymically to mean “pay, suffer for one’s guilt” (see HALOT 95 s.v. אָשַׁם).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** BDB 359 s.v. חָרַר derives the verb חָרַר (*kharar*) from חָרַר (*kharar*, “burn”), but HALOT 351 s.v. חָרַר understands a *hapax legomenon* חָרַרָה (*kharah*, “to diminish in number,” a homonym of חָרַר) here, relating it to an alleged Arabic cognate meaning “to decrease.” The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has חָרַר, perhaps understanding the root as חָוַר (*khavar*, “grow pale”); see Isa 29:22 and HALOT 299 s.v. חָוַר.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “and mankind is left small [in number].”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “all the joyful in heart,” but the context specifies the context as parties and drinking bouts.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “the joy” (again later in this verse).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “with a song they do not drink wine.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “the city of chaos” (so NAB, NASB, NRSV). Isaiah uses the term חָרוּ (*tohu*) rather frequently of things (like idols) that are empty and worthless (see BDB 1062 s.v.), so the word might characterize the city as rebellious or morally worthless. However, in this context, which focuses on the effects of divine judgment, it probably refers to the ruined or worthless condition in which the city is left (note the use of the word in Isa 34:11). For a discussion of the identity of this city, see R. Chisholm, “The ‘Everlasting Covenant’ and the ‘City of Chaos’: Intentional Ambiguity and Irony in Isaiah 24,” *CTR* 6 (1993): 237-53. In the context of universal judgment depicted in Isa 24, this city represents all the nations and cities of the world which, like Babylon of old and the powers/cities mentioned in chapters 13-23, rebel against God’s authority. Behind the stereotypical language one can detect various specific manifestations of this symbolic and paradigmatic city, including Babylon, Moab, and Jerusalem, all of which are alluded or referred to in chapters 24-27.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “every house is closed up from entering.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “[there is] an outcry over the wine in the streets.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “all joy turns to evening,” the darkness of evening symbolizing distress and sorrow.

celebrations disappear from the earth.<sup>12</sup>

24:12 The city is left in ruins,<sup>13</sup>  
the gate is reduced to rubble.<sup>14</sup>

24:13 This is what will happen through-  
out<sup>15</sup> the earth,  
among the nations.

It will be like when they beat an olive  
tree,  
and just a few olives are left at the end of  
the harvest.<sup>16</sup>

24:14 They<sup>17</sup> lift their voices and shout  
joyfully;  
they praise<sup>18</sup> the majesty of the LORD in  
the west.

24:15 So in the east<sup>19</sup> extol the LORD,  
along the seacoasts extol<sup>20</sup> the fame<sup>21</sup> of  
the LORD God of Israel.

24:16 From the ends of the earth we<sup>22</sup> hear  
songs –  
the Just One is majestic.<sup>23</sup>  
But I<sup>24</sup> say, “I’m wasting away! I’m wast-  
ing away! I’m doomed!

Deceivers deceive, deceivers thoroughly  
deceive!”<sup>25</sup>

24:17 Terror, pit, and snare  
are ready to overtake you inhabitants of  
the earth!<sup>26</sup>

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “the joy of the earth disappears.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “and there is left in the city desolation.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “and [into] rubble the gate is crushed.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “in the midst of” (so KJV, ASV, NASB).

<sup>16</sup> **sn** The judgment will severely reduce the earth’s population. See v. 6.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The remnant of the nations (see v. 13) may be the unspecified subject. If so, then those who have survived the judgment begin to praise God.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “they yell out concerning.”

<sup>19</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “in the lights,” interpreted by some to mean “in the region of light,” referring to the east. Some scholars have suggested the emendation of בְּאֲרִיִּים (*b’arim*) to בְּאֵיִיִּים (*b’eiyey hayyam*, “along the seacoasts”), a phrase that is repeated in the next line. In this case, the two lines form synonymous parallelism. If one retains the MT reading (as above), “in the east” and “along the seacoasts” depict the two ends of the earth to refer to all the earth (as a merism).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** The word “extol” is supplied in the translation; the verb in the first line does double duty in the parallelism.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “name,” which here stands for God’s reputation achieved by his mighty deeds.

<sup>22</sup> **sn** The identity of the subject is unclear. Apparently in vv. 15-16a an unidentified group responds to the praise they hear in the west by exhorting others to participate.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “Beauty belongs to the just one.” These words may summarize the main theme of the songs mentioned in the preceding line.

<sup>24</sup> **sn** The prophet seems to contradict what he hears the group saying. Their words are premature because more destruction is coming.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “and [with] deception deceivers deceive.”

**tn** Verse 16b is a classic example of Hebrew wordplay. In the first line (“I’m wasting away...”) four consecutive words end with *hireq yod* (י); in the second line all forms are derived from the root בָּגַד (*bagad*). The repetition of sound draws attention to the prophet’s lament.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb “[are] upon you, O inhabitant of the earth.” The first line of v. 17 provides another classic example of Hebrew wordplay. The names of the three instruments of judgment פַּחַד, פַּחַת, פַּחַח (*pakhad, fakhat, fakhi*) all begin with the letters פֶּה (*peh-khet*) and the first two end in dental consonants (פֶּה, תֶּת/דֶּלֶת). Once again the repetition of sound draws attention

**24:18** The one who runs away from the sound of the terror will fall into the pit;<sup>1</sup> the one who climbs out of the pit, will be trapped by the snare. For the floodgates of the heavens<sup>2</sup> are opened up<sup>3</sup> and the foundations of the earth shake.

**24:19** The earth is broken in pieces, the earth is ripped to shreds, the earth shakes violently.<sup>4</sup>

**24:20** The earth will stagger around<sup>5</sup> like a drunk; it will sway back and forth like a hut in a windstorm.<sup>6</sup>

Its sin will weigh it down, and it will fall and never get up again.

### The Lord Will Become King

**24:21** At that time<sup>7</sup> the LORD will punish<sup>8</sup> the heavenly forces in the heavens<sup>9</sup> and the earthly kings on the earth.

**24:22** They will be imprisoned in a pit,<sup>10</sup> locked up in a prison, and after staying there for a long time,<sup>11</sup> they will be punished.<sup>12</sup>

**24:23** The full moon will be covered up,<sup>13</sup>

the bright sun<sup>14</sup> will be darkened;<sup>15</sup> for the LORD who commands armies will rule<sup>16</sup> on Mount Zion in Jerusalem<sup>17</sup> in the presence of his assembly, in majestic splendor.<sup>18</sup>

**25:1** O LORD, you are my God!<sup>19</sup> I will extol you in praise, I will extol your fame.<sup>20</sup>

For you have done extraordinary things, and executed plans made long ago exactly as you decreed.<sup>21</sup>

**25:2** Indeed,<sup>22</sup> you have made the city<sup>23</sup> into a heap of rubble, the fortified town into a heap of ruins; the fortress of foreigners<sup>24</sup> is no longer a city, it will never be rebuilt.

**25:3** So a strong nation will extol you; the towns of<sup>25</sup> powerful nations will fear you.

**25:4** For you are a protector for the poor, a protector for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm, a shade from the heat.

Though the breath of tyrants<sup>26</sup> is like a winter rainstorm,<sup>27</sup>

**25:5** like heat<sup>28</sup> in a dry land, you humble the boasting foreigners.<sup>29</sup> Just as the shadow of a cloud causes the heat to subside,<sup>30</sup>

so he causes the song of tyrants to cease.<sup>31</sup>

to the statement and contributes to the theme of the inescapability of judgment. As their similar-sounding names suggest, terror, pit, and snare are allies in destroying the objects of divine wrath.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the height"; KJV "from on high."

<sup>3</sup> **sn** The language reflects the account of the Noahic Flood (see Gen 7:11).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Once more repetition is used to draw attention to a statement. In the Hebrew text each line ends with אֶרֶץ ('erets, "earth"). Each line also uses a Hitpoel verb form from a geminate root preceded by an emphatic infinitive absolute.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "staggering, staggers." The Hebrew text uses the infinitive absolute before the finite verb for emphasis and sound play.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The words "in a windstorm" are supplied in the translation to clarify the metaphor.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (so KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "visit [in judgment]."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the host of the height in the height." The "host of the height/heaven" refers to the heavenly luminaries (stars and planets, see, among others, Deut 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4-5; 2 Chr 33:3, 5) that populate the divine/heavenly assembly in mythological and prescientific Israelite thought (see Job 38:7; Isa 14:13).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "they will be gathered [in] a gathering [as] a prisoner in a cistern." It is tempting to eliminate אֶסְפָּה ('asefah, "a gathering") as dittographic or as a gloss, but sound repetition is one of the main characteristics of the style of this section of the chapter.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and after a multitude of days."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "visited" (so KJV, ASV). This verse can mean to visit for good or for evil. The translation assumes the latter, based on v. 21a. However, BDB 823 s.v. בָּקַרְךָ B.Niph.2 suggests the meaning "visit graciously" here, in which case one might translate "they will be released."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will be ashamed."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or "glow of the sun."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will be ashamed" (so NCV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Or "take his throne," "become king."

<sup>17</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and before his elders [in] splendor."

<sup>19</sup> **sn** The prophet speaks here as one who has observed the coming judgment of the proud.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "name." See the note at 24:15.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "plans from long ago [in] faithfulness, trustworthiness." The feminine noun אֱמוּנָה ('emunah, "faithfulness") and masculine noun אֱמֻנָה ('omeni, "trustworthiness"), both of which are derived from the root אָמַן ('aman), are juxtaposed to emphasize the basic idea conveyed by the synonyms. Here they describe the absolute reliability of the divine plans.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or "For" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has "you have made from the city." The prefixed *mem* (מִ) עִיר (ir, "city") was probably originally an enclitic *mem* suffixed to the preceding verb. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:456, n. 3.

<sup>24</sup> **tc** Some with support from the LXX emend זָרִים (*zarim*, "foreigners") to זְדִים (*zedim*, "the insolent").

<sup>25</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has a singular form, but it should be emended to a plural or eliminated altogether. The noun may have been accidentally copied from the preceding verse.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "the violent"; NIV, NRSV "the ruthless."

<sup>27</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, "like a rainstorm of a wall," which might be interpreted to mean, "like a rainstorm battering against a wall." The translation assumes an emendation of קִיר (*qir*, "wall") to קָר (*qor*, "cold, winter"; cf. Gen 8:22). See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:457, n. 6, for discussion.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Or "drought" (TEV).

<sup>29</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the tumult of foreigners."

<sup>30</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[like] heat in the shadow of a cloud."

<sup>31</sup> **tn** The translation assumes that the verb יַעֲנֶה (*ya'aneh*) is a Hiphil imperfect from עָנָה ('anah, "be afflicted, humiliated").

25:6 The LORD who commands armies will hold a banquet for all the nations on this mountain.<sup>1</sup>  
 At this banquet there will be plenty of meat and aged wine – tender meat and choicest wine.<sup>2</sup>  
 25:7 On this mountain he will swallow up the shroud that is over all the peoples,<sup>3</sup> the woven covering that is over all the nations;<sup>4</sup>  
 25:8 he will swallow up death permanently.<sup>5</sup>  
 The sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from every face, and remove his people’s disgrace from all the earth.  
 Indeed, the LORD has announced it!<sup>6</sup>  
 25:9 At that time they will say,<sup>7</sup> “Look, here<sup>8</sup> is our God!  
 We waited for him and he delivered us. Here<sup>9</sup> is the LORD! We waited for him. Let’s rejoice and celebrate his deliverance!”<sup>10</sup>  
 25:10 For the LORD’s power will make this mountain secure.<sup>11</sup>  
 Moab will be trampled down where it stands,<sup>11</sup> as a heap of straw is trampled down in<sup>12</sup> a manure pile.  
 25:11 Moab<sup>13</sup> will spread out its hands in the middle of it,<sup>14</sup>

just as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim;  
 the LORD<sup>15</sup> will bring down Moab’s<sup>16</sup> pride as it spreads its hands.<sup>17</sup>  
 25:12 The fortified city (along with the very tops of your<sup>18</sup> walls)<sup>19</sup> he will knock down,  
 he will bring it down, he will throw it down to the dusty ground.<sup>20</sup>

*Judah Will Celebrate*

26:1 At that time<sup>21</sup> this song will be sung in the land of Judah:  
 “We have a strong city!  
 The LORD’s<sup>22</sup> deliverance, like walls and a rampart, makes it secure.<sup>23</sup>  
 26:2 Open the gates so a righteous nation can enter – one that remains trustworthy.  
 26:3 You keep completely safe the people who maintain their faith, for they trust in you.<sup>24</sup>  
 26:4 Trust in the LORD from this time forward,<sup>25</sup> even in Yah, the LORD, an enduring protector!<sup>26</sup>

In this context with “song” as object it means to “quiet” (see HALOT 853-54 s.v. הָנִיחַ). Some prefer to emend the form to the second person singular, so that it will agree with the second person verb earlier in the verse. BDB 776 s.v. III הָנִיחַ Qal.1 understands the form as Qal, with “song” as subject, in which case one might translate “the song of tyrants will be silent.” An emendation of the form to a Niphal הִנִּיחַ, ye’aneh would yield the same translation.

<sup>1</sup> sn That is, Mount Zion (see 24:23); cf. TEV; NLT “In Jerusalem.”

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “And the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] will make for all the nations on this mountain a banquet of meats, a banquet of wine dregs, meats filled with marrow, dregs that are filtered.”

<sup>3</sup> tn The Hebrew text reads, “the face of the shroud, the shroud over all the nations.” Some emend the second הָלוּט (hallot) to a passive participle הָלוּט (hallut, “that is wrapped”).

<sup>4</sup> sn The point of the imagery is unclear. Perhaps the shroud/covering referred to was associated with death in some way (see v. 8).

<sup>5</sup> sn The image of the LORD “swallowing” death would be especially powerful, for death was viewed in Canaanite mythology and culture as a hungry enemy that swallows its victims. See the note at 5:14.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “has spoken” (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “and one will say in that day.”

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb “this [one].”

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “this [one].”

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “for the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain”; TEV “will protect Mount Zion”; NCV “will protect (rest on NLT) Jerusalem.”

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “under him,” i.e., “in his place.”

<sup>12</sup> tc The marginal reading (Qere) is בְּנוֹי (b<sup>h</sup>mo, “in”). The consonantal text (Kethib) has בְּמֵי (b<sup>h</sup>mi, “in the water of”).

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (Moab) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>14</sup> tn The antecedent of the third masculine singular pronominal suffix is probably the masculine noun מַטְבֵּן (matben, “heap of straw”) in v. 10 rather than the feminine noun מְטָבֵת (metbat, “manure pile”), also in v. 10.

(madmenah, “manure pile”), also in v. 10.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “he”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb “his”; the referent (Moab) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>17</sup> tn The Hebrew text has, “he will bring down his pride along with the [?] of his hands.” The meaning of אֲרִבוֹת (arbot), which occurs only here in the OT, is unknown. Some (see BDB 70 s.v. אֲרִיבוֹת) translate “artifice, cleverness,” relating the form to the verbal root אָרַב (arav, “to lie in wait, ambush”), but this requires some convoluted semantic reasoning. HALOT 83 s.v. אָרַב suggests the meaning “[nimble] movements.” The translation above, which attempts to relate the form to the preceding context, is purely speculative.

<sup>18</sup> sn Moab is addressed.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb “a fortification, the high point of your walls.”

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “he will bring [it] down, he will make [it] touch the ground, even to the dust.”

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “In that day” (so KJV).

<sup>22</sup> tn Heb “his”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “deliverance he makes walls and a rampart.”

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb “[one of] firm purpose you will keep [in] peace, peace, for in you he possesses trust.” The Hebrew term יָצַר (yetsar) refers to what one devises in the mind; and שָׁמִיךְ (samukh) probably functions here like an attributive adjective and carries the nuance “firm.” So the phrase literally means, “a firm purpose,” but as the object of the verb “keep, guard,” it must stand by metonymy for the one(s) who possess a firm purpose. In this context the “righteous nation” (v. 2) is probably in view and the “firm purpose” refers to their unwavering faith in God’s vindication (see 25:9). In this context שָׁלוֹם (shalom, “peace”), which is repeated for emphasis, likely refers to national security, not emotional or psychological composure (see vv. 1-2). The passive participle בְּטוּחַ (batuakh) expresses a state that results from the subject’s action.

<sup>25</sup> tn Or “forevermore.” For other uses of the phrase עָדֵי עָד (ade’ad) see Isa 65:18 and Pss 83:17; 92:7.

<sup>26</sup> tc The Hebrew text has “for in Yah, the LORD, an everlasting rock.” Some have suggested that the phrase בֵּיתָהּ (beyah, “in Yah”) is the result of dittography. A scribe seeing יְהוָה (ki yeshvah) in his original text would somehow have confused the letters and accidentally inserted בֵּיתָהּ between the words (bet and kaf [ב and כ] can be confused in later script phases). A number of English versions retain both divine names for em-



26:5 Indeed,<sup>1</sup> the LORD knocks down those who live in a high place, he brings down an elevated town; he brings it down to the ground,<sup>2</sup> he throws it down to the dust.  
26:6 It is trampled underfoot by the feet of the oppressed, by the soles of the poor.”

*God's People Anticipate Vindication*

26:7<sup>3</sup> The way of the righteous is level, the path of the righteous that you make is straight.<sup>4</sup>  
26:8 Yes, as your judgments unfold,<sup>5</sup> O LORD, we wait for you. We desire your fame and reputation to grow.<sup>6</sup>  
26:9 I<sup>7</sup> look for<sup>8</sup> you during the night, my spirit within me seeks you at dawn, for when your judgments come upon the earth, those who live in the world learn about justice.<sup>9</sup>

26:10 If the wicked are shown mercy, they do not learn about justice.<sup>10</sup> Even in a land where right is rewarded, they act unjustly,<sup>11</sup> they do not see the LORD's majesty revealed.  
26:11 O LORD, you are ready to act,<sup>12</sup> but they don't even notice. They will see and be put to shame by your angry judgment against humankind,<sup>13</sup> yes, fire will consume your enemies.<sup>14</sup>  
26:12 O LORD, you make us secure,<sup>15</sup> for even all we have accomplished, you have done for us.<sup>16</sup>  
26:13 O LORD, our God, masters other than you have ruled us, but we praise your name alone.  
26:14 The dead do not come back to life, the spirits of the dead do not rise.<sup>17</sup> That is because<sup>18</sup> you came in judgment<sup>19</sup> and destroyed them, you wiped out all memory of them.  
26:15 You have made the nation larger,<sup>20</sup> O LORD, you have made the nation larger and revealed your splendor,<sup>21</sup> you have extended all the borders of the land.

phasis (ESV, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, NLT). One of the Qumran texts (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) confirms the MT reading as well.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The translation assumes that *yashpileannah* (yashpileannah) goes with the preceding words “an elevated town,” and that *yashpilalah* (yashpilalah) belongs with the following words, “to the ground.” See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:469, n. 7.

<sup>3</sup> **sn** The literary structure of chap. 26 is not entirely clear. The chapter begins with an eschatological song of praise and ends with a lament and prophetic response (vv. 16-21). It is not certain where the song of praise ends or how vv. 7-15 fit into the structure. Verses 10-11a seem to lament the presence of evil and v. 11b anticipates the arrival of judgment, so it is possible that vv. 7-15 are a prelude to the lament and announcement that conclude the chapter.

<sup>4</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, “upright, the path of the righteous you make level.” There are three possible ways to translate this line. Some take *yashar* (yashar) as a divine title: “O Upright One” (cf. NASB, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, NLT). Others regard *yashar* as the result of dittography (*yashar* בְּיָשָׁר, *mesharim yashar ma'gal*) and do not include it in the translation. Another possibility is to keep *yashar* and render the line as “the path of the righteous that you prepare is straight.”

**sn** The metaphor of a level/smooth road/path may refer to their morally upright manner of life (see v. 8a), but verse 7b, which attributes the smooth path to the LORD, suggests that the LORD's vindication and blessing may be the reality behind the metaphor here.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has, “yes, the way of your judgments.” The translation assumes that “way” is related to the verb “we wait” as an adverbial accusative (“in the way of your judgments we wait”). *mesharim* (mesharim) בְּיָשָׁרְכֶם (“your judgments”) could refer to the LORD's commandments, in which case one might translate, “as we obey your commands.” However, in verse 9 the same form refers to divine acts of judgment on evildoers.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your name and your remembrance [is] the desire of [our?] being.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “with my soul I.” This is a figure for the speaker himself (“I”).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or “long for, desire.” The speaker acknowledges that he is eager to see God come in judgment (see v. 8, 9b).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The translation understands *tsedeq* (tsedeq) in the sense of “justice,” but it is possible that it carries the nuance “righteousness,” in which case one might translate, “those who live in the world learn to live in a righteous manner” (cf. NCV).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** As in verse 9b, the translation understands *tsedeq* (tsedeq) in the sense of “justice,” but it is possible that it carries the nuance “righteousness,” in which case one might translate, “they do not learn to live in a righteous manner.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in a land of uprightness they act unjustly”; NRSV “they deal perversely.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “O LORD, your hand is lifted up.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “They will see and be ashamed of zeal of people.” Some take the prefixed verbs as jussives and translate the statement as a prayer, “Let them see and be put to shame.” The meaning of the phrase *qin'at-am* (qin'at-am, “zeal of people”) is unclear. The translation assumes that this refers to God's angry judgment upon people. Another option is to understand the phrase as referring to God's zealous, protective love of his covenant people. In this case one might translate, “by your zealous devotion to your people.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “yes, fire, your enemies, will consume them.” Many understand the prefixed verb form to be jussive and translate, “let [fire] consume” (cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV). The *mem* suffixed to the verb may be enclitic; if a pronominal suffix, it refers back to “your enemies.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “O LORD, you establish peace for us.”

<sup>16</sup> **tc** Some suggest emending *gam kol* (gam kol, “even all”) to *kigmul* (kigmul, “according to what the deed[s] of”) One might then translate “for according to what our deeds deserve, you have acted on our behalf.” Nevertheless, accepting the MT as it stands, the prophet affirms that Yahweh deserved all the credit for anything Israel had accomplished.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** In light of what is said in verse 14b, the “dead” here may be the “masters” mentioned in verse 13.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term *lakhen* (lakhen) normally indicates a cause-effect relationship between what precedes and follows and is translated, “therefore.” Here, however, it infers the cause from the effect and brings out what is implicit in the previous statement. See BDB 487 s.v.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “visited [for harm]” (cf. KJV, ASV); NAB, NRSV “you have punished.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you have added to the nation.” The last line of the verse suggests that geographical expansion is in view. “The nation” is Judah.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or “brought honor to yourself.”

26:16 O LORD, in distress they looked for you;  
they uttered incantations because of your discipline.<sup>1</sup>

26:17 As when a pregnant woman gets ready to deliver  
and strains and cries out because of her labor pains,

so were we because of you, O LORD.

26:18 We were pregnant, we strained,  
we gave birth, as it were, to wind.<sup>2</sup>

We cannot produce deliverance on the earth;

people to populate the world are not born.<sup>3</sup>

26:19<sup>4</sup> Your dead will come back to life;  
your corpses will rise up.

Wake up and shout joyfully, you who live  
in the ground!<sup>5</sup>

For you will grow like plants drenched  
with the morning dew,<sup>6</sup>

and the earth will bring forth its dead  
spirits.<sup>7</sup>

26:20 Go, my people! Enter your inner  
rooms!

Close your doors behind you!

Hide for a little while,  
until his angry judgment is over!<sup>8</sup>

26:21 For look, the LORD is coming out of  
the place where he lives,<sup>9</sup>  
to punish the sin of those who live on the  
earth.

The earth will display the blood shed on  
it;

it will no longer cover up its slain.<sup>10</sup>

27:1 At that time<sup>11</sup> the LORD will punish  
with his destructive,<sup>12</sup> great, and power-  
ful sword

Leviathan the fast-moving<sup>13</sup> serpent,  
Leviathan the squirming serpent;  
he will kill the sea monster.<sup>14</sup>

27:2 When that time comes,<sup>15</sup>  
sing about a delightful vineyard!<sup>16</sup>

27:3 I, the LORD, protect it;<sup>17</sup>  
I water it regularly.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The meaning of this verse is unclear. It appears to read literally, "O LORD, in distress they visit you, they pour out [?] an incantation, your discipline to them." פָּקַד (paqad) may here carry the sense of "seek with interest" (cf. Ezek 23:21 and BDB 823 s.v.) or "seek in vain" (cf. Isa 34:16), but it is peculiar for the LORD to be the object of this verb. צָקַן (tsaqun) may be a Qal perfect third plural form from צָקַ (tsuq, "pour out, melt"), though the verb is not used of pouring out words in its two other occurrences. Because of the appearance of צָר (tsar, "distress") in the preceding line, it is tempting to emend the form to a noun and derive it from צָרַק ("be in distress") The term לַחֵשׁ (lakhash) elsewhere refers to an incantation (Isa 3:3; Jer 8:17; Eccl 10:11) or amulet (Isa 3:20). Perhaps here it refers to ritualistic prayers or to magical incantations used to ward off evil.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** On the use of כְּמוֹ (kemo, "like, as") here, see BDB 455 s.v. Israel's distress and suffering, likened here to the pains of childbirth, seemed to be for no purpose. A woman in labor endures pain with the hope that a child will be born; in Israel's case no such positive outcome was apparent. The nation was like a woman who strains to bring forth a child, but can't push the baby through to daylight. All her effort produces nothing.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "and the inhabitants of the world do not fall." The term נָפַל (nafal) apparently means here, "be born," though the Qal form of the verb is not used with this nuance anywhere else in the OT. (The Hiphil appears to be used in the sense of "give birth" in v. 19, however.) The implication of verse 18b seems to be that Israel hoped its suffering would somehow end in deliverance and an increase in population. The phrase "inhabitants of the world" seems to refer to the human race in general, but the next verse, which focuses on Israel's dead, suggests the referent may be more limited.

<sup>4</sup> **sn** At this point the LORD (or prophet) gives the people an encouraging oracle.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "dust" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "for the dew of lights [is] your dew." The pronominal suffix on "dew" is masculine singular, like the suffixes on "your dead" and "your corpses" in the first half of the verse. The statement, then, is addressed to collective Israel, the speaker in verse 18. The plural form אֲרוֹת (orot) is probably a plural of respect or magnitude, meaning "bright light" (i.e., morning's light). Dew is a symbol of fertility and life. Here Israel's "dew," as it were, will soak the dust of the ground and cause the corpses of the dead to spring up to new life, like plants sprouting up from well-watered soil.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** It is not certain whether the resurrection envisioned here is intended to be literal or figurative. A comparison with 25:8 and Dan 12:2 suggests a literal interpretation, but Ezek 37:1-14 uses resurrection as a metaphor for deliverance from

exile and the restoration of the nation (see Isa 27:12-13).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "until anger passes by."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "out of his place" (so KJV, ASV).

<sup>10</sup> **sn** This implies that rampant bloodshed is one of the reasons for divine judgment. See the note at 24:5.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "in that day" (so KJV).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "hard, severe"; cf. NAB, NRSV "cruel"; KJV "sore"; NLT "terrible."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "fleeing" (so NAB, NASB, NRSV). Some translate "slippery" or "slithering."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The description of Leviathan should be compared with the following excerpts from Ugaritic mythological texts: (1) "Was not the dragon (Ugaritic *tnn*, cognate with Hebrew תַּנִּין [*tannin*, translated "sea monster" here]) vanquished and captured? I did destroy the wriggling (Ugaritic *qltn*, cognate to Hebrew עֲקָלְתָן [*aqallaton*, translated "squirming" here]) serpent, the tyrant with seven heads (cf. Ps 74:14)." (See CTA 3 iii 38-39.) (2) "for all that you smote Leviathan the slippery (Ugaritic *brh*, cognate to Hebrew בְּרִיחַ [*bariakh*, translated "fast-moving" here]) serpent, [and] made an end of the wriggling serpent, the tyrant with seven heads" (See CTA 5 i 1-3.)

**sn** In the Ugaritic mythological texts Leviathan is a sea creature that symbolizes the destructive water of the sea and in turn the forces of chaos that threaten the established order. Isaiah here applies imagery from Canaanite mythology to Yahweh's eschatological victory over his enemies. Elsewhere in the OT, the battle with the sea motif is applied to Yahweh's victories over the forces of chaos at creation and in history (cf. Pss 74:13-14; 77:16-20; 89:9-10; Isa 51:9-10). Yahweh's subjugation of the chaos waters is related to His kingship (cf. Pss 29:3, 10; 93:3-4). Apocalyptic literature employs the imagery as well. The beasts of Dan 7 emerge from the sea, while Rev 13 speaks of a seven-headed beast coming from the sea.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "in that day" (so KJV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "vineyard of delight," or "vineyard of beauty." Many medieval mss read כְּרֵם חֵמֶר (*kerem khemer*, "vineyard of wine"), i.e., "a productive vineyard."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "her." Apparently "vineyard" is the antecedent, though normally this noun is understood as masculine (see Lev 25:3, however).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "constantly." Heb "by moments."

I guard it night and day,  
so no one can harm it.<sup>1</sup>

27:4 I am not angry.

I wish I could confront some thorns and  
briers!

Then I would march against them<sup>2</sup> for  
battle;

I would set them<sup>3</sup> all on fire,

27:5 unless they became my subjects<sup>4</sup>  
and made peace with me;

let them make peace with me.<sup>5</sup>

27:6 The time is coming when Jacob will  
take root;<sup>6</sup>

Israel will blossom and grow branches.

The produce<sup>7</sup> will fill the surface of the  
world.<sup>8</sup>

27:7 Has the LORD struck down Israel like  
he did their oppressors?<sup>9</sup>

Has Israel been killed like their en-  
emies?<sup>10</sup>

27:8 When you summon her for divorce,  
you prosecute her;<sup>11</sup>

he drives her away<sup>12</sup> with his strong wind  
in the day of the east wind.<sup>13</sup>

27:9 So in this way Jacob's sin will be  
forgiven,<sup>14</sup>

and this is how they will show they are  
finished sinning;<sup>15</sup>

They will make all the stones of the al-  
tars<sup>16</sup>

like crushed limestone,

and the Asherah poles and the incense  
altars will no longer stand.<sup>17</sup>

27:10 For the fortified city<sup>18</sup> is left alone;  
it is a deserted settlement  
and abandoned like the desert.

Calves<sup>19</sup> graze there;

they lie down there

and eat its branches bare.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "lest [someone] visit [harm] upon it, night and day I guard it."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "it." The feminine singular suffix apparently refers back to the expression "thorns and briers," understood in a collective sense. For other examples of a cohortative expressing resolve after a hypothetical statement introduced by הִי with *mi* (with *natan*), see Judg 9:29; Jer 9:1-2; Ps 55:6.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "it." The feminine singular suffix apparently refers back to the expression "thorns and briers," understood in a collective sense.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "or let him take hold of my refuge." The subject of the third masculine singular verb form is uncertain. Apparently the symbolic "thorns and briers" are in view, though in v. 4b a feminine singular pronoun was used to refer to them.

<sup>5</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has, "he makes peace with me, peace he makes with me." Some contend that two alternative readings are preserved here and one should be deleted. The first has the object שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*, "peace") preceding the verb עָשָׂה (*asah*, "make"); the second reverses the order. Another option is to retain both statements, although repetitive, to emphasize the need to make peace with Yahweh.

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, "the coming ones, let Jacob take root." הַבָּאִים (*habba'im*, "the coming ones") should probably be emended to בָּיָמֵי הַבָּאִים (*yamim va'im*, "days [are] coming") or בְּיָמֵי הַבָּאִים (*biyamim habba'im*, "in the coming days").

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "fruit" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>8</sup> **sn** This apparently refers to a future population explosion. See 26:18.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, "Like the striking down of the one striking him down does he strike him down?" The meaning of the text is unclear, but this may be a rhetorical question, suggesting that Israel has not experienced divine judgment to the same degree as her oppressors. In this case "the one striking down" refers to Israel's oppressors, while the pronoun "him" refers to Israel. The subject of the final verb ("does he strike down") would then be God, while the pronoun "him" would again refer to Israel.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, "Or like the killing of his killed ones is he killed?" If one accepts the interpretation of the parallel line outlined in the previous note, then this line too would contain a rhetorical question suggesting that Israel has not experienced destruction to the same degree as its enemies. In this case "his killed ones" refers to the one who struck Israel down, and Israel would be the subject of the final verb ("is he killed").

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, "in [?], in sending her away, you oppose her." The meaning of this line is uncertain. The form בְּשִׁאֲחָהּ (*b<sup>s</sup>sa'ah*) is taken as an infinitive from שִׁאֲחָה (*sa'ss<sup>e</sup>ah*) with a prepositional prefix and a third femi-

nine singular suffix. (The MT does not have a *mappiq* in the final *he* [ה], however). According to HALOT 738 s.v. שִׁאֲחָה the verb is a Palpel form from an otherwise unattested root cognate with an Arabic verb meaning "to gather beasts with a call." Perhaps it means "to call, summon" here, but this is a very tentative proposal. בְּשִׁאֲחָה (*b<sup>s</sup>shalkhah*, "in sending her away") appears to be a Piel infinitive with a prepositional prefix and a third feminine singular suffix. Since the Piel of שָׁלַח (*shalakh*) can sometimes mean "divorce" (HALOT 1514-15 s.v.) and the following verb רִיב (*riv*, "oppose") can be used in legal contexts, it is possible that divorce proceedings are alluded to here. This may explain why Israel is referred to as feminine in this verse, in contrast to the masculine forms used in vv. 6-7 and 9.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has no object expressed, but one can understand a third feminine singular pronominal object and place a *mappiq* in the final *he* (ה) of the form to indicate the suffix.

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The "east wind" here symbolizes violent divine judgment.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or "be atoned for" (NIV); cf. NRSV "be expiated."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "and this [is] all the fruit of removing his sin." The meaning of the statement is not entirely clear, though "removing his sin" certainly parallels "Jacob's sin will be removed" in the preceding line. If original, "all the fruit" may refer to the result of the decision to remove sin, but the phrase may be a corruption of הַכַּפָּר (*lekhp<sup>r</sup>*, "to atone for"), which in turn might be a gloss on הָסִיר (*hasir*, "removing").

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "when he makes the stones of an altar." The singular "altar" is collective here; pagan altars are in view, as the last line of the verse indicates. See also 17:8.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** As interpreted and translated above, this verse says that Israel must totally repudiate its pagan religious practices in order to experience God's forgiveness and restoration. Another option is to understand "in this way" and "this" in v. 9a as referring back to the judgment described in v. 8. In this case כָּפַר (*kafar*, "atone for") is used in a sarcastic sense; Jacob's sin is "atoned for" and removed through severe judgment. Following this line of interpretation, one might paraphrase the verse as follows: "So in this way (through judgment) Jacob's sin will be 'atoned for,' and this is the way his sin will be removed, when he (i.e., God) makes all the altar stones like crushed limestone...." This interpretation is more consistent with the tone of judgment in vv. 8 and 10-11.

<sup>18</sup> **sn** The identity of this city is uncertain. The context suggests that an Israelite city, perhaps Samaria or Jerusalem, is in view. For discussions of interpretive options see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:496-97, and Paul L. Redditt, "Once Again, the City in Isaiah 24-27," *HAR* 10 (1986), 332.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The singular form in the text is probably collective.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "and destroy her branches." The city is the antecedent of the third feminine singular pronominal suffix. Apparently the city is here compared to a tree. See also v. 11.

27:11 When its branches get brittle,<sup>1</sup> they break;  
women come and use them for kindling.<sup>2</sup>  
For these people lack understanding,<sup>3</sup>  
therefore the one who made them has no  
compassion on them;  
the one who formed them has no mercy  
on them.

27:12 At that time<sup>4</sup> the LORD will shake the  
tree,<sup>5</sup> from the Euphrates River<sup>6</sup> to the Stream of  
Egypt. Then you will be gathered up one by one,  
O Israelites.<sup>7</sup> 27:13 At that time<sup>8</sup> a large<sup>9</sup> trumpet  
will be blown, and the ones lost<sup>10</sup> in the land of  
Assyria will come, as well as the refugees in<sup>11</sup> the  
land of Egypt. They will worship the LORD on the  
holy mountain in Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup>

*The Lord Will Judge Samaria*

28:1 The splendid crown of Ephraim's  
drunkards is doomed,<sup>13</sup>  
the withering flower, its beautiful splen-  
dor,<sup>14</sup>  
situated<sup>15</sup> at the head of a rich valley,  
the crown of those overcome with wine.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb "are dry" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb "women come [and] light it." The city is likened to a dead tree with dried up branches that is only good for fire-wood.

<sup>3</sup> *tn* Heb "for not a people of understanding [is] he."

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb "and it will be in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>5</sup> *tn* Heb "the LORD will beat out." The verb is used of beating seeds or grain to separate the husk from the kernel (see Judg 6:11; Ruth 2:17; Isa 28:27), and of beating the olives off the olive tree (Deut 24:20). The latter metaphor may be in view here, where a tree metaphor has been employed in the preceding verses. See also 17:6.

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Heb "the river," a frequent designation in the OT for the Euphrates. For clarity most modern English versions substitute the name "Euphrates" for "the river" here.

<sup>7</sup> *sn* The Israelites will be freed from exile (likened to beating the olives off the tree) and then gathered (likened to collecting the olives).

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb "and it will be in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

<sup>9</sup> *tn* Traditionally, "great" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NLT); CEV "loud."

<sup>10</sup> *tn* Or "the ones perishing."

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Or "the ones driven into."

<sup>12</sup> *map* For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>13</sup> *tn* Heb "Woe [to] the crown [or "wreath"] of the splendor [or "pride"] of the drunkards of Ephraim." The "crown" is Samaria, the capital city of the northern kingdom (Ephraim). Priests and prophets are included among these drunkards in v. 7.

<sup>14</sup> *tn* Heb "the beauty of his splendor." In the translation the masculine pronoun ("his") has been replaced by "its" because the referent (the "crown") is the city of Samaria.

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb "which [is]."

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb "ones overcome with wine." The words "the crown of" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The syntactical relationship of the final phrase to what precedes is uncertain. הָלוּמֵי הָעֵרָאִיִּם (*halume e'rayim*, "ones overcome with wine") seems to correspond to שְׂכָרֵי אֶפְרַיִם (*shikkore e'rayim*, "drunkards of Ephraim") in line 1. The translation assumes that the phrase "the splendid crown" is to be understood in the final line as well.

28:2 Look, the sovereign master<sup>17</sup> sends a strong, powerful one.<sup>18</sup>  
With the force of a hailstorm or a destruc-  
tive windstorm,<sup>19</sup>  
with the might of a driving, torrential  
rainstorm,<sup>20</sup>  
he will knock that crown<sup>21</sup> to the ground  
with his hand.<sup>22</sup>

28:3 The splendid crown of Ephraim's  
drunkards  
will be trampled underfoot.

28:4 The withering flower, its beautiful  
splendor,  
situated at the head of a rich valley,  
will be like an early fig before harvest –  
as soon as someone notices it,  
he grabs it and swallows it.<sup>23</sup>

28:5 At that time<sup>24</sup> the LORD who com-  
mands armies will become a beautiful  
crown  
and a splendid diadem for the remnant of  
his people.

28:6 He will give discernment to the one  
who makes judicial decisions,  
and strength to those who defend the city  
from attackers.<sup>25</sup>

28:7 Even these men<sup>26</sup> stagger because of  
wine,

they stumble around because of beer –  
priests and prophets stagger because of  
beer,

they are confused<sup>27</sup> because of wine,  
they stumble around because of beer;  
they stagger while seeing prophetic vi-  
sions,<sup>28</sup>

they totter while making legal decisions.<sup>29</sup>

28:8 Indeed, all the tables are covered  
with vomit;

no place is untouched.<sup>30</sup>

28:9 Who is the LORD<sup>31</sup> trying to teach?

<sup>17</sup> *tn* The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in vv. 16, 22 is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonay*).

<sup>18</sup> *tn* Heb "Look, a strong and powerful [one] belongs to the LORD."

<sup>19</sup> *tn* Heb "like a rainstorm of hail, a wind of destruction."

<sup>20</sup> *tn* Heb "like a rainstorm of mighty, overflowing waters."

<sup>21</sup> *tn* The words "that crown" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The object of the verb is unexpressed in the Hebrew text.

<sup>22</sup> *tn* Or "by [his] power."

<sup>23</sup> *tn* Heb "which the one seeing sees, while still it is in his hand he swallows it."

<sup>24</sup> *tn* Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>25</sup> *tn* Heb "and [he will become] a spirit of justice for the one who sits [i.e., presides] over judgment, // and strength [for] the ones who turn back battle at the city gate." The LORD will provide internal stability and national security.

<sup>26</sup> *tn* Heb "these." The demonstrative pronoun anticipates "priests and prophets" two lines later.

<sup>27</sup> *tn* According to HALOT 135 s.v. III בָּלַע, the verb form is derived from בָּלַע (*bala*, "confuse"), not the more common בָּלַע (*balac*, "swallow"). See earlier notes at 3:12 and 9:16.

<sup>28</sup> *tn* Heb "in the seeing."

<sup>29</sup> *tn* Heb "[in] giving a decision."

<sup>30</sup> *tn* Heb "vomit, without a place." For the meaning of the phrase בְּלֵי מַאֲוָה (*b'li ma'om*, "without a place"), see HALOT 133 s.v. בָּלַע.

<sup>31</sup> *tn* Heb "he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in



To whom is he explaining a message?<sup>4</sup>  
Those just weaned from milk!  
Those just taken from their mother's  
breast!<sup>2</sup>

**28:10** Indeed, they will hear meaningless  
gibberish,  
senseless babbling,  
a syllable here, a syllable there.<sup>3</sup>

**28:11** For with mocking lips and a foreign  
tongue  
he will speak to these people.<sup>4</sup>

**28:12** In the past he said to them,<sup>5</sup>  
"This is where security can be found.  
Provide security for the one who is ex-  
hausted!

This is where rest can be found."<sup>6</sup>  
But they refused to listen.

**28:13** So the LORD's word to them will  
sound like  
meaningless gibberish,  
senseless babbling,  
a syllable here, a syllable there.<sup>7</sup>

As a result, they will fall on their back-  
sides when they try to walk,<sup>8</sup>

and be injured, ensnared, and captured.<sup>9</sup>

### *The Lord Will Judge Jerusalem*

**28:14** Therefore, listen to the LORD's word,  
you who mock,  
you rulers of these people  
who reside in Jerusalem!<sup>10</sup>

**28:15** For you say,  
"We have made a treaty with death,  
with Sheol!<sup>11</sup> we have made an agree-  
ment.<sup>12</sup>

When the overwhelming judgment  
sweeps by<sup>13</sup>  
it will not reach us.

For we have made a lie our refuge,  
we have hidden ourselves in a deceitful  
word."<sup>14</sup>

**28:16** Therefore, this is what the sovereign  
master, the LORD, says:

"Look, I am laying<sup>15</sup> a stone in Zion,  
an approved<sup>16</sup> stone,  
set in place as a precious cornerstone for  
the foundation.<sup>17</sup>

The one who maintains his faith will not  
panic.<sup>18</sup>

the translation for clarity.

**1 tn** Heb "Who is he teaching knowledge? For whom is he explaining a message?" The translation assumes that the LORD is the subject of the verbs "teaching" and "explaining," and that the prophet is asking the questions. See v. 12. According to some vv. 9-10 record the people's sarcastic response to the LORD's message through Isaiah.

**2 tn** Heb "from the breasts." The words "their mother's" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The translation assumes that this is the prophet's answer to the questions asked in the first half of the verse. The LORD is trying to instruct people who are "infants" morally and ethically.

**3 tn** The meaning of this verse has been debated. The text has literally "indeed [or "for"] a little there, a little there" (כי צו לטב לטב, *ki tsav latsav, tsav latsav, qav laqav, qav laqav*). The present translation assumes that the repetitive syllables are gibberish that resembles baby talk (cf v. 9b) and mimics what the people will hear when foreign invaders conquer the land (v. 11). In this case זָבִיר (*z'er*, "a little") refers to the short syllabic structure of the babbling (cf. CEV). Some take צו (*tsav*) as a derivative of צִוָּה (*tsavah*, "command") and translate the first part of the statement as "command after command, command after command." Proponents of this position (followed by many English versions) also take קָב (*qav*) as a noun meaning "measuring line" (see v. 17), understood here in the abstract sense of "standard" or "rule."

**4 sn** This verse alludes to the coming Assyrian invasion, when the people will hear a foreign language that sounds like gibberish to them. The LORD is the subject of the verb "will speak," as v. 12 makes clear. He once spoke in meaningful terms, but in the coming judgment he will speak to them, as it were, through the mouth of foreign oppressors. The apparent gibberish they hear will be an outward reminder that God has decreed their defeat.

**5 tn** Heb "who said to them."

**6 sn** This message encapsulates the LORD's invitation to his people to find security in his protection and blessing.

**7 tn** Heb "And the word of the LORD will be to them, 'tsahv latsahv,' etc." See the note at v. 10. In this case the "LORD's word" is not the foreigner's strange sounding words (as in v. 10), but the LORD's repeated appeals to them (like the one quoted in v. 12). As time goes on, the LORD's appeals through the prophets will have no impact on the people; they will regard prophetic preaching as gibberish.

**8 tn** Heb "as a result they will go and stumble backward." Perhaps an infant falling as it attempts to learn to walk is the background image here (cf. v. 9b). The Hebrew term לִבְנֵי (*l'banan*) could be taken as indicating purpose ("in order

that"), rather than simple result. In this case the people's insensitivity to the message is caused by the LORD as a means of expediting their downfall.

**9 sn** When divine warnings and appeals become gibberish to the spiritually insensitive, they have no guidance and are doomed to destruction.

**10 map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**11 sn** Sheol is the underworld, land of the dead, according to the OT world view.

**12 tn** Elsewhere the noun חֲזוֹן (*khazeh*) refers to a prophet who sees visions. In v. 18 the related term חֲזוֹת (*khazut*, "vision") is used. The parallelism in both verses (note "treaty") seems to demand a meaning "agreement" for both nouns. Perhaps חֲזוֹת and חֲזוֹת are used in a metonymic sense in vv. 15 and 18. Another option is to propose a homonymic root. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:514, and HALOT 301 s.v. חֲזוֹת.

**13 tn** Heb "the overwhelming scourge, when it passes by" (NRSV similar).

**14 sn** "Lie" and "deceitful word" would not be the terms used by the people. They would likely use the words "promise" and "reliable word," but the prophet substitutes "lie" and "deceitful word" to emphasize that this treaty with death will really prove to be disappointing.

**15 tc** The Hebrew text has a third person verb form, which does not agree with the first person suffix that precedes. The form should be emended to יָוָסֵד (*yosed*), a Qal active participle used in a present progressive or imminent future sense.

**16 tn** Traditionally "tested," but the implication is that it has passed the test and stands approved.

**17 sn** The reality behind the metaphor is not entirely clear from the context. The stone appears to represent someone or something that gives Zion stability. Perhaps the ideal Davidic ruler is in view (see 32:1). Another option is that the image of beginning a building project by laying a precious cornerstone suggests that God is about to transform Zion through judgment and begin a new covenant community that will experience his protection (see 4:3-6; 31:5; 33:20-24; 35:10).

**18 tn** Heb "will not hurry," i.e., act in panic.

28:17 I will make justice the measuring line,  
 fairness the plumb line;  
 hail will sweep away the unreliable refuge,<sup>1</sup>  
 the floodwaters will overwhelm the hiding place.  
 28:18 Your treaty with death will be dissolved;<sup>2</sup>  
 your agreement<sup>3</sup> with Sheol will not last.<sup>4</sup>  
 When the overwhelming judgment sweeps by,<sup>5</sup>  
 you will be overrun by it.<sup>6</sup>  
 28:19 Whenever it sweeps by, it will overtake you;  
 indeed,<sup>7</sup> every morning it will sweep by,  
 it will come through during the day and the night.<sup>8</sup>  
 When this announcement is understood,  
 it will cause nothing but terror.  
 28:20 For the bed is too short to stretch out on,  
 and the blanket is too narrow to wrap around oneself.<sup>9</sup>  
 28:21 For the LORD will rise up, as he did at Mount Perazim,<sup>10</sup>  
 he will rouse himself, as he did in the Valley of Gibeon,<sup>11</sup>  
 to accomplish his work,  
 his peculiar work,  
 to perform his task,  
 his strange task.<sup>12</sup>  
 28:22 So now, do not mock,  
 or your chains will become heavier!  
 For I have heard a message about decreed destruction,  
 from the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, against the entire land.<sup>13</sup>

28:23 Pay attention and listen to my message!<sup>14</sup>  
 Be attentive and listen to what I have to say!<sup>15</sup>  
 28:24 Does a farmer just keep on plowing at planting time?<sup>16</sup>  
 Does he keep breaking up and harrowing his ground?  
 28:25 Once he has leveled its surface,  
 does he not scatter the seed of the caraway plant,  
 sow the seed of the cumin plant,  
 and plant the wheat, barley, and grain in their designated places?<sup>17</sup>  
 28:26 His God instructs him;  
 he teaches him the principles of agriculture.<sup>18</sup>  
 28:27 Certainly<sup>19</sup> caraway seed is not threshed with a sledge,  
 nor is the wheel of a cart rolled over cumin seed.<sup>20</sup>  
 Certainly caraway seed is beaten with a stick,  
 and cumin seed with a flail.  
 28:28 Grain is crushed,  
 though one certainly does not thresh it forever.  
 The wheel of one's wagon rolls over it,  
 but his horses do not crush it.  
 28:29 This also comes from the LORD who commands armies,  
 who gives supernatural guidance and imparts great wisdom.<sup>21</sup>

*Ariel is Besieged*

29:1 Ariel is as good as dead<sup>22</sup> –

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “[the] refuge, [the] lie.” See v. 15.  
<sup>2</sup> **tn** On the meaning of כַּפָּר (kafar) in this context, see HALOT 494 s.v. | כָּפַר and J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:515, n. 9.  
<sup>3</sup> **tn** Normally the noun חֲזוֹן (khasut) means “vision.” See the note at v. 15.  
<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or “will not stand” (NIV, NRSV).  
<sup>5</sup> **tn** See the note at v. 15.  
<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “you will become a trampling place for it.”  
<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “for” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).  
<sup>8</sup> **tn** The words “it will come through” are supplied in the translation. The verb “will sweep by” does double duty in the parallel structure.  
<sup>9</sup> **sn** The bed and blanket probably symbolize their false sense of security. A bed that is too short and a blanket that is too narrow may promise rest and protection from the cold, but in the end they are useless and disappointing. In the same way, their supposed treaty with death will prove useless and disappointing.  
<sup>10</sup> **sn** This probably alludes to David's victory over the Philistines at Baal Perazim. See 2 Sam 5:20.  
<sup>11</sup> **sn** This probably alludes to the LORD's victory over the Canaanites at Gibeon, during the days of Joshua. See Josh 10:10-11.  
<sup>12</sup> **sn** God's judgment of his own people is called “his peculiar work” and “his strange task,” because he must deal with them the way he treated their enemies in the past.  
<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or “the whole earth” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NCV).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “to my voice.”  
<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “to my word”; cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV “hear my speech.”  
<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “All the day does the plowman plow in order to plant?” The phrase “all the day” here has the sense of “continually, always.” See BDB 400 s.v. יוֹם.  
<sup>17</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “place wheat [?], and barley [?], and grain in its territory.” The term שְׂוֹרָה (shorah) is sometimes translated “[in] its place,” but the word is unattested elsewhere. It is probably due to dittography of the immediately following שְׂעֵרָה (s'o'rah, “barley”). The meaning of the immediately following נִסְמָן (nisman) is also uncertain. It may be due to dittography of the immediately following כֹּסֶמֶת (kussemet, “grain”).  
<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “he teaches him the proper way, his God instructs him.”  
<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB).  
<sup>20</sup> **sn** Both of these seeds are too small to use the ordinary threshing techniques.  
<sup>21</sup> **sn** Verses 23-29 emphasize that God possesses great wisdom and has established a natural order. Evidence of this can be seen in the way farmers utilize divinely imparted wisdom to grow and harvest crops. God's dealings with his people will exhibit this same kind of wisdom and order. Judgment will be accomplished according to a divinely ordered timetable and, while severe enough, will not be excessive. Judgment must come, just as planting inevitably follows plowing. God will, as it were, thresh his people, but he will not crush them to the point where they will be of no use to him.  
<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] Ariel.” The meaning of the name “Ariel” is uncertain. The name may mean “altar hearth” (see v. 2) or, if compound, “lion of God.” The name is used here as a title for Mount Zion/Jerusalem (see v. 7-8).

Ariel, the town David besieged!<sup>1</sup>  
 Keep observing your annual rituals,  
 celebrate your festivals on schedule.<sup>2</sup>  
**29:2** I will threaten Ariel,  
 and she will mourn intensely  
 and become like an altar hearth<sup>3</sup> before  
 me.  
**29:3** I will lay siege to you on all sides;<sup>4</sup>  
 I will besiege you with troops;<sup>5</sup>  
 I will raise siege works against you.  
**29:4** You will fall;  
 while lying on the ground<sup>6</sup> you will  
 speak;  
 from the dust where you lie, your words  
 will be heard.<sup>7</sup>  
 Your voice will sound like a spirit speak-  
 ing from the underworld;<sup>8</sup>  
 from the dust you will chirp as if mutter-  
 ing an incantation.<sup>9</sup>  
**29:5** But the horde of invaders will be like  
 fine dust,  
 the horde of tyrants<sup>10</sup> like chaff that is  
 blown away.  
 It will happen suddenly, in a flash.  
**29:6** Judgment will come from the LORD  
 who commands armies,<sup>11</sup>  
 accompanied by thunder, earthquake, and  
 a loud noise,  
 by a strong gale, a windstorm, and a con-  
 suming flame of fire.

**29:7** It will be like a dream, a night vision.  
 There will be a horde from all the nations  
 that fight against Ariel,  
 those who attack her and her stronghold  
 and besiege her.  
**29:8** It will be like a hungry man dream-  
 ing that he is eating,  
 only to awaken and find that his stomach  
 is empty.<sup>12</sup>  
 It will be like a thirsty man dreaming that  
 he is drinking,  
 only to awaken and find that he is still  
 weak and his thirst unquenched.<sup>13</sup>  
 So it will be for the horde from all the  
 nations  
 that fight against Mount Zion.

*God's People Are Spiritually Insensitive*

**29:9** You will be shocked and amazed!<sup>14</sup>  
 You are totally blind!<sup>15</sup>  
 They are drunk,<sup>16</sup> but not because of wine;  
 they stagger,<sup>17</sup> but not because of beer.  
**29:10** For the LORD has poured out on you  
 a strong urge to sleep deeply.<sup>18</sup>  
 He has shut your eyes (the prophets),  
 and covered your heads (the seers).

**29:11** To you this entire prophetic revela-  
 tion<sup>19</sup> is like words in a sealed scroll. When they  
 hand it to one who can read<sup>20</sup> and say, "Read  
 this," he responds, "I can't, because it is sealed."  
**29:12** Or when they hand the scroll to one who

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "the town where David camped." The verb *הָקַדַּח* (*khanah*, "camp") probably has the nuance "lay siege to" here. See v. 3. Another option is to take the verb in the sense of "lived, settled."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "Add year to year, let your festivals occur in cycles." This is probably a sarcastic exhortation to the people to keep up their religious rituals, which will not prevent the coming judgment. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:527.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The term *אֲרִיֵּאל* (*ari'el*, "Ariel") is the word translated "altar hearth" here. The point of the simile is not entirely clear. Perhaps the image likens Jerusalem's coming crisis to a sacrificial fire.

<sup>4</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has *כְּדָוִר* (*khadur*, "like a circle"), i.e., "like an encircling wall." Some emend this phrase to *כְּדָוִד* (*k<sup>e</sup> david*, "like David"), which is supported by the LXX (see v. 1). However, the rendering in the LXX could have arisen from a confusion of the *dalet* (ד) and *resh* (ר).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The meaning of *מִצְבֵּיב* (*mutsav*) is not certain. Because of the parallelism (note "siege works"), some translate "towers." The noun is derived from *נָצַב* (*natsav*, "take one's stand") and may refer to the troops stationed outside the city to prevent entrance or departure.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "from the ground" (so NIV, NCV).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb "and from the dust your word will be low."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "and your voice will be like a ritual pit from the earth." The Hebrew *אֹבֵד* (*ov*, "ritual pit") refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. See the note on "incantations" in 8:19. Here the word is used metonymically for the voice that emerges from such a pit.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "and from the dust your word will chirp." The words "as if muttering an incantation" are supplied in the translation for clarification. See the parallelism and 8:19.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or "violent men"; cf. NASB "the ruthless ones."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "from the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] there will be visitation." The third feminine singular passive verb form *תִּפְקָד* (*tippaqed*, "she/it will be visited") is used here in an impersonal sense. See GKC 459 §144.b.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or "that he [or "his appetite"] is unsatisfied."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "that he is faint and that he [or "his appetite"] longs [for water]."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb *הִתְמַחְמוּ* (*hitmahm<sup>hu</sup>*) is a Hitpael imperative from *מָחָה* (*mahah*, "hesitate"). If it is retained, one might translate "halt and be amazed." The translation assumes an emendation to *הִתְאַמְמוּ* (*hitamm<sup>hu</sup>*), a Hitpael imperative from *תָּמָה* (*tamah*, "be amazed"). In this case, the text, like Hab 1:5, combines the Hitpael and Qal imperatival forms of *תָּמָה* (*tamah*). A literal translation might be "Shock yourselves and be shocked!" The repetition of sound draws attention to the statement. The imperatives here have the force of an emphatic assertion. On this use of the imperative in Hebrew, see GKC 324 §110.c and IBHS 572 §34.4c.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "Blind yourselves and be blind!" The Hitpael and Qal imperatival forms of *שָׁעַנְתָּ* (*sha'a'*, "be blind") are combined to draw attention to the statement. The imperatives have the force of an emphatic assertion.

<sup>16</sup> **tc** Some prefer to emend the perfect form of the verb to an imperative (e.g., NAB, NCV, NRSV), since the people are addressed in the immediately preceding and following contexts.

<sup>17</sup> **tc** Some prefer to emend the perfect form of the verb to an imperative (e.g., NAB, NCV, NRSV), since the people are addressed in the immediately preceding and following contexts.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb "a disposition [or "spirit"] of deep sleep." Through this mixed metaphor (sleep is likened to a liquid which one pours and in turn symbolizes spiritual dullness) the prophet emphasizes that God himself has given the people over to their spiritual insensitivity as a form of judgment.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "vision" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "one who knows a/the scroll."

can't read<sup>1</sup> and say, "Read this," he says, "I can't read."<sup>2</sup>

**29:13** The sovereign master<sup>3</sup> says,  
"These people say they are loyal to me;<sup>4</sup>  
they say wonderful things about me,<sup>5</sup>  
but they are not really loyal to me.<sup>6</sup>  
Their worship consists of  
nothing but man-made ritual.<sup>7</sup>

**29:14** Therefore I will again do an amaz-  
ing thing for these people –  
an absolutely extraordinary deed.<sup>8</sup>  
Wise men will have nothing to say,  
the sages will have no explanations."<sup>9</sup>

**29:15** Those who try to hide their plans  
from the LORD are as good as dead,<sup>10</sup>  
who do their work in secret and boast,<sup>11</sup>  
"Who sees us? Who knows what we're  
doing?"<sup>12</sup>

**29:16** Your thinking is perverse!<sup>13</sup>  
Should the potter be regarded as clay?<sup>14</sup>  
Should the thing made say<sup>15</sup> about its  
maker, "He didn't make me"?  
Or should the potter say about the pot-  
ter, "He doesn't understand"?

#### *Changes Are Coming*

**29:17** In just a very short time<sup>16</sup>  
Lebanon will turn into an orchard,  
and the orchard will be considered a  
forest.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and if the scroll is handed to one who does not know a scroll."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I do not know a scroll."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is *ʾadonai* ('*adonai*).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Because these people draw near to me with their mouth."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and with their lips they honor me."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "but their heart is far from me." The heart is viewed here as the seat of the will, from which genuine loyalty derives.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "their fear of me is a commandment of men that has been taught."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Therefore I will again do something amazing with these people, an amazing deed, an amazing thing." This probably refers to the amazing transformation predicted in vv. 17-24, which will follow the purifying judgment implied in vv. 15-16.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the wisdom of their wise ones will perish, the discernment of their discerning ones will keep hidden."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Woe [to] those who deeply hide counsel from the LORD." This probably alludes to political alliances made without seeking the LORD's guidance. See 30:1-2 and 31:1.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and their works are in darkness and they say."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The rhetorical questions suggest the answer, "no one." They are confident that their deeds are hidden from others, including God.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "your overturning." The predicate is suppressed in this exclamation. The idea is, "O your perversity! How great it is!" See GKC 470 §147.c. The people "overturn" all logic by thinking their authority supersedes God's.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The expected answer to this rhetorical question is "of course not." On the interrogative use of *im*, see BDB 50 s.v.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "that the thing made should say."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text phrases this as a rhetorical question, "Is it not yet a little, a short [time]?"

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The meaning of this verse is debated, but it seems to depict a reversal in fortunes. The mighty forest of Lebanon

**29:18** At that time<sup>18</sup> the deaf will be able to  
hear words read from a scroll,  
and the eyes of the blind will be able to  
see through deep darkness.<sup>19</sup>

**29:19** The downtrodden will again rejoice  
in the LORD;

the poor among humankind will take de-  
light<sup>20</sup> in the Holy One of Israel.<sup>21</sup>

**29:20** For tyrants will disappear,  
those who taunt will vanish,  
and all those who love to do wrong will  
be eliminated<sup>22</sup> –

**29:21** those who bear false testimony  
against a person,<sup>23</sup>  
who entrap the one who arbitrates at the  
city gate<sup>24</sup>

and deprive the innocent of justice by  
making false charges.<sup>25</sup>

**29:22** So this is what the LORD, the one  
who delivered Abraham, says to the  
family of Jacob:<sup>26</sup>  
"Jacob will no longer be ashamed;  
their faces will no longer show their em-  
barrassment."<sup>27</sup>

**29:23** For when they see their children,  
whom I will produce among them,<sup>28</sup>  
they will honor<sup>29</sup> my name.  
They will honor the Holy One of Jacob;<sup>30</sup>  
they will respect<sup>31</sup> the God of Israel.

**29:24** Those who stray morally will gain  
understanding;<sup>32</sup>  
those who complain will acquire insight.<sup>33</sup>

(symbolic of the proud and powerful, see 2:13; 10:34) will be changed into a common orchard, while the common orchard (symbolic of the oppressed and lowly) will grow into a great forest. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:538.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Or "In that day" (KJV).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Perhaps this depicts the spiritual transformation of the once spiritually insensitive nation (see vv. 10-12, cf. also 6:9-10).

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or "will rejoice" (NIV, NCV, NLT).

<sup>22</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and all the watchers of wrong will be cut off."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the ones who make a man a sinner with a word." The Hiphil of *khata* (here has a delocutive sense: "declare a man sinful/guilty."

<sup>25</sup> **sn** Legal disputes were resolved at the city gate, where the town elders met. See Amos 5:10.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and deprive by emptiness the innocent."

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* "So this is what the LORD says to the house of Jacob, the one who ransomed Abraham." The relative pronoun must refer back to "the LORD," not to the immediately preceding "Jacob." It is uncertain to what event in Abraham's experience this refers. Perhaps the name "Abraham" stands here by metonymy for his descendants through Jacob. If so, the Exodus is in view.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and his face will no longer be pale."

<sup>29</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for when he sees his children, the work of my hands in his midst."

<sup>30</sup> **tn** Or "treat as holy" (also in the following line); NASB, NRSV "will sanctify."

<sup>31</sup> **sn** *Holy One of Jacob* is similar to the phrase "Holy One of Israel" common throughout Isaiah; see the **sn** at Isa 1:4.

<sup>32</sup> **tn** Or "fear," in the sense of "stand in awe of."

<sup>33</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the ones who stray in spirit will know understanding."

<sup>34</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will learn instruction"; cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT



## Egypt Will Prove Unreliable

**30:1** “The rebellious<sup>1</sup> children are as good as dead,<sup>2</sup>” says the LORD,  
 “those who make plans without consulting me,<sup>3</sup>  
 who form alliances without consulting my Spirit,<sup>4</sup>  
 and thereby compound their sin.<sup>5</sup>  
**30:2** They travel down to Egypt without seeking my will,<sup>6</sup>  
 seeking Pharaoh’s protection,  
 and looking for safety in Egypt’s protective shade.<sup>7</sup>  
**30:3** But Pharaoh’s protection will bring you nothing but shame,  
 and the safety of Egypt’s protective shade nothing but humiliation.  
**30:4** Though his<sup>8</sup> officials are in Zoan and his messengers arrive at Hanes,<sup>9</sup>  
**30:5** all will be put to shame<sup>10</sup>  
 because of a nation that cannot help them,  
 who cannot give them aid or help,  
 but only shame and disgrace.”  
**30:6** This is a message<sup>11</sup> about the animals in the Negev:  
 Through a land of distress and danger,  
 inhabited by lionesses and roaring lions,<sup>12</sup>

by snakes and darting adders,<sup>13</sup>  
 they transport<sup>14</sup> their wealth on the backs of donkeys,  
 their riches on the humps of camels,  
 to a nation that cannot help them.<sup>15</sup>  
**30:7** Egypt is totally incapable of helping.<sup>16</sup>  
 For this reason I call her  
 ‘Proud one<sup>17</sup> who is silenced.’”<sup>18</sup>  
**30:8** Now go, write it<sup>19</sup> down on a tablet in their presence,<sup>20</sup>  
 inscribe it on a scroll,  
 so that it might be preserved for a future time  
 as an enduring witness.<sup>21</sup>  
**30:9** For these are rebellious people – they are lying children,  
 children unwilling to obey the LORD’s law.<sup>22</sup>  
**30:10** They<sup>23</sup> say to the visionaries, “See no more visions!”  
 and to the seers, “Don’t relate messages to us about what is right!<sup>24</sup>  
 Tell us nice things,  
 relate deceptive messages.<sup>25</sup>  
**30:11** Turn aside from the way,  
 stray off the path.<sup>26</sup>  
 Remove from our presence the Holy One of Israel.”<sup>27</sup>  
**30:12** For this reason this is what the Holy One of Israel says:

“will accept instruction.”

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “stubborn” (NCV); cf. NIV “obstinate.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “Woe [to] rebellious children.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “making a plan, but not from me.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “and pouring out a libation, but not [from] my spirit.” This translation assumes that the verb נָסַךְ (*nasakh*) means “pour out,” and that the cognate noun נִסְכָּה (*massekhhah*) means “libation.” In this case “pouring out a libation” alludes to a ceremony that formally ratifies an alliance. Another option is to understand the verb נָסַךְ as a homonym meaning “weave,” and the cognate noun נִסְכָּה as a homonym meaning “covering.” In this case forming an alliance is likened to weaving a garment.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “consequently adding sin to sin.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “those who go to descend to Egypt, but [of] my mouth they do not inquire.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “to seek protection in the protection of Pharaoh, and to seek refuge in the shade of Egypt.”

<sup>8</sup> **sn** This probably refers to Judah’s officials and messengers.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Zoan was located in the Egyptian delta in the north; Hanes was located somewhere in southern region of lower Egypt, south of Memphis; the exact location is debated.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The present translation follows the marginal (*Qere*) reading of the Hebrew text; the consonantal text (*Kethib*) has “made to stink, decay.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Traditionally, “burden” (so KJV, ASV); NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “oracle.”

<sup>12</sup> **tc** Heb “[a land of] a lioness and a lion, from them.” Some emend מְהֵם (*mehem*, “from them”) to מְהֵם (*mehem*), an otherwise unattested Hiphil participle from הָמַם (*hamam*, “move noisily”). Perhaps it would be better to take the initial *mem* (מ) as enclitic and emend the form to הִמְהֵם (*homeh*), a Qal active participle from הָמַה (*hamah*, “to make a noise”); cf. J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:542, n. 9.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “flying burning ones.” See the note at 14:29.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “carry” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>15</sup> **sn** This verse describes messengers from Judah transporting wealth to Egypt in order to buy Pharaoh’s protection through a treaty.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “As for Egypt, with vanity and emptiness they help.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “Rahab” (רַהַב, *rahav*), which also appears as a name for Egypt in Ps 87:4. The epithet is also used in the OT for a mythical sea monster symbolic of chaos. See the note at 51:9. A number of English versions use the name “Rahab” (e.g., ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV) while others attempt some sort of translation (cf. CEV “a helpless monster”; TEV, NLT “the Harmless Dragon”).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The MT reads “Rahab, they, sitting.” The translation above assumes an emendation of שָׁבַת (*hem shavet*) to שָׁבַת (*hammashbat*), a Hophal participle with prefixed definite article, meaning “the one who is made to cease,” i.e., “destroyed,” or “silenced.” See HALOT 444-45 s.v. יָשַׁב.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The referent of the third feminine singular pronominal suffix is uncertain. Perhaps it refers to the preceding message, which accuses the people of rejecting the LORD’s help in favor of an alliance with Egypt.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “with them.” On the use of the preposition here, see BDB 86 s.v. אִתּוֹ.

<sup>21</sup> **sn** Recording the message will enable the prophet to use it in the future as evidence that God warned his people of impending judgment and clearly spelled out the nation’s guilt. An official record of the message will also serve as proof of the prophet’s authority as God’s spokesman.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “instruction” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); NCV, TEV “teachings.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “who” (so NASB, NRSV). A new sentence was started here in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “Do not see for us right things.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “Tell us smooth things, see deceptive things.”

<sup>26</sup> **sn** The imagery refers to the way or path of truth, as revealed by God to the prophet.

<sup>27</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

“You have rejected this message;<sup>1</sup>  
you trust instead in your ability to op-  
press and trick;<sup>2</sup>  
and rely on that kind of behavior.<sup>3</sup>  
30:13 So this sin will become your down-  
fall.

You will be like a high wall  
that bulges and cracks and is ready to  
collapse;  
it crumbles suddenly, in a flash.<sup>4</sup>  
30:14 It shatters in pieces like a clay jar,  
so shattered to bits that none of it can be  
salvaged.<sup>5</sup>

Among its fragments one cannot find a  
shard large enough<sup>6</sup>  
to scoop a hot coal from a fire<sup>7</sup>  
or to skim off water from a cistern.”<sup>8</sup>  
30:15 For this is what the master, the  
LORD, the Holy One of Israel says:  
“If you repented and patiently waited for  
me, you would be delivered;<sup>9</sup>  
if you calmly trusted in me you would  
find strength,<sup>10</sup>  
but you are unwilling.

30:16 You say, ‘No, we will flee on  
horses,’  
so you will indeed flee.  
You say, ‘We will ride on fast horses,’  
so your pursuers will be swift.  
30:17 One thousand will scurry at the  
battle cry of one enemy soldier;<sup>11</sup>  
at the battle cry of five enemy soldiers  
you will all run away,<sup>12</sup>  
until the remaining few are as isolated<sup>13</sup>  
as a flagpole on a mountaintop  
or a signal flag on a hill.”

*The Lord Will Not Abandon His People*

30:18 For this reason the LORD is ready to  
show you mercy;  
he sits on his throne, ready to have com-  
passion on you.<sup>14</sup>  
Indeed, the LORD is a just God;  
all who wait for him in faith will be  
blessed.<sup>15</sup>

30:19 For people will live in Zion;  
in Jerusalem<sup>16</sup> you will weep no more.<sup>17</sup>  
When he hears your cry of despair, he  
will indeed show you mercy;  
when he hears it, he will respond to you.<sup>18</sup>

30:20 The sovereign master<sup>19</sup> will give you  
distress to eat  
and suffering to drink;<sup>20</sup>  
but your teachers will no longer be hid-  
den;  
your eyes will see them.<sup>21</sup>

30:21 You<sup>22</sup> will hear a word spoken be-  
hind you, saying,  
“This is the correct<sup>23</sup> way, walk in it,”  
whether you are heading to the right or  
the left.

30:22 You will desecrate your silver-plated  
idols<sup>24</sup>  
and your gold-plated images.<sup>25</sup>  
You will throw them away as if they were  
a menstrual rag,  
saying to them, “Get out!”  
30:23 He will water the seed you plant in  
the ground,

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The sentence actually begins with the word “because.” In the Hebrew text vv. 12-13 are one long sentence.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and you trust in oppression and cunning.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and you lean on it”; NAB “and depend on it.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The verse reads literally, “So this sin will become for you like a breach ready to fall, bulging on a high wall, the breaking of which comes suddenly, in a flash.” Their sin produces guilt and will result in judgment. Like a wall that collapses their fall will be swift and sudden.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Its shattering is like the shattering of a jug of [i.e., “made by”] potters, [so] shattered one cannot save [any of it].”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The words “large enough” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to remove fire from the place of kindling.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** On the meaning of גֵּוֹה (*geveh*, “cistern”) see *HALOT* 170 s.v.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in returning and in quietness you will be delivered.” Many English versions render the last phrase “shall be saved” or something similar (e.g., NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in quietness and in trust is your strength” (NASB and NRSV both similar).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “One thousand from before [or “because of”] one battle cry.” גְּבַחָהּ (*g'arah*) is often defined as “threat,” but in war contexts it likely refers to a shout or battle cry. See Ps 76:6.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “from before [or “because of”] the battle cry of five you will flee.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “until you are left” (so NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Therefore the LORD waits to show you mercy, and therefore he is exalted to have compassion on you.” The logical connection between this verse and what precedes is problematic. The point seems to be that Judah’s impending doom does not bring God joy. Rather the prospect of their suffering stirs within him a willingness to show mercy and compassion, if they are willing to seek him on his terms.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Blessed are all who wait for him.”

<sup>16</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “For people in Zion will live, in Jerusalem, you will weep no more.” The phrase “in Jerusalem” could be taken with what precedes. Some prefer to emend יֵשֶׁב (*yeshhev*, “will live,” a Qal imperfect) to יָשֵׁב (*yoshev*, a Qal active participle) and translate “For [you] people in Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he will indeed show you mercy at the sound of your crying out; when he hears, he will answer you.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonai*).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the Master will give to you bread – distress, and water – oppression.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “but your teachers will no longer be hidden, your eyes will be seeing your teachers.” The translation assumes that the form מוֹרֵיכֶם (*morekha*) is a plural participle, referring to spiritual leaders such as prophets and priests. Another possibility is that the form is actually singular (see GKC 273-74 §93.ss) or a plural of respect, referring to God as the master teacher. See *HALOT* 560-61 s.v. מוֹרֵה. For discussion of the views, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:560.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your ears” (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The word “correct” is supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the platings of your silver idols.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the covering of your gold image.”

and the ground will produce crops in abundance.<sup>1</sup>

At that time<sup>2</sup> your cattle will graze in wide pastures.

**30:24** The oxen and donkeys used in plowing<sup>3</sup> will eat seasoned feed winnowed with a shovel and pitchfork.<sup>4</sup>

**30:25** On every high mountain and every high hill there will be streams flowing with water, at the time of<sup>5</sup> great slaughter when the fortified towers collapse.

**30:26** The light of the full moon will be like the sun's glare and the sun's glare will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days,<sup>6</sup> when the LORD binds up his people's fractured bones<sup>7</sup> and heals their severe wound.<sup>8</sup>

**30:27** Look, the name<sup>9</sup> of the LORD comes from a distant place in raging anger and awesome splendor.<sup>10</sup> He speaks angrily and his word is like destructive fire.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and he will give rain for your seed which you plant in the ground, and food [will be] the produce of the ground, and it will be rich and abundant."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or "in that day" (KJV).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground."

<sup>4</sup> **sn** Crops will be so abundant that even the work animals will eat well.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or "in the day of" (KJV).

<sup>6</sup> **sn** Light here symbolizes restoration of divine blessing and prosperity. The number "seven" is used symbolically to indicate intensity. The exact meaning of the phrase "the light of seven days" is uncertain; it probably means "seven times brighter" (see the parallel line).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the fracture of his people" (so NASB).

**sn** The LORD is here compared to a physician setting a broken bone in a bandage or cast.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the injury of his wound." The joining of synonyms emphasizes the severity of the wound. Another option is to translate, "the wound of his blow." In this case the pronominal suffix might refer to the LORD, not the people, yielding the translation, "the wound which he inflicted."

<sup>9</sup> **sn** The "name" of the LORD sometimes stands by metonymy for the LORD himself, see Exod 23:21; Lev 24:11; Pss 54:1 (54:3 HT); 124:8. In Isa 30:27 the point is that he reveals that aspect of his character which his name suggests – he comes as Yahweh ("he is present"), the ever present helper of his people who annihilates their enemies and delivers them. The name "Yahweh" originated in a context where God assured a fearful Moses that he would be with him as he confronted Pharaoh and delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt. See Exod 3.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "his anger burns, and heaviness of elevation." The meaning of the phrase "heaviness of elevation" is unclear, for מַעֲלָה (*masa'ah*, "elevation") occurs only here. Some understand the term as referring to a cloud (elevated above the earth's surface), in which case one might translate, "and in heavy clouds" (cf. NAB "with lowering clouds"). Others relate the noun to מַסָּה (*masa*, "burden") and interpret it as a reference to judgment. In this case one might translate, "and with severe judgment." The present translation assumes that the noun refers to his glory and that "heaviness" emphasizes its degree.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "his lips are full of anger, and his tongue is like consuming fire." The LORD's lips and tongue are used metonymically for his word (or perhaps his battle cry; see v. 31).

**30:28** His battle cry overwhelms like a flooding river<sup>12</sup> that reaches one's neck.

He shakes the nations in a sieve that isolates the chaff;<sup>13</sup> he puts a bit into the mouth of the nations and leads them to destruction.<sup>14</sup>

**30:29** You will sing as you do in the evening when you are celebrating a festival.

You will be happy like one who plays a flute as he goes to the mountain of the LORD, the Rock who shelters Israel.<sup>15</sup>

**30:30** The LORD will give a mighty shout<sup>16</sup> and intervene in power,<sup>17</sup> with furious anger and flaming, destructive fire,<sup>18</sup> with a driving rainstorm and hailstones.

**30:31** Indeed, the LORD's shout will shatter Assyria;<sup>19</sup>

he will beat them with a club.

**30:32** Every blow from his punishing cudgel,<sup>20</sup>

with which the LORD will beat them,<sup>21</sup> will be accompanied by music from the<sup>22</sup> tambourine and harp, and he will attack them with his weapons.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "his breath is like a flooding river." This might picture the LORD breathing heavily as he runs down his enemy, but in light of the preceding verse, which mentions his lips and tongue, "breath" probably stands metonymically for the word or battle cry that he expels from his mouth as he shouts. In Isa 34:16 and Ps 33:6 the LORD's "breath" is associated with his command.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "shaking nations in a sieve of worthlessness." It is not certain exactly how שָׁוָה (*shav*<sup>12</sup>, "emptiness, worthlessness") modifies "sieve." A sieve is used to separate grain from chaff and isolate what is worthless so that it might be discarded. Perhaps the nations are likened to such chaff; God's judgment will sift them out for destruction.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and a bit that leads astray [is] in the jaws of the peoples." Here the nations are likened to horse that can be controlled by a bit placed in its mouth. In this case the LORD uses his sovereign control over the "horse" to lead it to its demise.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[you will have] joy of heart, like the one going with a flute to enter the mountain of the LORD to the Rock of Israel." The image here is not a foundational rock, but a rocky cliff where people could hide for protection (for example, the fortress of Masada).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the LORD will cause the splendor of his voice to be heard."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and reveal the lowering of his arm."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and a flame of consuming fire."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Indeed by the voice of the LORD Assyria will be shattered."

<sup>20</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has "every blow from a founded [i.e., "appointed"]? cudgel." The translation above, with support from a few medieval Hebrew MSS, assumes an emendation from מוּסָדָה (*musadah*, "founded") to מוּסָרוֹה (*musaroh*, "his discipline").

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "which the LORD lays on him."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will be with" (KJV similar).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, "and with battles of brandishing [weapons?] he will fight against him." Some prefer to emend מוּלְחָמֹת (*uv'milkhamot*, "and with battles of") to וּבְחֻלּוֹת (*uv'mikholot*, "and with dancing"). Note the immediately preceding references to musical instruments.

30:33 For<sup>1</sup> the burial place is already prepared;<sup>2</sup> it has been made deep and wide for the king.<sup>3</sup> The firewood is piled high on it.<sup>4</sup> The LORD's breath, like a stream flowing with brimstone, will ignite it.

*Egypt Will Disappoint*

31:1 Those who go down to Egypt for help are as good as dead,<sup>5</sup> those who rely on war horses, and trust in Egypt's many chariots<sup>6</sup> and in their many, many horsemen.<sup>7</sup> But they do not rely on the Holy One of Israel<sup>8</sup> and do not seek help from the LORD. 31:2 Yet he too is wise<sup>9</sup> and he will bring disaster; he does not retract his decree.<sup>10</sup> He will attack the wicked nation,<sup>11</sup> and the nation that helps<sup>12</sup> those who commit sin.<sup>13</sup> 31:3 The Egyptians are mere humans, not God; their horses are made of flesh, not spirit. The LORD will strike with<sup>14</sup> his hand; the one who helps will stumble and the one being helped will fall. Together they will perish.<sup>15</sup>

*The Lord Will Defend Zion*

31:4 Indeed, this is what the LORD says to me: "The LORD will be like a growling lion, like a young lion growling over its prey.<sup>16</sup> Though a whole group of shepherds gathers against it, it is not afraid of their shouts or intimidated by their yelling.<sup>17</sup> In this same way the LORD who commands armies will descend to do battle on Mount Zion and on its hill.<sup>18</sup> 31:5 Just as birds hover over a nest,<sup>19</sup> so the LORD who commands armies will protect Jerusalem.<sup>20</sup> He will protect and deliver it; as he passes over<sup>21</sup> he will rescue it. 31:6 You Israelites! Return to the one against whom you have so blatantly rebelled!<sup>22</sup> 31:7 For at that time<sup>23</sup> everyone will get rid of<sup>24</sup> the silver and gold idols your hands sinfully made.<sup>25</sup> 31:8 Assyria will fall by a sword, but not one human-made;<sup>26</sup> a sword not made by humankind will destroy them.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>1</sup> tn Or "indeed."  
<sup>2</sup> tc The Hebrew text reads literally, "for arranged from before [or "yesterday"] is [?]." The meaning of תִּפְתֵּחַ (*taf'teh*), which occurs only here, is unknown. The translation above (as with most English versions) assumes an emendation to תִּפְתֵּחַ (*tofet*, "Topheth"; cf. NASB, NIV, NLT) and places the final הֵּ (he) on the beginning of the next word as an interrogative particle. Topheth was a place near Jerusalem used as a burial ground (see Jer 7:32; 19:11).  
<sup>3</sup> tn The Hebrew text reads literally, "Also it is made ready for the king, one makes it deep and wide." If one takes the final הֵּ (he) on תִּפְתֵּחַ (*taf'teh*) and prefixes it to גָּמַל (*gam*) as an interrogative particle (see the preceding note), one can translate, "Is it also made ready for the king?" In this case the question is rhetorical and expects an emphatic affirmative answer, "Of course it is!"  
<sup>4</sup> tn Heb "its pile of wood, fire and wood one makes abundant."  
<sup>5</sup> sn Apparently this alludes to some type of funeral rite.  
<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "Woe [to] those who go down to Egypt for help."  
<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "and trust in chariots for they are many."  
<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "and in horsemen for they are very strong [or "numerous"]."  
<sup>8</sup> sn See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.  
<sup>9</sup> sn This statement appears to have a sarcastic tone. The royal advisers who are advocating an alliance with Egypt think they are wise, but the LORD possesses wisdom as well and will thwart their efforts.  
<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "and he does not turn aside [i.e., "retract"] his words"; NIV "does not take back his words."  
<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "and he will arise against the house of the wicked."  
<sup>12</sup> sn That is, Egypt.  
<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "and against the help of the doers of sin."  
<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "will extend"; KJV, ASV, NASB, NCV "stretch out."  
<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "together all of them will come to an end."

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "As a lion growls, a young lion over its prey." In the Hebrew text the opening comparison is completed later in the verse ("so the LORD will come down..."), after a parenthesis describing how fearless the lion is. The present translation divides the verse into three sentences for English stylistic reasons.  
<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "Though there is summoned against it fullness of shepherds, by their voice it is not terrified, and to their noise it does not respond."  
<sup>18</sup> tn Some prefer to translate the phrase לִיבֹא עַל (*litsbo' 'al*) as "fight against," but the following context pictures the LORD defending, not attacking, Zion.  
<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "just as birds fly." The words "over a nest" are supplied in the translation for clarification.  
<sup>20</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.  
<sup>21</sup> tn The only other occurrence of this verb is in Exod 12:13, 23, 27, where the LORD "passes over" (i.e., "spares") the Israelite households as he comes to judge their Egyptian oppressors. The noun פֶּסַח (*pesakh*, "Passover") is derived from the verb. The use of the verb in Isa 31:5 is probably an intentional echo of the Exodus event. As in the days of Moses the LORD will spare his people as he comes to judge their enemies.  
<sup>22</sup> tn Heb "Return to the one [against] whom the sons of Israel made deep rebellion." The syntax is awkward here. A preposition is omitted by ellipsis after the verb (see GKC 446 §133.f, n. 2), and there is a shift from direct address (note the second plural imperative "return") to the third person (note "they made deep"). For other examples of abrupt shifts in person in poetic style, see GKC 462 §144.p.  
<sup>23</sup> tn Or "in that day" (KJV).  
<sup>24</sup> tn Heb "reject" (so NIV); NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT "throw away."  
<sup>25</sup> tn Heb "the idols of their idols of silver and their idols of gold which your hands made for yourselves [in] sin." חָטָא (*khata*, "sin") is understood as an adverbial accusative of manner. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:573, n. 4.  
<sup>26</sup> tn Heb "Assyria will fall by a sword, not of a man."  
<sup>27</sup> tn Heb "and a sword not of humankind will devour him."



They will run away from this sword<sup>1</sup> and their young men will be forced to do hard labor.

**31:9** They will surrender their stronghold<sup>2</sup> because of fear;<sup>3</sup>

their officers will be afraid of the LORD's battle flag.<sup>34</sup>

This is what the LORD says – the one whose fire is in Zion, whose firepot is in Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup>

### Justice and Wisdom Will Prevail

**32:1** Look, a king will promote fairness;<sup>6</sup> officials will promote justice.<sup>7</sup>

**32:2** Each of them<sup>8</sup> will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from a rainstorm; like streams of water in a dry region and like the shade of a large cliff in a parched land.

**32:3** Eyes<sup>9</sup> will no longer be blind<sup>10</sup> and ears<sup>11</sup> will be attentive.

**32:4** The mind that acts rashly will possess discernment<sup>12</sup> and the tongue that stutters will speak with ease and clarity.

**32:5** A fool will no longer be called honorable; a deceiver will no longer be called principled.

**32:6** For a fool speaks disgraceful things;<sup>13</sup> his mind plans out sinful deeds.<sup>14</sup>

He commits godless deeds<sup>15</sup> and says misleading things about the LORD;

he gives the hungry nothing to satisfy their appetite<sup>16</sup>

and gives the thirsty nothing to drink.<sup>17</sup>

**32:7** A deceiver's methods are evil,<sup>18</sup> he dreams up evil plans<sup>19</sup>

to ruin the poor with lies, even when the needy are in the right.<sup>20</sup>

**32:8** An honorable man makes honorable plans; his honorable character gives him security.<sup>21</sup>

### The Lord Will Give True Security

**32:9** You complacent<sup>22</sup> women, get up and listen to me!

You carefree<sup>23</sup> daughters, pay attention to what I say!

**32:10** In a year's time<sup>24</sup> you carefree ones will shake with fear, for the grape<sup>25</sup> harvest will fail, and the fruit harvest will not arrive.

**32:11** Tremble, you complacent ones! Shake with fear, you carefree ones!

Strip off your clothes and expose yourselves –

put sackcloth on your waist!<sup>26</sup>

**32:12** Mourn over the field,<sup>27</sup> over the delightful fields and the fruitful vine!

**32:13** Mourn<sup>28</sup> over the land of my people,

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "as for a deceiver, his implements [or "weapons"] are evil."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or "he plans evil things"; NIV "he makes up evil schemes."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to ruin the poor with words of falsehood, even when the needy speak what is just."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and he upon honorable things stands."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or "self-assured"; NAB, NRSV "who are at ease."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Or "self-confident"; NASB "overconfident."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "days upon a year."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "olive." See 24:13.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** The imperative forms in v. 11 are problematic. The first (תִּרְדוּ, *khirdu*, "tremble") is masculine plural in form, though spoken to a feminine plural addressee (שְׂאֵנָנוֹת, *sha'anannot*, "complacent ones"). The four imperative forms that follow (רָגַזְתֶּן, *r'gazah*, "shake with fear"; פְּשַׁתְתֶּן, *p'shotah*, "strip off your clothes"; עָרַדְתֶּן, *orah*, "expose yourselves"; and הִנְיַרְתֶּן, *khagorah*, "put on") all appear to be lengthened (so-called "emphatic") masculine singular forms, even though they too appear to be spoken to a feminine plural addressee. GKC 131-32 §48j suggests emending תִּרְדוּ (*khirdu*) to תִּרְדָּה (*kharadah*) and understanding all five imperatives as feminine plural "aramaized" forms.

<sup>27</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has "over mourning breasts." The reference to "breasts" would make sense in light of v. 11, which refers to the practice of women baring their breasts as a sign of sorrow (see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:585). However, one expects the preposition עַל (*al*) to introduce the source or reason for mourning (see vv. 12b-13a) and the participle בִּפְרוּיִם (*sofedim*, "mourning") seems odd modifying "breasts." The translation above assumes a twofold emendation: (1) שְׂדָיִם (*shadayim*, "breasts") is emended to שְׂדָיִן (*sadayim*), "field," a term that also appears in Isa 56:9). The final *mem* (ם) would be enclitic in this case, not a plural indicator. (The Hebrew noun שָׂדֶה (*sadeh*, "field") forms its plural with an וּת- [-ot] ending). (2) The plural participle בִּפְרוּיִם is emended to בִּפְדָּה (*s'fodah*), a lengthened imperative form, meaning "mourn." For an overview of various suggestions that have been made for this difficult line, see Oswalt, 586, n. 12).

<sup>28</sup> **tn** "Mourn" is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text vv. 12-13 are one long sentence.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he will flee for himself from before a sword."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "rocky cliff" (cf. ASV, NASB "rock"), viewed metaphorically as a place of defense and security.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "His rocky cliff, because of fear, will pass away [i.e., "perish"]."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and they will be afraid of the flag, his officers."

<sup>5</sup> **sn** The "fire" and "firepot" here symbolize divine judgment, which is heating up like a fire in Jerusalem, waiting to be used against the Assyrians when they attack the city.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will reign according to fairness."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will rule according to justice."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a man," but אִישׁ (*ish*) probably refers here to "each" of the officials mentioned in the previous verse.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Eyes that see."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text as vocalized reads literally "all not gaze," but this is contradictory to the context. The verb form should be revocalized תִּשְׁעֶנָּה (*s'ho'enah*) from שְׁעֵנִי (*sha'a'*, "be blinded"); see Isa 6:10; 29:9.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "ears that hear."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the heart of rashness will understand knowledge"; cf. NAB "The flighty will become wise and capable."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "foolishness," in a moral-ethical sense. See 9:17.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and his heart commits sin"; KJV, ASV "his heart will work iniquity"; NASB "inclines toward wickedness."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in order to do [or "so that he does"] what is godless [or "defiled"]."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "so that he leaves empty the appetite [or "desire"] of the hungry."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the drink of the thirsty he causes to fail."

which is overgrown with thorns and  
briers,  
and over all the once-happy houses<sup>1</sup>  
in the city filled with revelry.<sup>2</sup>

**32:14** For the fortress is neglected;  
the once-crowded<sup>3</sup> city is abandoned.

Hill<sup>4</sup> and watchtower  
are permanently uninhabited.<sup>5</sup>  
Wild donkeys love to go there,  
and flocks graze there.<sup>6</sup>

**32:15** This desolation will continue un-  
til new life is poured out on us from  
heaven.<sup>7</sup>

Then the desert will become an orchard  
and the orchard will be considered a  
forest.<sup>8</sup>

**32:16** Justice will settle down in the desert  
and fairness will live in the orchard.<sup>9</sup>

**32:17** Fairness will produce peace<sup>10</sup>  
and result in lasting security.<sup>11</sup>

**32:18** My people will live in peaceful  
settlements,  
in secure homes,  
and in safe, quiet places.<sup>12</sup>

**32:19** Even if the forest is destroyed<sup>13</sup>

and the city is annihilated,<sup>14</sup>

**32:20** you will be blessed,  
you who plant seed by all the banks of  
the streams,<sup>15</sup>  
you who let your ox and donkey graze.<sup>16</sup>

### The Lord Will Restore Zion

**33:1** The destroyer is as good as dead,<sup>17</sup>  
you who have not been destroyed!  
The deceitful one is as good as dead,<sup>18</sup>  
the one whom others have not deceived!  
When you are through destroying, you  
will be destroyed;  
when you finish<sup>19</sup> deceiving, others will  
deceive you!

**33:2** LORD, be merciful to us! We wait for  
you.

Give us strength each morning!<sup>20</sup>  
Deliver us when distress comes.<sup>21</sup>

**33:3** The nations run away when they hear  
a loud noise;<sup>22</sup>  
the nations scatter when you spring into  
action!<sup>23</sup>

**33:4** Your plunder<sup>24</sup> disappears as if lo-  
custs were eating it;<sup>25</sup>  
they swarm over it like locusts!<sup>26</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “indeed, over all the houses of joy.” It is not certain if this refers to individual homes or to places where parties and celebrations were held.

<sup>2</sup> **sn** This same phrase is used in 22:2.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or “noisy” (NAB, NIV, NCV).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Hebrew עִבְלָה (*ofel*), probably refers here to a specific area within the city of Jerusalem. See HALOT 861 s.v. II עִבְלָה.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has בְּעֵד בְּעֵדָה (*v<sup>e</sup>ad m<sup>e</sup>arot*). The force of בְּעֵד, which usually means “behind, through, round about,” or “for the benefit of,” is uncertain here. HALOT 616 s.v. \*בְּעֵדָה takes בְּעֵדָה (*m<sup>e</sup>arot*) as a homonym of “cave” and define it here as “cleared field.” Despite these lexical problems, the general point of the statement seems clear – the city will be uninhabited.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the joy of wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “until a spirit is emptied out on us from on high.” The words “this desolation will continue” are supplied in the translation for clarification and stylistic purposes. The verb קָרָה (*arah*), used here in the Niphal, normally means “lay bare, expose.” The term רוּחַ (*ruakh*, “spirit”) is often understood here as a reference to the divine spirit (cf. 44:3 and NASB, NIV, CEV, NLT), but it appears here without an article (cf. NRSV “a spirit”), pronominal suffix, or a genitive (such as “of the LORD”). The translation assumes that it carries an impersonal nuance “vivacity, vigor” in this context.

<sup>8</sup> **sn** The same statement appears in 29:17b, where, in conjunction with the preceding line, it appears to picture a reversal. Here it seems to depict supernatural growth. The desert will blossom into an orchard, and the trees of the orchard will multiply and grow tall, becoming a forest.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** This new era of divine blessing will also include a moral/ethical transformation, as justice and fairness fill the land and replace the social injustice so prevalent in Isaiah’s time.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the product of fairness will be peace.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the work of fairness [will be] calmness and security forever.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or “in safe resting places”; NAB, NRSV “quiet resting places.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and [?] when the forest descends.” The form וְיָרַד (*uvarad*) is often understood as an otherwise unattested denominative verb meaning “to hail” (HALOT 154 s.v. I יָרַד). In this case one might translate, “and it hails when the forest is destroyed” (cf. KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV). Perhaps the text alludes to a powerful wind and hail storm that knocks down limbs and trees. Some prefer to emend the form to יָרַד (*y<sup>a</sup>rad*), “and it descends,” which provides better, though not perfect, sym-

metry with the parallel line (cf. NAB). Perhaps וְיָרַד should be dismissed as dittographic. In this case the statement (“when the forest descends”) lacks a finite verb and seems incomplete, but perhaps it is subordinate to v. 20.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and in humiliation the city is laid low.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “by all the waters.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “who set free the foot of the ox and donkey”; NIV “letting your cattle and donkeys range free.”

**sn** This verse seems to anticipate a time when fertile land is available to cultivate and crops are so abundant that the farm animals can be allowed to graze freely.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Woe [to] the destroyer.”

**sn** In this context “the destroyer” appears to refer collectively to the hostile nations (vv. 3-4). Assyria would probably have been primary in the minds of the prophet and his audience.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the deceitful one”; NAB, NIV “O traitor”; NRSV “you treacherous one.” In the parallel structure הֵי (*hay*, “woe [to]”) does double duty.

<sup>19</sup> **tc** The form in the Hebrew text appears to derive from an otherwise unattested verb נָלַח (*nalah*). The translation follows the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> in reading נִבְלַח, a Piel infinitival form from the verbal root נָלַח (*kalah*), meaning “finish.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Be their arm each morning.” “Arm” is a symbol for strength. The *mem* suffixed to the noun has been traditionally understood as a third person suffix, but this is contrary to the context, where the people speak of themselves in the first person. The *mem* (ב) is probably enclitic with ellipsis of the pronoun, which can be supplied from the context. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:589, n. 1.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[Be] also our deliverance in the time of distress.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “at the sound of tumult the nations run away.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “because of your exaltation the nations scatter.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The pronoun is plural; the statement is addressed to the nations who have stockpiled plunder from their conquests of others.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and your plunder is gathered, the gathering of the locust.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like a swarm of locusts swarming on it.”

33:5 The LORD is exalted,<sup>1</sup>  
indeed,<sup>2</sup> he lives in heaven;<sup>3</sup>  
he fills Zion with justice and fairness.  
33:6 He is your constant source of  
stability;<sup>4</sup>  
he abundantly provides safety and great  
wisdom;<sup>5</sup>  
he gives all this to those who fear him.<sup>6</sup>  
33:7 Look, ambassadors<sup>7</sup> cry out in the  
streets;  
messengers sent to make peace<sup>8</sup> weep  
bitterly.  
33:8 Highways are empty,<sup>9</sup>  
there are no travelers.<sup>10</sup>  
Treaties are broken,<sup>11</sup>  
witnesses are despised,<sup>12</sup>  
human life is treated with disrespect.<sup>13</sup>  
33:9 The land<sup>14</sup> dries up<sup>15</sup> and withers  
away;  
the forest of Lebanon shrivels up<sup>16</sup> and  
decays.  
Sharon<sup>17</sup> is like the desert;<sup>18</sup>  
Bashan and Carmel<sup>19</sup> are parched.<sup>20</sup>  
33:10 “Now I will rise up,” says the LORD.  
“Now I will exalt myself;  
now I will magnify myself.”<sup>21</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “elevated”; NCV, NLT “is very great.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or “for” (KJV, NASB, NIV).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “on high” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); CEV “in the heavens.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and he is the stability of your times.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a rich store of deliverance, wisdom, and knowledge.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the fear of the LORD, it is his treasure.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The meaning of the Hebrew word is unknown. Proposals include “heroes” (cf. KJV, ASV “valiant ones”; NASB, NIV “brave men”); “priests,” “residents [of Jerusalem].” The present translation assumes that the term is synonymous with “messengers of peace,” with which it corresponds in the parallel structure of the verse.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “messengers of peace,” apparently those responsible for negotiating the agreements that have been broken (see v. 8).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or “desolate” (NAB, NASB); NIV, NRSV, NLT “deserted.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the one passing by on the road ceases.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “one breaks a treaty”; NAB “Covenants are broken.”

<sup>12</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “he despises cities.” The term עָרִים (*arim*, “cities”) is probably a corruption of an original עֵדִים (*edim*, “[legal] witnesses”), a reading that is preserved in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa. Confusion of *dalet* (ד) and *resh* (ר) is a well-attested scribal error.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he does not regard human beings.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “earth” (KJV); NAB “the country.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “mourns” (BDB 5 s.v. אָבַל). HALOT 6-7 lists homonyms אָבַל (“mourn”) and אָבַל (“dry up”). They propose the second here on the basis of parallelism. See 24:4.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Lebanon is ashamed.” The Hiphil is exhibitiv, expressing the idea, “exhibits shame.” In this context the statement alludes to the withering of vegetation.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** *Sharon* was a fertile plain along the Mediterranean coast. See 35:2.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Or “the Arabah” (NIV). See 35:1.

<sup>19</sup> **sn** Both of these areas were known for their trees and vegetation. See 2:13; 35:2.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “shake off [their leaves]” (so ASV, NRSV); NAB “are stripped bare.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or “lift myself up” (KJV); NLT “show my power and might.”

33:11 You conceive straw,<sup>22</sup>  
you give birth to chaff;  
your breath is a fire that destroys you.<sup>23</sup>  
33:12 The nations will be burned to  
ashes;<sup>24</sup>  
like thorn bushes that have been cut  
down, they will be set on fire.  
33:13 You who are far away, listen to what  
I have done!  
You who are close by, recognize my  
strength!<sup>25</sup>  
33:14 Sinners are afraid in Zion;  
panic<sup>25</sup> grips the godless.<sup>26</sup>  
They say,<sup>27</sup> “Who among us can coexist  
with destructive fire?  
Who among us can coexist with un-  
quenchable<sup>28</sup> fire?”  
33:15 The one who lives<sup>29</sup> uprightly<sup>30</sup>  
and speaks honestly;  
the one who refuses to profit from op-  
pressive measures  
and rejects a bribe;<sup>31</sup>  
the one who does not plot violent crimes<sup>32</sup>  
and does not seek to harm others<sup>33</sup> —  
33:16 This is the person who will live in a  
secure place;<sup>34</sup>  
he will find safety in the rocky, mountain  
strongholds;<sup>35</sup>  
he will have food  
and a constant supply of water.  
33:17 You will see a king in his splendor;<sup>36</sup>  
you will see a wide land.<sup>37</sup>  
33:18 Your mind will recall the terror you  
experienced,<sup>38</sup>  
and you will ask yourselves,<sup>39</sup> “Where is  
the scribe?”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** The second person verb and pronominal forms in this verse are plural. The hostile nations are the addressed, as the next verse makes clear.

<sup>23</sup> **sn** The hostile nations’ plans to destroy God’s people will come to nothing; their hostility will end up being self-destructive.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will be a burning to lime.” See Amos 2:1.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Or “trembling” (ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “shake with fear.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Or “the defiled”; TEV “The sinful people of Zion”; NLT “The sinners in Jerusalem.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** The words “they say” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Or “perpetual”; or “everlasting” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>29</sup> **tn** *Heb* “walks” (so NASB, NIV).

<sup>30</sup> **tn** Or, possibly, “justly”; NAB “who practices virtue.”

<sup>31</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[who] shakes off his hands from grabbing hold of a bribe.”

<sup>32</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[who] shuts his ear from listening to bloodshed.”

<sup>33</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[who] closes his eyes from seeing evil.”

<sup>34</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he [in the] exalted places will live.”

<sup>35</sup> **tn** *Heb* “mountain strongholds, cliffs [will be] his elevated place.”

<sup>36</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your eyes will see a king in his beauty”; NIV, NRSV “the king.”

<sup>37</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a land of distances,” i.e., an extensive land.

<sup>38</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your heart will meditate on terror.”

<sup>39</sup> **tn** The words “and you will ask yourselves” are supplied in the translation for clarification and stylistic reasons.

Where is the one who weighs the money?  
Where is the one who counts the towers?<sup>1</sup>

**33:19** You will no longer see a defiant<sup>2</sup>  
people  
whose language you do not comprehend,<sup>3</sup>  
whose derisive speech you do not understand.<sup>4</sup>

**33:20** Look at Zion, the city where we  
hold religious festivals!  
You<sup>5</sup> will see Jerusalem,<sup>6</sup>  
a peaceful settlement,  
a tent that stays put;<sup>7</sup>

its stakes will never be pulled up;  
none of its ropes will snap in two.  
**33:21** Instead the LORD will rule there as  
our mighty king.<sup>8</sup>

Rivers and wide streams will flow  
through it;<sup>9</sup>

no war galley will enter;<sup>10</sup>  
no large ships will sail through.<sup>11</sup>

**33:22** For the LORD, our ruler,  
the LORD, our commander,  
the LORD, our king –  
he will deliver us.

**33:23** Though at this time your ropes are  
slack,<sup>12</sup>

the mast is not secured,<sup>13</sup>  
and the sail<sup>14</sup> is not unfurled,  
at that time you will divide up a great  
quantity of loot;<sup>15</sup>  
even the lame will drag off plunder.<sup>16</sup>

**33:24** No resident of Zion<sup>17</sup> will say, “I am  
ill”;  
the people who live there will have their  
sin forgiven.

### *The Lord Will Judge Edom*

**34:1** Come near, you nations, and listen!  
Pay attention, you people!  
The earth and everything it contains must  
listen,

the world and everything that lives in it.<sup>18</sup>

**34:2** For the LORD is angry at all the na-  
tions  
and furious with all their armies.  
He will annihilate them and slaughter  
them.

**34:3** Their slain will be left unburied,<sup>19</sup>  
their corpses will stink;<sup>20</sup>  
the hills will soak up their blood.<sup>21</sup>

**34:4** All the stars in the sky will fade  
away,<sup>22</sup>

the sky will roll up like a scroll;  
all its stars will wither,  
like a leaf withers and falls from a vine  
or a fig withers and falls from a tree.<sup>23</sup>

**34:5** He says,<sup>24</sup> “Indeed, my sword has  
slaughtered heavenly powers.<sup>25</sup>  
Look, it now descends on Edom,<sup>26</sup>  
on the people I will annihilate in judg-  
ment.”

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The people refer to various Assyrian officials who were responsible for determining the amount of taxation or tribute Judah must pay to the Assyrian king.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The Hebrew form נֹאֲז (no'az) is a Niphal participle derived from אָז (ya'az, an otherwise unattested verb) or from אָזַז ('azaz, “be strong,” unattested elsewhere in the Niphal). Some prefer to emend the form to לוֹעַז (lo'ez) which occurs in Ps 114:1 with the meaning “speak a foreign language.” See HALOT 809 s.v. עָז, 533 s.v. לוֹעַז. In this case, one might translate “people who speak a foreign language.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a people too deep of lip to hear.” The phrase “deep of lip” must be an idiom meaning “lips that speak words that are unfathomable [i.e., incomprehensible].”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “derision of tongue there is no understanding.” The Niphal of אָגַז (la'ag) occurs only here. In the Qal and Hiphil the verb means “to deride, mock.” A related noun is used in 28:11.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your eyes” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>6</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “that does not travel”; NASB “which shall not be folded.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “But there [as] a mighty one [will be] the LORD for us.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a place of rivers, streams wide of hands [i.e., on both sides].”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a ship of rowing will not go into it.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and a mighty ship will not pass through it.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The words “though at this time” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The first half of the verse is addressed to Judah and contrasts the nation’s present weakness with its future prosperity. Judah is compared to a ship that is incapable of sailing.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they do not fasten the base of their mast.” On כָּן (ken, “base”) see BDB 487 s.v. III כָּן and HALOT 483 s.v. III כָּן.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “flag.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “then there will be divided up loot of plunder [in] abundance.”

<sup>16</sup> **sn** Judah’s victory over its enemies will be so thorough

there will be more than enough plunder for everyone, even slow-moving lame men who would normally get left out in the rush to gather the loot.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The words “of Zion” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the world and its offspring”; NASB “the world and all that springs from it.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will be cast aside”; NASB, NIV “thrown out.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[as for] their corpses, their stench will arise.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “hills will dissolve from their blood.”

<sup>22</sup> **tc** *Heb* “and all the host of heaven will rot.” The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> inserts “and the valleys will be split open,” but this reading may be influenced by Mic 1:4. On the other hand, the statement, if original, could have been omitted by homoioarcton, a scribe’s eye jumping from the conjunction prefixed to “the valleys” to the conjunction prefixed to the verb “rot.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like the withering of a leaf from a vine, and like the withering from a fig tree.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The words “he says” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The LORD speaks at this point.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “indeed [or “for”] my sword is drenched in the heavens.” The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has תְּרִיחָה (“[my sword] appeared [in the heavens]”), but this is apparently an attempt to make sense out of a difficult metaphor. Cf. NIV “My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens.”

**sn** In v. 4 the “host of the heaven” refers to the heavenly luminaries (stars and planets, see, among others, Deut 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4-5; 2 Chr 33:3, 5) that populate the divine/heavenly assembly in mythological and prescientific Israelite thought (see Job 38:7; Isa 14:13). As in 24:21, they are viewed here as opposing God and being defeated in battle.

<sup>26</sup> **sn** Edom is mentioned here as epitomizing the hostile nations that oppose God.



**34:6** The LORD’s sword is dripping with blood,  
it is covered<sup>1</sup> with fat;  
it drips<sup>2</sup> with the blood of young rams  
and goats  
and is covered<sup>3</sup> with the fat of rams’  
kidneys.  
For the LORD is holding a sacrifice<sup>4</sup> in  
Bozrah,<sup>5</sup>  
a bloody<sup>6</sup> slaughter in the land of Edom.  
**34:7** Wild oxen will be slaughtered<sup>7</sup> along  
with them,  
as well as strong bulls.<sup>8</sup>  
Their land is drenched with blood,  
their soil is covered with fat.  
**34:8** For the LORD has planned a day of  
revenge,<sup>9</sup>  
a time when he will repay Edom for her  
hostility toward Zion.<sup>10</sup>  
**34:9** Edom’s<sup>11</sup> streams will be turned into  
pitch  
and her soil into brimstone;  
her land will become burning pitch.  
**34:10** Night and day it will burn;<sup>12</sup>  
its smoke will ascend continually.  
Generation after generation it will be a  
wasteland  
and no one will ever pass through it  
again.  
**34:11** Owls and wild animals<sup>13</sup> will live  
there,<sup>14</sup>  
all kinds of wild birds<sup>15</sup> will settle in it.  
The LORD<sup>16</sup> will stretch out over her  
the measuring line of ruin

and the plumb line<sup>17</sup> of destruction.<sup>18</sup>  
**34:12** Her nobles will have nothing left to  
call a kingdom  
and all her officials will disappear.<sup>19</sup>  
**34:13** Her fortresses will be overgrown  
with thorns;  
thickets and weeds will grow<sup>20</sup> in her for-  
tified cities.  
Jackals will settle there;  
ostriches will live there.<sup>21</sup>  
**34:14** Wild animals and wild dogs will  
congregate there;<sup>22</sup>  
wild goats will bleat to one another.<sup>23</sup>  
Yes, nocturnal animals<sup>24</sup> will rest there  
and make for themselves a nest.<sup>25</sup>  
**34:15** Owls<sup>26</sup> will make nests and lay  
eggs<sup>27</sup> there;  
they will hatch them and protect them.<sup>28</sup>  
Yes, hawks<sup>29</sup> will gather there,  
each with its mate.  
**34:16** Carefully read the scroll of the  
LORD!<sup>30</sup>  
Not one of these creatures will be miss-  
ing,<sup>31</sup>  
none will lack a mate.<sup>32</sup>

**1 tn** The verb is a rare Hotpaal passive form. See GKC 150 §54.h.

**2 tn** The words “it drips” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

**3 tn** The words “and is covered” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

**4 tn Heb** “for there is a sacrifice to the LORD.”

**5 sn** The LORD’s judgment of Edom is compared to a bloody sacrificial scene.

**6 tn Heb** “great” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

**7 tn Heb** “will go down”; NAB “shall be struck down.”

**8 tn Heb** “and bulls along with strong ones.” Perhaps this refers to the leaders.

**9 tn Heb** “for a day of vengeance [is] for the LORD.”

**10 tn Heb** “a year of repayment for the strife of Zion.” The translation assumes that ריב (riv) refers to Edom’s hostility toward Zion. Another option is to understand ריב (riv) as referring to the LORD’s taking up Zion’s cause. In this case one might translate, “a time when he will repay Edom and vindicate Zion.”

**11 tn Heb** “her”; the referent (Edom) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

**12 tn Heb** “it will not be extinguished.”

**13 tn** Heb *qa’at* (q̄a’at) refers to some type of bird (cf. Lev 11:18; Deut 14:17) that was typically found near ruins (see Zeph 2:14); קיפור (kipod) may also refer to a type of bird (NAB “hoot owl”; NIV “screech owl”; TEV “ravens”), but some have suggested a rodent may be in view (cf. NCV “small animals”; ASV “porcupine”; NASB, NRSV “hedgehog”).

**14 tn Heb** “will possess it” (so NIV).

**15 tn** The Hebrew text has גִּישְׁפָּרֹת (yanshof v<sup>e</sup> orev). Both the Hebrew and “owl”; see Lev 11:17; Deut 14:16) and עֲרָב (‘ravn); Lev 11:15; Deut 14:14) were types of wild birds.

**16 tn Heb** “he”; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

**17 tn Heb** “stones,” i.e., the stones used in a plumb bob.

**18 sn** The metaphor in v. 11b emphasizes that God has carefully planned Edom’s demise.

**19 tn Heb** “will be nothing”; NCV, TEV, NLT “will all be gone.”

**20 tn** The words “will grow” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

**21 tc Heb** “and she will be a settlement for wild dogs, a dwelling place for ostriches.” The translation assumes an emendation of חַצִּיר (khatsir, “grass”) to חָצִיר (khatsar, “settlement”). One of the Qumran scrolls of Isaiah (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) supports this emendation (cf. HALOT 344 s.v. חַצִּיר).

**22 tn Heb** “will meet” (so NIV); NLT “will mingle there.”

**23 tn Heb** “and a goat will call to its neighbor.”

**24 tn** The precise meaning of לַיְלִית (lilit) is unclear, though in this context the word certainly refers to some type of wild animal or bird. The word appears to be related to לַיְלָה (laylah, “night”). Some interpret it as the name of a female night demon, on the basis of an apparent Akkadian cognate used as the name of a demon. Later Jewish legends also identified Lilith as a demon. Cf. NRSV “Lilith.”

**25 tn Heb** “and will find for themselves a resting place.”

**26 tn** Heb *qippoz* (q̄ppoz) occurs only here; the precise meaning of the word is uncertain.

**27 tn** For this proposed meaning for Hebrew מַלֵּא (malat), see HALOT 589 s.v. מֵלֵא.

**28 tn Heb** “and brood [over them] in her shadow.”

**29 tn** The precise meaning of הַיָּהּ (dayyah) is uncertain, though the term appears to refer to some type of bird of prey, perhaps a vulture.

**30 tn Heb** “Seek from upon the scroll of the LORD and read.”

**sn** It is uncertain what particular scroll is referred to here. Perhaps the phrase simply refers to this prophecy and is an admonition to pay close attention to the details of the message.

**31 tn Heb** “one from these will not be missing.” הֵנָּה (hen-nah, “these”) is feminine plural in the Hebrew text. It may refer only to the birds mentioned in v. 15b or may include all of the creatures listed in vv. 14b-15 (all of which are identified with feminine nouns).

**32 tn Heb** “each its mate they will not lack.”

For the LORD has issued the decree,<sup>1</sup>  
and his own spirit gathers them.<sup>2</sup>  
34:17 He assigns them their allotment;<sup>3</sup>  
he measures out their assigned place.<sup>4</sup>  
They will live there<sup>5</sup> permanently;  
they will settle in it through successive  
generations.

*The Land and Its People Are Transformed*

35:1 Let the desert and dry region be  
happy;<sup>6</sup>  
let the wilderness<sup>7</sup> rejoice and bloom  
like a lily!  
35:2 Let it richly bloom;<sup>8</sup>  
let it rejoice and shout with delight!<sup>9</sup>  
It is given the grandeur<sup>10</sup> of Lebanon,  
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon.  
They will see the grandeur of the LORD,  
the splendor of our God.  
35:3 Strengthen the hands that have gone  
limp,  
steady the knees that shake!<sup>11</sup>  
35:4 Tell those who panic,<sup>12</sup>  
“Be strong! Do not fear!  
Look, your God comes to avenge!  
With divine retribution he comes to de-  
liver you.”<sup>13</sup>

35:5 Then blind eyes will open,  
deaf ears will hear.  
35:6 Then the lame will leap like a deer,  
the mute tongue will shout for joy;  
for water will flow<sup>14</sup> in the desert,  
streams in the wilderness.<sup>15</sup>  
35:7 The dry soil will become a pool of  
water,  
the parched ground springs of water.  
Where jackals once lived and sprawled  
out,  
grass, reeds, and papyrus will grow.  
35:8 A thoroughfare will be there –  
it will be called the Way of Holiness.<sup>16</sup>  
The unclean will not travel on it;  
it is reserved for those authorized to use  
it<sup>17</sup> –  
fools<sup>18</sup> will not stray into it.  
35:9 No lions will be there,  
no ferocious wild animals will be on it<sup>19</sup> –  
they will not be found there.  
Those delivered from bondage will travel  
on it,  
35:10 those whom the LORD has ransomed  
will return that way.<sup>20</sup>  
They will enter Zion with a happy shout.  
Unending joy will crown them,<sup>21</sup>  
happiness and joy will overwhelm<sup>22</sup>  
them;  
grief and suffering will disappear.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “for a mouth, it has commanded.” The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and a few medieval MSS have בִּירוֹ (pīhu, “his mouth [has commanded]”), while a few other medieval MSS read בִּי יְהוָה (pī yēhvah, “the mouth of the LORD [has commanded]”).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and his spirit, he gathers them.” The pronominal suffix (“them”) is feminine plural, referring to the birds mentioned in v. 15b or to all of the creatures listed in vv. 14b-15 (all of which are identified with feminine nouns).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and he causes the lot to fall for them.” Once again the pronominal suffix (“them”) is feminine plural, referring to the birds mentioned in v. 15b or to all of the creatures listed in vv. 14b-15 (all of which are identified with feminine nouns).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and his hand divides for them with a measuring line.” The pronominal suffix (“them”) now switches to masculine plural, referring to all the animals and birds mentioned in vv. 11-15, some of which were identified with masculine nouns. This signals closure for this portion of the speech, which began in v. 11. The following couplet (v. 17b) forms an inclusio with v. 11a through verbal repetition.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will possess it” (so NIV); NCV “they will own that land forever.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The final *mem* (ם) on the verb יִשְׂשׂוּם (yēsusum) is ditographic (note the initial *mem* on the following noun מְדַבֵּר [midbar]). The ambiguous verbal form is translated as a jussive because it is parallel to the jussive form תִּגְלֵל (tagel). The jussive is used rhetorically here, not as a literal command or prayer.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “Arabah” (NASB); NAB, NIV, TEV “desert.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The ambiguous verb form תִּפְרַחַהּ (tifrah) is translated as a jussive because it is parallel to the jussive form תִּגְלֵל (tagel).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and let it rejoice, yes [with] rejoicing and shouting.” גִּילַת (gilat) may be an archaic feminine nominal form (see GKC 421 §130.b).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or “glory” (KJV, NIV, NRSV); also a second time later in this verse.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “staggering knees”; KJV, ASV, NRSV “feeble knees”; NIV “knees that give way.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Say to the hasty of heart,” i.e., those whose hearts beat quickly from fear.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The jussive form וְיִשְׂעַבְבֵם (yēyosha’akhem), which is subordinated to the preceding imperfect with *vav* conjunctive, indicates purpose.

*Sennacherib Invades Judah*

36:1 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah’s reign,<sup>24</sup> King Sennacherib of Assyria marched up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. 36:2 The king of

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “burst forth” (so NAB); KJV “break out.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “Arabah” (NASB); KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT “desert.”

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and there will be there a road and a way, and the Way of Holiness it will be called.” הַדֶּרֶךְ (v<sup>e</sup>derekh, “and a/the way”) is accidentally duplicated; the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> does not reflect the repetition of the phrase.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. The text reads literally “and it is for them, the one who walks [on the] way.” In this context those authorized to use the Way of Holiness would be morally upright people who are the recipients of God’s deliverance, in contrast to the morally impure and foolish who are excluded from the new covenant community.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** In this context “fools” are those who are morally corrupt, not those with limited intellectual capacity.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will go up on it”; TEV “will pass that way.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the redeemed will walk, the ransomed of the LORD will return.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[will be] on their head[s].” “Joy” may be likened here to a crown (cf. 2 Sam 1:10). The statement may also be an ironic twist on the idiom “earth/dust on the head” (cf. 2 Sam 1:2; 13:19; 15:32; Job 2:12), referring to a mourning practice.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will overtake” (NIV); NLT “they will be overcome with.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “grief and groaning will flee”; KJV “sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a dis-coordinate particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

Assyria sent his chief adviser<sup>1</sup> from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> along with a large army. The chief adviser<sup>3</sup> stood at the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.<sup>4</sup> **36:3** Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went out to meet him.

**36:4** The chief adviser said to them, “Tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: “What is your source of confidence?<sup>5</sup> **36:5** Your claim to have a strategy and military strength is just empty talk.<sup>6</sup> In whom are you trusting, that you would dare to rebel against me? **36:6** Look, you must be trusting in Egypt, that splintered reed staff. If someone leans on it for support, it punctures his hand and wounds him. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt does to all who trust in him! **36:7** Perhaps you will tell me, ‘We are trusting in the LORD our God.’ But Hezekiah is the one who eliminated his high places and altars and then told the people of Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You must worship at this altar.’ **36:8** Now make a deal with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, provided you can find enough riders for them. **36:9** Certainly you will not refuse one of my master’s minor officials and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen.<sup>7</sup> **36:10** Furthermore it was by the command of the LORD that I marched up against this land to destroy it. The LORD told me, ‘March up against this land and destroy it!’”<sup>8</sup>

**36:11** Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the chief adviser, “Speak to your servants in Ar-

amaic,<sup>9</sup> for we understand it. Don’t speak with us in the Judahite dialect<sup>10</sup> in the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” **36:12** But the chief adviser said, “My master did not send me to speak these words only to your master and to you.<sup>11</sup> His message is also for the men who sit on the wall, for they will eat their own excrement and drink their own urine along with you!”<sup>12</sup>

**36:13** The chief adviser then stood there and called out loudly in the Judahite dialect,<sup>13</sup> “Listen to the message of the great king, the king of Assyria. **36:14** This is what the king says: ‘Don’t let Hezekiah mislead you, for he is not able to rescue you! **36:15** Don’t let Hezekiah talk you into trusting in the LORD by saying, “The LORD will certainly rescue us; this city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.” **36:16** Don’t listen to Hezekiah!’ For this is what the king of Assyria says, “Send me a token of your submission and surrender to me.<sup>14</sup> Then each of you may eat from his own vine and fig tree and drink water from his own cistern, **36:17** until I come and take you to a land just like your own – a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards. **36:18** Hezekiah is misleading you when he says, “The LORD will rescue us.” Has any of the gods of the nations rescued his land from the power of the king of Assyria?<sup>15</sup> **36:19** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim?<sup>16</sup> Indeed, did any gods rescue Samaria<sup>17</sup> from my power?<sup>18</sup> **36:20** Who among all the gods of these lands have rescued their lands from my power? So how can the LORD rescue Jerusalem from my power?”<sup>19</sup> **36:21** They were silent and did not

<sup>1</sup> **sn** For a discussion of this title see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 229-30.

<sup>2</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (the chief adviser) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “the field of the washer”; traditionally “the fuller’s field” (so KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “What is this object of trust in which you are trusting?”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “you say only a word of lips, counsel and might for battle.” Sennacherib’s message appears to be in broken Hebrew at this point. The phrase “word of lips” refers to mere or empty talk in Prov 14:23.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “How can you turn back the face of an official [from among] the least of my master’s servants and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen?” In vv. 8-9 the chief adviser develops further the argument begun in v. 6. His reasoning seems to be as follows: “In your weakened condition you obviously need military strength. Agree to the king’s terms and I will personally give you more horses than you are capable of outfitting. If I, a mere minor official, am capable of giving you such military might, just think what power the king has. There is no way the Egyptians can match our strength. It makes much better sense to deal with us.”

<sup>8</sup> **sn** In v. 10 the chief adviser develops further the argument begun in v. 7. He claims that Hezekiah has offended the LORD and that the LORD has commissioned Assyria as his instrument of discipline and judgment.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Aramaic was the diplomatic language of the Assyrian empire.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or “in Hebrew” (NIV, NCV, NLT); NAB, NASB “in Judean.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “To your master and to you did my master send me to speak these words?” The rhetorical question expects a negative answer.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “[Is it] not [also] to the men...?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Yes, it is.”

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The chief adviser alludes to the horrible reality of siege warfare, when the starving people in the besieged city would resort to eating and drinking anything to stay alive.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text includes “and he said.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “make with me a blessing and come out to me.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “Have the gods of the nations rescued, each his land, from the hand of the king of Assyria?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Of course not!”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The rhetorical questions in v. 34a suggest the answer, “Nowhere, they seem to have disappeared in the face of Assyria’s might.”

<sup>18</sup> **map** For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “that they rescued Samaria from my hand?” But this gives the impression that the gods of Sepharvaim were responsible for protecting Samaria, which is obviously not the case. The implied subject of the plural verb “rescued” must be the generic “gods of the nations/lands” (vv. 18, 20).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “that the LORD might rescue Jerusalem from my hand?” The logic runs as follows: Since no god has ever been able to withstand the Assyrian onslaught, how can the people of Jerusalem possibly think the LORD will rescue them?

respond, for the king had ordered, “Don’t respond to him.”

**36:22** Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn in grief<sup>1</sup> and reported to him what the chief adviser had said. **37:1** When King Hezekiah heard this,<sup>2</sup> he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went to the LORD’s temple. **37:2** Eliakim the palace supervisor, Shebna the scribe, and the leading priests,<sup>3</sup> clothed in sackcloth, sent this message to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz: **37:3** “This is what Hezekiah says:<sup>4</sup> ‘This is a day of distress, insults,<sup>5</sup> and humiliation,<sup>6</sup> as when a baby is ready to leave the birth canal, but the mother lacks the strength to push it through.’ **37:4** Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all these things the chief adviser has spoken on behalf of his master, the king of Assyria, who sent him to taunt the living God.<sup>8</sup> When the LORD your God hears, perhaps he will punish him for the things he has said.<sup>9</sup> So pray for this remnant that remains.”<sup>10</sup>

**37:5** When King Hezekiah’s servants came to Isaiah, **37:6** Isaiah said to them, “Tell your master this: ‘This is what the LORD says: “Don’t be afraid because of the things you have heard – these insults the king of Assyria’s servants have hurled against me.<sup>11</sup> **37:7** Look, I will take control of his mind;<sup>12</sup> he will receive a report and return to his own land. I will cut him down<sup>13</sup> with a sword in his own land.”’”

**37:8** When the chief adviser heard the king of Assyria had departed from Lachish, he left and went to Libnah, where the king was cam-

paigned.<sup>14</sup> **37:9** The king<sup>15</sup> heard that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia<sup>16</sup> was marching out to fight him.<sup>17</sup> He again sent<sup>18</sup> messengers to Hezekiah, ordering them: **37:10** “Tell King Hezekiah of Judah this: ‘Don’t let your God in whom you trust mislead you when he says, “Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.”’ **37:11** Certainly you have heard how the kings of Assyria have annihilated all lands.<sup>19</sup> Do you really think you will be rescued?<sup>20</sup> **37:12** Were the nations whom my predecessors<sup>21</sup> destroyed – the nations of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Telassar – rescued by their gods?<sup>22</sup> **37:13** Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the kings of Lair,<sup>23</sup> Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?”

**37:14** Hezekiah took the letter<sup>24</sup> from the messengers and read it.<sup>25</sup> Then Hezekiah went up to the LORD’s temple and spread it out before the LORD. **37:15** Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: **37:16** “O LORD who commands armies, O God of Israel, who is enthroned on the cherubim!<sup>26</sup> You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the sky<sup>27</sup> and the earth. **37:17** Pay attention, LORD, and hear! Open your eyes, LORD, and observe! Listen to this entire message Sennacherib sent and how he taunts the

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “with their clothes torn”; the words “in grief” have been supplied in the translation to indicate that this was done as a sign of grief and mourning.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “elders of the priests” (so KJV, NAB, NASB); NCV “the older priests”; NRSV, TEV, CEV “the senior priests.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** In the Hebrew text this verse begins with “they said to him” (cf. NRSV).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or “rebuke” (KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV), or “correction.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or “contempt”; NAB, NIV, NRSV “disgrace.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “when sons come to the cervical opening and there is no strength to give birth.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all the words of the chief adviser whom his master, the king of Assyria, sent to taunt the living God.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and rebuke the words which the LORD your God hears.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and lift up a prayer on behalf of the remnant that is found.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “by which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I will put in him a spirit.” The precise sense of *רוּחַ* (*ruakh*, “spirit”) is uncertain in this context. It may refer to a spiritual being who will take control of his mind (see 1 Kgs 22:19), or it could refer to a disposition of concern and fear. In either case the LORD’s sovereignty over the king is apparent.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “cause him to fall” (so KJV, ASV, NAB), that is, “kill him.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the chief adviser returned and he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Cush” (so NASB); NIV, NCV “the Cushite king of Egypt.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, ‘He has come out to fight with you.’”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has, “and he heard and he sent,” but the parallel in 2 Kgs 19:9 has *וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּשְׁלַח* (*vayyashav vayyishlach*, “and he returned and he sent”), i.e., “he again sent.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, annihilating them.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and will you be rescued?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “No, of course not!”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “fathers” (so KJV, NAB, NASB); NIV “forefathers”; NCV “ancestors.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Did the gods of the nations whom my fathers destroyed rescue them – Gozan and Haran, and Rezeph and the sons of Eden who are in Telassar?”

<sup>23</sup> **sn** *Lair* was a city located in northeastern Babylon. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 235.

<sup>24</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has the plural, “letters.” The final *mem* (מ) may be dittographic (note the initial *mem* on the form that immediately follows). Some Greek and Aramaic witnesses have the singular. If so, one still has to deal with the *yod* that is part of the plural ending. J. N. Oswalt refers to various commentators who have suggested ways to understand the plural form (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:652).

<sup>25</sup> **tn** In the parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:14 the verb has the plural suffix, “them,” but this probably reflects a later harmonization to the preceding textual corruption (of “letter” to “letters”).

<sup>26</sup> **sn** *Cherubim* (singular “cherub”) refers to the images of winged angelic creatures that were above the ark of the covenant.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term *שָׁמַיִם* (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.



living God!<sup>1</sup> **37:18** It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all the nations<sup>2</sup> and their lands. **37:19** They have burned the gods of the nations,<sup>3</sup> for they are not really gods, but only the product of human hands manufactured from wood and stone. That is why the Assyrians could destroy them.<sup>4</sup> **37:20** Now, O LORD our God, rescue us from his power, so all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the LORD.<sup>5</sup>

**37:21** Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD God of Israel says: ‘Because you prayed to me concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria,<sup>6</sup> **37:22** this is what the LORD says about him:<sup>7</sup>

“The virgin daughter Zion<sup>8</sup> despises you – she makes fun of you; daughter Jerusalem shakes her head after you.<sup>9</sup>

**37:23** Whom have you taunted and hurled insults at?

At whom have you shouted and looked so arrogantly?<sup>10</sup>

At the Holy One of Israel!<sup>11</sup>

**37:24** Through your messengers you taunted the sovereign master,<sup>12</sup>

‘With my many chariots I climbed up the high mountains, the slopes of Lebanon.

I cut down its tall cedars and its best evergreens.

I invaded its most remote regions,<sup>13</sup> its thickest woods.

**37:25** I dug wells and drank water.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Hear all the words of Sennacherib which he sent to taunt the living God.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text here has “all the lands,” but the parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:17 has “the nations.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and they put their gods in the fire.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “so they destroyed them” (NASB similar).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:19 reads, “that you, LORD, are the only God.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:20 reads, “That which you prayed to me concerning Sennacherib King of Assyria I have heard.” The verb “I have heard” does not appear in Isa 37:21, where אָשֶׁר (*asher*) probably has a causal sense: “because.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “this is the word which the LORD has spoken about him.”

<sup>8</sup> **sn** Zion (Jerusalem) is pictured here as a young, vulnerable daughter whose purity is being threatened by the would-be Assyrian rapist. The personification hints at the reality which the young girls of the city would face if the Assyrians conquer it.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Shaking the head was a mocking gesture of derision.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and lifted your eyes on high?” Cf. NIV “lifted your eyes in pride”; NRSV “haughtily lifted your eyes.”

<sup>11</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonay*).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the height of its extremity”; ASV “its farthest height.”

<sup>14</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has simply, “I dug and drank water.” But the parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:24 has “foreign waters.” זָרִים (*zarim*, “foreign”) may have accidentally dropped out of the Isaianic text by homoioteleuton (cf. NCV, NIV, NLT). Note that the preceding word, מַיִם (*mayim*, “water) also ends in *mem* (ם). The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has “foreign waters” for this

With the soles of my feet I dried up all the rivers of Egypt.<sup>7</sup>

**37:26**<sup>15</sup> Certainly you must have heard!<sup>16</sup>

Long ago I worked it out, in ancient times I planned<sup>17</sup> it, and now I am bringing it to pass.

The plan is this:

Fortified cities will crash into heaps of ruins.<sup>18</sup>

**37:27** Their residents are powerless;<sup>19</sup> they are terrified and ashamed.

They are as short-lived as plants in the field

or green vegetation.<sup>20</sup>

They are as short-lived as grass on the rooftops<sup>21</sup>

when it is scorched by the east wind.<sup>22</sup>

**37:28** I know where you live and everything you do

and how you rage against me.<sup>23</sup>

**37:29** Because you rage against me and the uproar you create has reached my ears,<sup>24</sup>

line. However, in several other passages the 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> scroll harmonizes with 2 Kgs 19 against the MT (Isa 36:5; 37:9, 20). Since the addition of “foreign” to this text in Isaiah by a later scribe would be more likely than its deletion, the MT reading should be accepted.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Having quoted the Assyrian king’s arrogant words in vv. 23-24, the LORD now speaks to the king.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Have you not heard?” The rhetorical question expresses the LORD’s amazement that anyone might be ignorant of what he is about to say.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “formed” (so KJV, ASV).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and it is to cause to crash into heaps of ruins fortified cities.” The subject of the third feminine singular verb תִּהְיֶי (ʾ*hi*) is the implied plan, referred to in the preceding lines with third feminine singular pronominal suffixes.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “short of hand”; KJV, ASV “of small power”; NASB “short of strength.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they are plants in the field and green vegetation.” The metaphor emphasizes how short-lived these seemingly powerful cities really were. See Ps 90:5-6; Isa 40:6-8, 24.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[they are] grass on the rooftops.” See the preceding note.

<sup>22</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has “scorched before the standing grain” (perhaps meaning “before it reaches maturity”), but it is preferable to emend קָמַחַ (*qamah*, “standing grain”) to קָדִים (*qadim*, “east wind”) with the support of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>; cf. J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:657, n. 8.

<sup>23</sup> **tc** *Heb* “your going out and your coming in and how you have raged against me.” Several scholars have suggested that this line is probably dittographic (note the beginning of the next line). However, most English translations include the statement in question at the end of v. 28 and the beginning of v. 29. Interestingly, the LXX does not have this clause at the end of v. 28 and the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> does not have it at the beginning of v. 29. In light of this ambiguous manuscript evidence, it appears best to retain the clause in both verses.

<sup>24</sup> **tc** *Heb* “and your complacency comes up into my ears.” The parallelism is improved if שְׂמֵנֶיךָ (*sha’anankha*, “your complacency”) is emended to שְׂמֵיךָ (*sh<sup>e</sup>on’kha*, “your uproar”). See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 237-38. However, the LXX seems to support the MT and Sennacherib’s cavalier dismissal of Yahweh depicts an arrogant complacency (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:658, n. 10).

I will put my hook in your nose,<sup>1</sup>  
and my bridle between your lips,  
and I will lead you back  
the way you came.”

**37:30**<sup>2</sup> “This will be your reminder that I have spoken the truth:<sup>3</sup> This year you will eat what grows wild,<sup>4</sup> and next year<sup>5</sup> what grows on its own. But the year after that<sup>6</sup> you will plant seed and harvest crops; you will plant vines and consume their produce.<sup>7</sup> **37:31** Those who remain in Judah will take root in the ground and bear fruit.<sup>8</sup>

**37:32** “For a remnant will leave Jerusalem; survivors will come out of Mount Zion. The intense devotion of the LORD who commands armies<sup>9</sup> will accomplish this.

**37:33** So this is what the LORD says about the king of Assyria:

‘He will not enter this city,  
nor will he shoot an arrow here.<sup>10</sup>

He will not attack it with his shielded warriors,<sup>11</sup>

nor will he build siege works against it.

**37:34** He will go back the way he came – he will not enter this city,’ says the LORD.

**37:35** I will shield this city and rescue it for the sake of my reputation and because of my promise to David my servant.”<sup>12</sup>

**37:36** The LORD’s messenger<sup>13</sup> went out and killed 185,000 troops<sup>14</sup> in the Assyrian camp. When they<sup>15</sup> got up early the next morning, there

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The word-picture has a parallel in Assyrian sculpture. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 238.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** At this point the word concerning the king of Assyria (vv. 22-29) ends and the LORD again addresses Hezekiah and the people directly (see v. 21).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and this is your sign.” In this case the *אוֹת* (*ot*, “sign”) is a future reminder of God’s intervention designated before the actual intervention takes place. For similar “signs” see Exod 3:12 and Isa 7:14-25.

<sup>4</sup> **sn** This refers to crops that grew up on their own (that is, without cultivation) from the seed planted in past years.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and in the second year” (so ASV).

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in the third year” (so KJV, NAB).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The four plural imperatival verb forms in v. 30b are used rhetorically. The LORD commands the people to plant, harvest, etc. to emphasize the certainty of restored peace and prosperity.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “The remnant of the house of Judah that is left will add roots below and produce fruit above.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the zeal of the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].” In this context the LORD’s “zeal” refers to his intense devotion to and love for his people which prompts him to protect and restore them.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “there” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV). In terms of English style “here” is expected in collocation with “this” in the previous line.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[with] a shield” (so ASV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for my sake and for the sake of David my servant.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Traditionally, “the angel of the Lord” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The word “troops” is supplied in the translation for smoothness and clarity.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** This refers to the Israelites and/or the rest of the As-

were all the corpses!<sup>16</sup> **37:37** So King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and went on his way. He went home and stayed in Nineveh.<sup>17</sup> **37:38** One day,<sup>18</sup> as he was worshiping<sup>19</sup> in the temple of his god Nisroch,<sup>20</sup> his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword.<sup>21</sup> They ran away to the land of Ararat; his son Esarhaddon replaced him as king.

### *The Lord Hears Hezekiah’s Prayer*

**38:1** In those days Hezekiah was stricken with a terminal illness.<sup>22</sup> The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz visited him and told him, “This is what the LORD says, ‘Give instructions to your household, for you are about to die; you will not get well.’” **38:2** Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, **38:3** “Please, LORD. Remember how I have served you<sup>23</sup> faithfully and with wholehearted devotion,<sup>24</sup> and how I have carried out your will.”<sup>25</sup> Then Hezekiah wept bitterly.<sup>26</sup>

**38:4** The LORD told Isaiah,<sup>27</sup> **38:5** “Go and tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the LORD God of your ancestor<sup>28</sup> David says: “I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I will add fifteen years to your life, **38:6** and rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will shield this city.”’” **38:21**<sup>29</sup> Isaiah ordered, “Let them take a fig cake and apply it to the ulcerated sore and he will get well.” **38:22** Hezekiah said, “What is the confirming sign that I will go up to

syrian army.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “look, all of them were dead bodies”; NLT “they found corpses everywhere.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went and returned and lived in Nineveh.”

<sup>18</sup> **sn** The assassination of King Sennacherib probably took place in 681 B.C.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** No such Mesopotamian god is presently known. Perhaps the name *Nisroch* is a corruption of Nusku.

<sup>21</sup> **sn** Extra-biblical sources also mention the assassination of Sennacherib, though they refer to only one assassin. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 239-40.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “was sick to the point of dying”; NRSV “became sick and was at the point of death.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “walked before you.” For a helpful discussion of the background and meaning of this Hebrew idiom, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 254.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and with a complete heart”; KJV, ASV “with a perfect heart.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and that which is good in your eyes I have done.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* “wept with great weeping”; NCV “cried loudly”; TEV “began to cry bitterly.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* “father” (so KJV, NAB, NIV).

<sup>29</sup> **tc** If original to Isaiah 38, vv. 21-22 have obviously been misplaced in the course of the text’s transmission, and would most naturally be placed here, between Isa 38:6 and 38:7. See 2 Kgs 20:7-8, where these verses are placed at this point in the narrative, not at the end. Another possibility is that these verses were not in the original account, and a scribe, familiar with the 2 Kgs version of the story, appended vv. 21-22 to the end of the account in Isaiah 38.

the LORD's temple?" 38:7 Isaiah replied,<sup>1</sup> "This is your sign from the LORD confirming that the LORD will do what he has said: 38:8 Look, I will make the shadow go back ten steps on the stairs of Ahaz."<sup>2</sup> And then the shadow went back ten steps.<sup>3</sup>

*Hezekiah's Song of Thanks*

38:9 This is the prayer of King Hezekiah of Judah when he was sick and then recovered from his illness:

38:10 "I thought,<sup>4</sup>  
 'In the middle of my life<sup>5</sup> I must walk  
 through the gates of Sheol,  
 I am deprived<sup>6</sup> of the rest of my years.'  
 38:11 "I thought,  
 'I will no longer see the LORD<sup>7</sup> in the  
 land of the living,  
 I will no longer look on humankind with  
 the inhabitants of the world.<sup>8</sup>  
 38:12 My dwelling place<sup>9</sup> is removed and  
 taken away<sup>10</sup> from me  
 like a shepherd's tent.  
 I rolled up my life like a weaver rolls  
 cloth,<sup>11</sup>  
 from the loom he cuts me off.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The words "Isaiah replied" are supplied in the translation for clarification. In the present form of the Hebrew text v. 7 is joined directly to v. 6, but vv. 21-22, if original to Isaiah 38, must be inserted here. See 2 Kgs 20:7-8.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the shadow on the steps which [the sun] had gone down, on the steps of Ahaz, with the sun, back ten steps."

**sn** These steps probably functioned as a type of sundial. See HALOT 614 s.v. מַעְדָּקֵי and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 256.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the sun returned ten steps on the steps which it had gone down."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or "I said" (KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of the phrase בְּדַמֵּי יָמַי (*bidmi yamay*, "in the [?] of my days") is uncertain. According to HALOT 226 s.v. דָּמִי this word is a *hapax legomenon* meaning "half." Others derive the form from דָּמִי (*dami*, "quiet, rest, peacefulness").

<sup>6</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of the verb is uncertain. The Pual of פָּקַד (*paqad*) occurs only here and in Exod 38:21, where it appears to mean "passed in review" or "mustered." Perhaps the idea is, "I have been called away for the remainder of my years." To bring out the sense more clearly, one can translate, "I am deprived of the rest of my years."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has יְהוָה יְהוָה (*yah yah*, the abbreviated form of יהוה יהוה [*yhwh yhwh*] repeated), but this is probably a corruption of יהוה יהוה.

<sup>8</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has כְּחַדֵּל (*khadel*), which appears to be derived from a verbal root meaning "to cease, refrain." But the form has probably suffered an error of transmission; the original form (attested in a few medieval Hebrew MSS) was likely כְּחֵלֶד (*kheled*, "world").

<sup>9</sup> **tn** According to HALOT 217 s.v. דוּר this noun is a *hapax legomenon* meaning "dwelling place," derived from a verbal root meaning "live" (see Ps 84:10). For an interpretation that understands the form as the well-attested noun meaning "generation," see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:679, n. 4.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The verb form appears to be a Niphal from גָּלָה (*galah*), which normally means "uncovered, revealed" in the Niphal. Because of the following reference to a shepherd's tent, some prefer to emend the form to גָּלָה, a Niphal from גָּלָה (*galal*, "roll") and translate "is rolled [or "folded"] up."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I rolled up, like a weaver, my life" (so ASV).

<sup>12</sup> **sn** For a discussion of the imagery employed here, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:684.

You turn day into night and end my life.<sup>13</sup>

38:13 I cry out<sup>14</sup> until morning;  
 like a lion he shatters all my bones;  
 you turn day into night and end my life.<sup>15</sup>

38:14 Like a swallow or a thrush I chirp,  
 I coo<sup>16</sup> like a dove;  
 my eyes grow tired from looking up to  
 the sky.<sup>17</sup>

O sovereign master,<sup>18</sup> I am oppressed;  
 help me!<sup>19</sup>

38:15 What can I say?

He has decreed and acted.<sup>20</sup>  
 I will walk slowly all my years because I  
 am overcome with grief.<sup>21</sup>

38:16 O sovereign master, your decrees  
 can give men life;

may years of life be restored to me.<sup>22</sup>  
 Restore my health<sup>23</sup> and preserve my life.<sup>24</sup>

38:17 "Look, the grief I experienced was  
 for my benefit.<sup>24</sup>

You delivered me<sup>25</sup> from the Pit of  
 oblivion.<sup>26</sup>

For you removed all my sins from your  
 sight.<sup>27</sup>

38:18 Indeed<sup>28</sup> Sheol does not give you  
 thanks;

death does not<sup>29</sup> praise you.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from day to night you bring me to an end."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The verb form in the Hebrew text is a Piel from שָׁחַח (*shahah*). There are two homonyms שָׁחַח, one meaning in the Piel "level, smooth out," the other "set, place." Neither fits in v. 13. It is likely that the original reading was שִׁוְוַתִּי (*shivvati*, "I cry out") from the verbal root שָׁוַה (*shava'*), which occurs exclusively in the Piel.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from day to night you bring me to an end."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Or "moan" (ASV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); KJV, CEV "mourn."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "my eyes become weak, toward the height."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in v. 16 is אֲדוֹנָי (*'adonay*).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "stand surety for me." Hezekiah seems to be picturing himself as a debtor who is being exploited; he asks that the LORD might relieve his debt and deliver him from the oppressive creditor.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and he has spoken and he has acted."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "because of the bitterness of my soul."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** The translation offered here is purely speculative. The text as it stands is meaningless and probably corrupt. It reads literally, "O lord, on account of them [the suffix is masculine plural], they live, and to all in them [the suffix is feminine plural], life of my spirit."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The prefixed verbal form could be taken as indicative, "you restore my health," but the following imperatival form suggests it be understood as an imperfect of request.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Look, for peace bitterness was to me bitter"; NAB "thus is my bitterness transformed into peace."

<sup>25</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads, "you loved my soul," but this does not fit syntactically with the following prepositional phrase. The translation offered here, "you loved" (*khashaqta*), may reflect an aural error; most emend the form to הִשְׁכַּחְתָּ (*khassakht*, "you held back").

<sup>26</sup> **tn** בְּלִי (*b'eli*) most often appears as a negation, meaning "without," suggesting the meaning "nothingness, oblivion," here. Some translate "decay" or "destruction."

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for you threw behind your back all my sins."

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Or "For" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>29</sup> **tn** The negative particle is understood by ellipsis in this line. See GKC 483 §152.z.

Those who descend into the Pit do not anticipate your faithfulness.

**38:19** The living person, the living person, he gives you thanks, as I do today.

A father tells his sons about your faithfulness.

**38:20** The LORD is about to deliver me,<sup>1</sup> and we will celebrate with music<sup>2</sup> for the rest of our lives in the LORD's temple."<sup>3</sup>

#### Messengers from Babylon Visit Hezekiah

**39:1** At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been ill and had recovered. **39:2** Hezekiah welcomed<sup>4</sup> them and showed them his storehouse with its silver, gold, spices, and high-quality olive oil, as well as his whole armory and everything in his treasuries. Hezekiah showed them everything in his palace and in his whole kingdom.<sup>5</sup> **39:3** Isaiah the prophet visited King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say? Where do they come from?" Hezekiah replied, "They come from the distant land of Babylon." **39:4** Isaiah<sup>6</sup> asked, "What have they seen in your palace?" Hezekiah replied, "They have seen everything in my palace. I showed them everything in my treasuries." **39:5** Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Listen to the word of the LORD who commands armies: **39:6** 'Look, a time is coming when everything in your palace and the things your ancestors<sup>7</sup> have accumulated to this day will be carried away to Babylon; nothing will be left,' says the LORD. **39:7** 'Some of your very own descendants whom you father<sup>8</sup> will be taken away and will be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" **39:8** Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The LORD's word which you have announced is appropriate."<sup>9</sup> Then he thought,<sup>10</sup>

"For<sup>11</sup> there will be peace and stability during my lifetime."

#### The Lord Returns to Jerusalem

**40:1** "Comfort, comfort my people," says your<sup>12</sup> God.

**40:2** "Speak kindly to<sup>13</sup> Jerusalem,<sup>14</sup> and tell her that her time of warfare is over,<sup>15</sup> that her punishment is completed.<sup>16</sup> For the LORD has made her pay double<sup>17</sup> for all her sins."

**40:3** A voice cries out,

"In the wilderness clear a way for the LORD; construct in the desert a road for our God.

**40:4** Every valley must be elevated, and every mountain and hill leveled. The rough terrain will become a level plain, the rugged landscape a wide valley.

**40:5** The splendor<sup>18</sup> of the LORD will be revealed, and all people<sup>19</sup> will see it at the same time.

For<sup>20</sup> the LORD has decreed it."<sup>21</sup>

**40:6** A voice says, "Cry out!" Another asks,<sup>22</sup> "What should I cry out?" The first voice responds:<sup>23</sup> "All people are like grass,<sup>24</sup> and all their promises<sup>25</sup> are like the

<sup>11</sup> tn Or "surely"; cf. CEV "At least."

<sup>12</sup> tn The pronominal suffix is second masculine plural. The identity of the addressee is uncertain: (1) God's people may be addressed, or (2) the unidentified heralds commanded to comfort Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb "speak to the heart of Jerusalem." Jerusalem is personified as a woman.

<sup>14</sup> map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "that she is filled [with] her warfare." Some understand מַלְחָמָה (*tsavah*, "warfare") as meaning "hard service" or "compulsory labor" in this context.

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "that her punishment is accepted [as satisfactory]."

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "for she has received from the hand of the LORD double." The principle of the double portion in punishment is also seen in Jer 16:18; 17:18 and Rev 18:6. For examples of the double portion in Israelite law, see Exod 22:4, 7, 9 (double restitution by a thief) and Deut 21:17 (double inheritance portion for the firstborn).

<sup>18</sup> tn Or "glory." The LORD's "glory" is his theophanic radiance and royal splendor (see Isa 6:3; 24:23; 35:2; 60:1; 66:18-19).

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "flesh" (so KJV, ASV, NASB); NAB, NIV "mankind"; TEV "the whole human race."

<sup>20</sup> tn Or "indeed."

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "the mouth of the LORD has spoken" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>22</sup> tn Heb "and he says." Apparently a second "voice" responds to the command of the first "voice."

<sup>23</sup> tn The words "the first voice responds" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The first voice tells the second one what to declare.

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb "all flesh is grass." The point of the metaphor is explained in v. 7.

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb "and all his loyalty." The antecedent of the third masculine suffix is בָּשָׂר (*basar*, "flesh"), which refers collectively to mankind. The LXX, apparently understanding the antecedent as "grass," reads "glory," but תְּקוּמָה (*khesed*) rarely, if ever, has this nuance. The normal meaning of תְּקוּמָה ("faithful-

<sup>1</sup> tn The infinitive construct is used here to indicate that an action is imminent. See GKC 348-49 §114.i, and *IBHS* 610 §36.2.3g.

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "and music [or perhaps, "stringed instruments"] we will play."

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb "all the days of our lives in the house of the LORD." sn Note that vv. 21-22 have been placed between vv. 6-7, where they logically belong. See 2 Kgs 20:7-8.

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb "was happy with"; NAB, NASB "was pleased"; NIV "received the envoys gladly."

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb "there was nothing which Hezekiah did not show them in his house and in all his kingdom."

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "he"; the referent (Isaiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "fathers" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV).

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb "Some of your sons, who go out from you, whom you father."

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "good" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB "favorable."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "and he said." The verb אָמַר (*amar*, "say") is sometimes used of what one thinks (that is, says to oneself).



flowers in the field.

**40:7** The grass dries up,  
the flowers wither,  
when the wind sent by the LORD<sup>1</sup> blows  
on them.

Surely humanity<sup>2</sup> is like grass.

**40:8** The grass dries up,  
the flowers wither,  
but the decree of our God is forever reli-  
able.<sup>3</sup>

**40:9** Go up on a high mountain, O herald  
Zion!

Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem!<sup>4</sup>  
Shout, don't be afraid!

Say to the towns of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"

**40:10** Look, the sovereign LORD comes as  
a victorious warrior;<sup>5</sup>

his military power establishes his rule.<sup>6</sup>

Look, his reward is with him;  
his prize goes before him.<sup>7</sup>

**40:11** Like a shepherd he tends his flock;  
he gathers up the lambs with his arm;  
he carries them close to his heart;<sup>8</sup>  
he leads the ewes along.

*The Lord is Incomparable*

**40:12** Who has measured out the waters<sup>9</sup>  
in the hollow of his hand,  
or carefully<sup>10</sup> measured the sky,<sup>11</sup>  
or carefully weighed<sup>12</sup> the soil of the  
earth,

or weighed the mountains in a balance,  
or the hills on scales?<sup>13</sup>

**40:13** Who comprehends<sup>14</sup> the mind<sup>15</sup> of the  
LORD,  
or gives him instruction as his coun-  
selor?<sup>16</sup>

**40:14** From whom does he receive direc-  
tions?<sup>17</sup>

Who<sup>18</sup> teaches him the correct way to do  
things,<sup>19</sup>

or imparts knowledge to him,  
or instructs him in skillful design?<sup>20</sup>

**40:15** Look, the nations are like a drop in  
a bucket;

they are regarded as dust on the scales.

He lifts<sup>21</sup> the coastlands<sup>22</sup> as if they were  
dust.

ness, loyalty, devotion") fits very well in the argument. Human beings and their faithfulness (verbal expressions of faithfulness are specifically in view; cf. NRSV "constancy") are short-lived and unreliable, in stark contrast to the decrees and promises of the eternal God.

**1 tn** The Hebrew text has רִיחַ יְהוָה (*ruakh yehvah*), which in this context probably does not refer to the LORD's personal Spirit. The phrase is better translated "the breath of the LORD," or "the wind of [i.e., sent by] the LORD." The LORD's sovereign control over nature, including the hot desert winds that dry up vegetation, is in view here (cf. Ps 147:18; Isa 59:19).

**2 tn** Heb "the people" (so KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

**3 tn** Heb "but the word of our God stands forever." In this context the divine "word" specifically refers to his decreed promise assuring Jerusalem that her suffering is over and his glorious return imminent (vv. 1-5).

**4 tn** The second feminine singular imperatives are addressed to personified Zion/Jerusalem, who is here told to ascend a high hill and proclaim the good news of the LORD's return to the other towns of Judah. Isa 41:27 and 52:7 speak of a herald sent to Zion, but the masculine singular form מְבַשֵּׂר (*m'vaser*) is used in these verses, in contrast to the feminine singular form מְבַשֶּׂרֶת (*m'vaseret*) employed in 40:9, where Zion is addressed as a herald.

**5 tn** Heb "comes as a strong one"; ASV "will come as a mighty one." The preposition בְּ (*bet*) here carries the nuance "in the capacity of." It indicates that the LORD possesses the quality expressed by the noun. See GKC 379 §119.i and HALOT 104 s.v. בָּ.

**6 tn** Heb "his arm rules for him" (so NIV, NRSV). The LORD's "arm" symbolizes his military power (see Isa 51:9-10; 63:5).

**7 tn** As the LORD returns to Jerusalem as a victorious warrior, he brings with him the spoils of victory, called here his "reward" and "prize." These terms might also be translated "wages" and "recompense." Verse 11 indicates that his rescued people, likened to a flock of sheep, are his reward.

**8 tn** Heb "in his bosom" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV), an expression which reflects closeness and protective care.

**9 tn** The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has מֵי יָם ("waters of the sea"), a reading followed by NAB.

**10 tn** Heb "with a span." A "span" was the distance between the ends of the thumb and the little finger of the spread hand" (BDB 285 s.v. תָּרַח).

**11 tn** Or "the heavens." The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

**12 tn** Heb "or weighed by a third part [of a measure]."

**13 sn** The implied answer to the rhetorical questions of v. 12 is "no one but the LORD. The LORD, and no other, created the world. Like a merchant weighing out silver or commodities on a scale, the LORD established the various components of the physical universe in precise proportions.

**14 tn** Perhaps the verb is used metonymically here in the sense of "advises" (note the following line).

**15 tn** In this context רִיחַ (*ruakh*) likely refers to the LORD's "mind," or mental faculties, rather than his personal Spirit (see BDB 925 s.v.).

**16 tn** Heb "or [as] the man of his counsel causes him to know?"

**17 tn** Heb "With whom did he consult, so that he gave discernment to him?"

**18 tn** Heb "and taught him." The *vav* (ו) consecutive with prefixed verbal form continues the previous line. The translation employs an interrogative pronoun for stylistic reasons.

**19 tn** The phrase אֹרֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט (*orakh mishpat*) could be translated "path of justice" (so NASB, NRSV), but in this context, where creative ability and skill is in view, the phrase is better understood in the sense of "the way that is proper or fitting" (see BDB 1049 s.v. מִשְׁפָּט 6); cf. NIV, NCV "the right way."

**20 tn** Heb "or the way of understanding causes him to know?"

**sn** The implied answer to the rhetorical questions in vv. 13-14 is, "No one." In contrast to Marduk, the creator-god of Mesopotamian myths who receives help from the god of wisdom, the LORD neither needs nor receives any such advice or help. See R. Whybray, *Heavenly Counsellor* (SOTSMS), 64-77.

**21 tn** Or "weighs" (NIV); NLT "picks up."

**22 tn** Or "islands" (NASB, NIV, NLT).

**40:16** Not even Lebanon could supply enough firewood for a sacrifice;<sup>1</sup> its wild animals would not provide enough burnt offerings.<sup>2</sup>

**40:17** All the nations are insignificant before him;

they are regarded as absolutely nothing.<sup>3</sup>

**40:18** To whom can you compare God? To what image can you liken him?

**40:19** A craftsman casts<sup>4</sup> an idol; a metalsmith overlays it with gold and forges silver chains for it.

**40:20** To make a contribution one selects wood that will not rot;<sup>5</sup>

he then seeks a skilled craftsman to make<sup>6</sup> an idol that will not fall over.

**40:21** Do you not know? Do you not hear?

Has it not been told to you since the very beginning?

Have you not understood from the time the earth's foundations were made?

**40:22** He is the one who sits on the earth's horizon;<sup>7</sup>

its inhabitants are like grasshoppers before him.<sup>8</sup>

He is the one who stretches out the sky like a thin curtain,<sup>9</sup>

and spreads it out<sup>10</sup> like a pitched tent.<sup>11</sup>

**40:23** He is the one who reduces rulers to nothing; he makes the earth's leaders insignificant.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The words "for a sacrifice" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>2</sup> **sn** The point is that not even the Lebanon forest could supply enough wood and animals for an adequate sacrifice to the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[as derived] from nothing and unformed."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "pours out"; KJV "melteth."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The first two words of the verse (הַמִּסְכָּן תְּרוּמָה, *hamsukkan t'rumah*) are problematic. Some take מִסְכָּן as an otherwise unattested Pual participle from סָכַן (*sakhan*, "be poor") and translate "the one who is impoverished." תְּרוּמָה (*t'rumah*, "contribution") can then be taken as an adverbial accusative, "with respect to a contribution," and the entire line translated, "the one who is too impoverished for such a contribution [i.e., the metal idol of v. 19?] selects wood that will not rot." However, מִסְכָּן is probably the name of a tree used in idol manufacturing (cognate with Akkadian *musukkanu*, cf. H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* [SBLDS], 133). מִסְכָּן may be a scribal interpretive addition attempting to specify עֵץ (*ets*) or עֵץ may be a scribal attempt to categorize מִסְכָּן. How an idol constitutes a תְּרוּמָה ("contribution") is not entirely clear.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or "set up" (ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); KJV, NASB "to prepare."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the circle of the earth" (so KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The words "before him" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The otherwise unattested noun דָּק (*daq*), translated here "thin curtain," is apparently derived from the verbal root דָּקַדַּק ("crush") from which is derived the adjective דָּק (*daq*, "thin"; see HALOT 229 s.v. דָּק). The nuance "curtain" is implied from the parallelism (see "tent" in the next line).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The meaning of the otherwise unattested verb מָתַח (*matach*, "spread out") is determined from the parallelism (note the corresponding verb "stretch out" in the previous line) and supported by later Hebrew and Aramaic cognates. See HALOT 654 s.v. מָתַח.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "like a tent [in which] to live"; NAB, NASB "like a tent to dwell (live NIV, NRSV) in."

**40:24** Indeed, they are barely planted; yes, they are barely sown; yes, they barely take root in the earth, and then he blows on them, causing them to dry up, and the wind carries them away like straw.

**40:25** "To whom can you compare me?

Whom do I resemble?"

says the Holy One.<sup>12</sup>

**40:26** Look up at the sky!<sup>13</sup>

Who created all these heavenly lights?<sup>14</sup> He is the one who leads out their ranks;<sup>15</sup> he calls them all by name.

Because of his absolute power and awesome strength,

not one of them is missing.

**40:27** Why do you say, Jacob,

Why do you say, Israel,

"The LORD is not aware of what is happening to me,"<sup>16</sup>

My God is not concerned with my vindication?"<sup>17</sup>

**40:28** Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The LORD is an eternal God,

the Creator of the whole earth.<sup>18</sup>

He does not get tired or weary;

there is no limit to his wisdom.<sup>19</sup>

**40:29** He gives strength to those who are tired;

to the ones who lack power, he gives renewed energy.

**40:30** Even youths get tired and weary; even strong young men clumsily stumble.<sup>20</sup>

**40:31** But those who wait for the LORD's help<sup>21</sup> find renewed strength;

<sup>12</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Lift on high your eyes and see."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The words "heavenly lights" are supplied in the translation for clarification. See the following lines.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the one who brings out by number their host." The stars are here likened to a huge army that the LORD leads out. Perhaps the next line pictures God calling roll. If so, the final line may be indicating that none of them dares "go AWOL." ("AWOL" is a military acronym for "absent without leave.")

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "my way is hidden from the LORD" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and from my God my justice passes away"; NRSV "my right is disregarded by my God."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the ends of the earth," but this is a merism, where the earth's extremities stand for its entirety, i.e., the extremities and everything in between them.

<sup>19</sup> **sn** Exiled Israel's complaint (v. 27) implies that God might be limited in some way. Perhaps he, like so many of the pagan gods, has died. Or perhaps his jurisdiction is limited to Judah and does not include Babylon. Maybe he is unable to devise an adequate plan to rescue his people, or is unable to execute it. But v. 28 affirms that he is not limited temporally or spatially nor is his power and wisdom restricted in any way. He can and will deliver his people, if they respond in hopeful faith (v. 31a).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "stumbling they stumble." The verbal idea is emphasized by the infinitive absolute.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** The words "for the LORD's help" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

they rise up as if they had eagles' wings,<sup>1</sup>  
they run without growing weary,  
they walk without getting tired.

*The Lord Challenges the Nations*

41:1 "Listen to me in silence, you coastlands!<sup>2</sup>

Let the nations find renewed strength!  
Let them approach and then speak;  
let us come together for debate!<sup>3</sup>

41:2 Who stirs up this one from the east?<sup>4</sup>  
Who<sup>5</sup> officially commissions him for service?<sup>6</sup>

He hands nations over to him,<sup>7</sup>  
and enables him to subdue<sup>8</sup> kings.  
He makes them like dust with his sword,  
like windblown straw with his bow.<sup>9</sup>

41:3 He pursues them and passes by unharmed;<sup>10</sup>

he advances with great speed.<sup>11</sup>

41:4 Who acts and carries out decrees?<sup>12</sup>  
Who<sup>13</sup> summons the successive generations from the beginning?

I, the LORD, am present at the very beginning,

and at the very end – I am the one.<sup>14</sup>

41:5 The coastlands<sup>15</sup> see and are afraid;  
the whole earth<sup>16</sup> trembles;

they approach and come.

41:6 They help one another;<sup>17</sup>  
one says to the other, 'Be strong!'

41:7 The craftsman encourages the metalsmith,  
the one who wields the hammer encourages<sup>18</sup>  
the one who pounds on the anvil.  
He approves the quality of the welding,<sup>19</sup>  
and nails it down so it won't fall over.<sup>20</sup>

*The Lord Encourages His People*

41:8 "You, my servant Israel,  
Jacob whom I have chosen,

offspring of Abraham my friend,<sup>20</sup>  
41:9 you whom I am bringing back<sup>21</sup> from  
the earth's extremities,

and have summoned from the remote regions –

I told you, "You are my servant."

I have chosen you and not rejected you.

41:10 Don't be afraid, for I am with you!  
Don't be frightened, for I am your God!<sup>22</sup>  
I strengthen you –

yes, I help you –

yes, I uphold you with my saving right hand!<sup>23</sup>

41:11 Look, all who were angry at you  
will be ashamed and humiliated;  
your adversaries<sup>24</sup> will be reduced to  
nothing<sup>25</sup> and perish.

41:12 When you will look for your opponents,<sup>26</sup>  
you will not find them;  
your enemies<sup>27</sup> will be reduced to absolutely nothing.

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb "they rise up [on] wings like eagles" (TEV similar).

<sup>2</sup> tn Or "islands" (KJV, NIV, CEV); TEV "distant lands"; NLT "lands beyond the sea."

<sup>3</sup> tn The Hebrew term מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*) could be translated "judgment," but here it seems to refer to the dispute or debate between the LORD and the nations.

<sup>4</sup> sn The expression *this one from the east* refers to the Persian conqueror Cyrus, as later texts indicate (see 44:28-45:6; 46:11; 48:14-16).

<sup>5</sup> tn The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "[in] righteousness called him to his foot."

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "he [the LORD] places before him [Cyrus] nations."

<sup>8</sup> tn The verb יָרָד (*yard*) is an otherwise unattested Hiphil form from יָרַד (*radah*, "rule"). But the Hiphil makes no sense with "kings" as object; one must understand an ellipsis and supply "him" (Cyrus) as the object. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has יורד (*yorid*), which appears to be a Hiphil form from יָרַד (*yarad*, "go down"). Others suggest reading ירד (*yarod*), a Qal form from יָרַד (*radad*, "beat down").

<sup>9</sup> sn The point is that they are powerless before Cyrus' military power and scatter before him.

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "[in] peace"; KJV, ASV "safely"; NASB "in safety"; NIV "unscathed."

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "a way with his feet he does not come [or "enter"]." One could translate, "by a way he was not [previously] entering with his feet." This would mean that he is advancing into new territory and expanding his conquests. The present translation assumes this is a hyperbolic description to his speedy advance. He moves so quickly he does not enter the way with his feet, i.e., his feet don't even touch the ground. See C. R. North, *Second Isaiah*, 94.

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb "Who acts and accomplishes?"; NASB "Who has performed and accomplished it."

<sup>13</sup> tn The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb "I, the LORD, [am with] the first, and with the last ones I [am] he."

<sup>15</sup> tn Or "islands" (NIV, CEV); NCV "faraway places"; NLT "lands beyond the sea."

<sup>16</sup> tn Heb "the ends of the earth," but this is a merism, where the earth's extremities stand for its entirety, i.e., the extremities and everything in between them.

<sup>17</sup> tn Heb "each his neighbor helps"; NCV "The workers help each other."

<sup>18</sup> tn The verb "encourages" is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb "saying of the welding, 'It is good.'"

<sup>20</sup> tn Or perhaps, "covenantal partner" (see 1 Kgs 5:15 HT [5:1 ET]; 2 Chr 20:7).

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb "whom I have taken hold of [i.e., to lead back]."

<sup>22</sup> tn According to BDB (1043 s.v. שָׁעָה), the verb תִּשְׁתָּע (*tish-ta*) in the second line of the poetic couplet is a Hitpaal form from the root שָׁעָה (*sha'ah*, "gaze," with metathesis of the stem prefix and the first root letter). Taking the Hitpaal as iterative, one may then translate "do not anxiously look about." However, the alleged Hitpaal form of שָׁעָה (*sha'ah*) only occurs here and in verse 23. HALOT 1671 s.v. שָׁעָה proposes that the verb is instead a Qal form from the root שָׁעָה ("fear") which is attested in cognate Semitic languages, including Ugaritic (discovered after the publishing of BDB), suggests the existence of this root. The poetic structure of v. 10 also supports the proposal, for the form in question is in synonymous parallelism to יָרַד (*yare*), "fear".

<sup>23</sup> tn The "right hand" is a symbol of the LORD's power to deliver (Exod 15:6, 12) and protect (Ps 63:9 HT [63:8 ET]). Here מִצְדֵּק (*tsedeq*) has its well-attested nuance of "vindicated righteousness," i.e., "victory, deliverance" (see 45:8; 51:5, and BDB 841-42 s.v.).

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb "the men of your strife"; NASB "those who contend with you."

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb "like nothing"; NAB "come to nought."

<sup>26</sup> tn Heb "the men of your struggle"; NASB "those who quarrel with you."

<sup>27</sup> tn Heb "the men of your battle"; NAB "who do battle with you."

**41:13** For I am the LORD your God,  
the one who takes hold of your right  
hand,  
who says to you, ‘Don’t be afraid, I am  
helping you.’  
**41:14** Don’t be afraid, despised insignifi-  
cant Jacob,<sup>1</sup>  
men of<sup>2</sup> Israel.  
I am helping you,” says the LORD,  
your protector,<sup>3</sup> the Holy One of Israel.<sup>4</sup>  
**41:15** “Look, I am making you like<sup>5</sup> a  
sharp threshing sledge,  
new and double-edged.<sup>6</sup>  
You will thresh the mountains and crush  
them;  
you will make the hills like straw.<sup>7</sup>  
**41:16** You will winnow them and the wind  
will blow them away;  
the wind will scatter them.  
You will rejoice in the LORD;  
you will boast in the Holy One of Israel.  
**41:17** The oppressed and the poor look for  
water, but there is none;  
their tongues are parched from thirst.  
I, the LORD, will respond to their prayers;<sup>8</sup>  
I, the God of Israel, will not abandon  
them.  
**41:18** I will make streams flow down the  
slopes  
and produce springs in the middle of the  
valleys.  
I will turn the desert into a pool of water  
and the arid land into springs.  
**41:19** I will make cedars, acacias, myrtles,  
and olive trees grow in the wilderness;  
I will make evergreens, firs, and cypress-  
es grow together in the desert.  
**41:20** I will do this so<sup>9</sup> people<sup>10</sup> will ob-  
serve and recognize,  
so they will pay attention and understand  
that the LORD’s power<sup>11</sup> has accomplished  
this,  
and that the Holy One of Israel has  
brought it into being.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “O worm Jacob” (NAB, NIV). The worm metaphor suggests that Jacob is insignificant and despised.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** On the basis of the parallelism (note “worm”) and an alleged Akkadian cognate, some read “louse” or “weevil.” Cf. NAB “O maggot Israel”; NRSV “you insect Israel.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “your kinsman redeemer.” אֲגֹאֵל (*ga’al*, “kinsman redeemer”) was a protector of the extended family’s interests.

<sup>4</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “into” (so NIV); ASV “have made thee to be.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “owner of two-mouths,” i.e., double-edged.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “the mountains and hills symbolize hostile nations that are obstacles to Israel’s restoration.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “will answer them” (so ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The words “I will do this” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The Hebrew text has here simply, “in order that.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “they”; NAB, NRSV “that all may see”; CEV, NLT “Everyone will see.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “hand” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or “created it” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “has made it happen.”

### The Lord Challenges the Pagan Gods

**41:21** “Present your argument,” says the  
LORD.

“Produce your evidence,”<sup>13</sup> says Jacob’s  
king.<sup>14</sup>

**41:22** “Let them produce evidence! Let  
them tell us what will happen!

Tell us about your earlier predictive  
oracles,<sup>15</sup>

so we may examine them<sup>16</sup> and see how  
they were fulfilled.<sup>17</sup>

Or decree for us some future events!

**41:23** Predict how future events will turn  
out,<sup>18</sup>

so we might know you are gods.

Yes, do something good or bad,  
so we might be frightened and in awe.<sup>19</sup>

**41:24** Look, you are nothing, and your ac-  
complishments are nonexistent;

the one who chooses to worship you is  
disgusting.<sup>20</sup>

**41:25** I have stirred up one out of the  
north<sup>21</sup> and he advances,  
one from the eastern horizon who prays  
in my name.<sup>22</sup>

He steps on<sup>23</sup> rulers as if they were clay,  
like a potter treading the clay.

**41:26** Who decreed this from the begin-  
ning, so we could know?

Who announced it<sup>24</sup> ahead of time, so we  
could say, ‘He’s correct’?

Indeed, none of them decreed it!

Indeed, none of them announced it!

Indeed, no one heard you say anything!

**41:27** I first decreed to Zion, ‘Look, here’s  
what will happen!’<sup>25</sup>

I sent a herald to Jerusalem.<sup>26</sup>

**41:28** I look, but there is no one,  
among them there is no one who serves  
as an adviser,

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “strong [words],” see HALOT 870 s.v. עֲצוּמֹת.

<sup>14</sup> **sn** Apparently this challenge is addressed to the pagan idol gods, see vv. 23-24.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “As for the former things, tell us what they are!”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “so we might set [them to] our heart.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “and might know their outcome.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “Declare the coming things, with respect to the end.”

<sup>19</sup> **tc** The translation assumes the Qere (יִרְאֶה [yir’eh], “fear”), from יָרָא [yare], “be afraid”).

**tn** Heb “so we might be frightened and afraid together.” On the meaning of the verb שָׁתַּח (shata), see the note at v. 10.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “an object of disgust [is he who] chooses you.”

<sup>21</sup> **sn** That is, Cyrus the Persian. See the note at v. 2.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “[one] from the rising of the sun [who] calls in my name.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has וַיָּבֹא (yavo), “and he comes”), but this is likely a corruption of an original וַיָּבֹא (vayyavas), from בָּסַח (bus, “step on”).

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The words “who announced it” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The interrogative particle and verb are understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line).

<sup>25</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads simply, “First to Zion, ‘Look here they are!’” The words “I decreed” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>26</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.



that I might ask questions and receive answers.

**41:29** Look, all of them are nothing,<sup>1</sup> their accomplishments are nonexistent; their metal images lack any real substance.<sup>2</sup>

*The Lord Commissions His Special Servant*

**42:1**<sup>3</sup> “Here is my servant whom I support, my chosen one in whom I take pleasure. I have placed my spirit on him; he will make just decrees<sup>4</sup> for the nations.<sup>5</sup>

**42:2** He will not cry out or shout; he will not publicize himself in the streets.<sup>6</sup>

**42:3** A crushed reed he will not break, a dim wick he will not extinguish;<sup>7</sup> he will faithfully make just decrees.<sup>8</sup>

**42:4** He will not grow dim or be crushed<sup>9</sup> before establishing justice on the earth; the coastlands<sup>10</sup> will wait in anticipation for his decrees.”<sup>11</sup>

**42:5** This is what the true God,<sup>12</sup> the LORD, says – the one who created the sky and stretched it out, the one who fashioned the earth and everything that lives on it,<sup>13</sup> the one who gives breath to the people on it, and life to those who live on it.<sup>14</sup>

**42:6** “I, the LORD, officially commission you,<sup>15</sup> I take hold of your hand. I protect you<sup>16</sup> and make you a covenant mediator for people,<sup>17</sup> and a light<sup>18</sup> to the nations,<sup>19</sup> **42:7** to open blind eyes,<sup>20</sup> to release prisoners<sup>21</sup> from dungeons, those who live in darkness from prisons.

*The Lord Intervenes*

**42:8** I am the LORD! That is my name! I will not share my glory with anyone else,

or the praise due me with idols.

**42:9** Look, my earlier predictive oracles have come to pass;<sup>22</sup>

now I announce new events.

Before they begin to occur, I reveal them to you.”<sup>23</sup>

**42:10** Sing to the LORD a brand new song! Praise him<sup>24</sup> from the horizon of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and everything that lives in it,<sup>25</sup> you coastlands<sup>26</sup> and those who live there!

**42:11** Let the desert and its cities shout out, the towns where the nomads of Kedar live! Let the residents of Sela shout joyfully; let them shout loudly from the mountaintops.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “call you in righteousness.” The pronoun “you” is masculine singular, referring to the servant. See the note at 41:2.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The translation assumes the verb is derived from the root נָצַר (*natsar*, “protect”). Some prefer to derive it from the root יָצַר (*yatsar*, “form”).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a covenant of people.” A person cannot literally be a covenant; בְּרִית (*b'rit*) is probably metonymic here, indicating a covenant mediator. The precise identity of עַם (*am*, “people”) is uncertain. In v. 5 נָם refers to mankind, and the following reference to “nations” also favors this. But in 49:8, where the phrase עַם בְּרִית occurs again, Israel seems to be in view.

<sup>18</sup> **sn** Light here symbolizes deliverance from bondage and oppression; note the parallelism in 49:6b and in 51:4-6.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or “the Gentiles” (so KJV, ASV, NIV); the same Hebrew word can be translated “nations” or “Gentiles” depending on the context.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** This does not refer to literal physical healing of the blind. As the next two lines suggest, this refers metonymically to freeing captives from their dark prisons where their eyes have grown unaccustomed to light.

<sup>21</sup> **sn** This does not refer to hardened, dangerous criminals, who would have been executed for their crimes in ancient Near Eastern society. This verse refers to political prisoners or victims of social injustice.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the former things, look, they have come.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “before they sprout up, I cause you to hear.” The pronoun “you” is plural, referring to the people of Israel. In this verse “the former things” are the LORD’s earlier predictive oracles which have come to pass, while “the new things” are predicted events that have not yet begun to take place. “The former things” are earlier events in Israel’s history which God announced beforehand, such as the Exodus (see 43:16-18). “The new things” are the predictions about the servant (42:1-7), and may also include Cyrus’ conquests (41:25-27).

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “his praise.” The phrase stands parallel to “new song” in the previous line.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and its fullness”; NASB, NIV “and all that is in it.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Or “islands” (NASB, NIV); NLT “distant coastlands.”

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has אָוֶן (*aven*, “deception,” i.e., “false”), but the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has אֵין (“nothing”), which forms a better parallel with אָפֶס (*‘efes*, “nothing”) in the next line. See also 40:17 and 41:12.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “their statues are wind and nothing”; NASB “wind and emptiness”; NIV “wind and confusion.”

<sup>3</sup> **sn** Verses 1-7 contain the first of Isaiah’s “servant songs,” which describe the ministry of a special, ideal servant who accomplishes God’s purposes for Israel and the nations. This song depicts the servant as a just king who brings justice to the earth and relief for the oppressed. The other songs appear in 49:1-13; 50:4-11; and 52:13-53:12.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he will bring out justice” (cf. ASV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>5</sup> **sn** Like the ideal king portrayed in Isa 11:1-9, the servant is energized by the divine spirit and establishes justice on the earth.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he will not cause his voice to be heard in the street.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The “crushed reed” and “dim wick” symbolize the weak and oppressed who are on the verge of extinction.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “faithfully he will bring out justice” (cf. NASB, NRSV).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** For rhetorical effect the terms used to describe the “crushed (רָצוּץ, *ratsats*) reed” and “dim (קָהָה, *kahah*) wick” in v. 3 are repeated here.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or “islands” (NIV); NLT “distant lands beyond the sea.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Or “his law” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV) or “his instruction” (NLT).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the God.” The definite article here indicates distinctiveness or uniqueness.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and its offspring” (so NASB); NIV “all that comes out of it.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and spirit [i.e., “breath”] to the ones walking in it” (NAB, NASB, and NRSV all similar).

42:12 Let them give the LORD the honor he deserves;<sup>1</sup> let them praise his deeds in the coastlands.<sup>2</sup>  
 42:13 The LORD emerges like a hero, like a warrior he inspires himself for battle;<sup>3</sup> he shouts, yes, he yells, he shows his enemies his power.<sup>4</sup>  
 42:14 “I have been inactive<sup>5</sup> for a long time; I kept quiet and held back. Like a woman in labor I groan; I pant and gasp.<sup>6</sup>  
 42:15 I will make the trees on the mountains and hills wither up;<sup>7</sup> I will dry up all their vegetation. I will turn streams into islands,<sup>8</sup> and dry up pools of water.<sup>9</sup>  
 42:16 I will lead the blind along an unfamiliar way;<sup>10</sup> I will guide them down paths they have never traveled.<sup>11</sup> I will turn the darkness in front of them into light, and level out the rough ground.<sup>12</sup> This is what I will do for them. I will not abandon them.  
 42:17 Those who trust in idols will turn back and be utterly humiliated,<sup>13</sup> those who say to metal images, ‘You are our gods.’”

*The Lord Reasons with His People*

42:18 “Listen, you deaf ones!

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Let them ascribe to the LORD glory.”  
<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and his praise in the coastlands [or “islands”] let them declare.”  
<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like a man of war he stirs up zeal” (NIV similar).  
<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “he triumphs over his enemies” (cf. NIV); NLT “will crush all his enemies.”  
<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “silent” (so NASB, NIV, TEV, NLT); CEV “have held my temper.”  
<sup>6</sup> **sn** The imagery depicts the LORD as a warrior who is eager to fight and can no longer hold himself back from the attack.  
<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I will dry up the mountains and hills.” The “mountains and hills” stand by synecdoche for the trees that grow on them. Some prefer to derive the verb from a homonymic root and translate, “I will lay waste.”  
<sup>8</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads, “I will turn streams into coastlands [or “islands”].” Scholars who believe that this reading makes little sense have proposed an emendation of אִיְלִים (‘*ayilim*, “islands”) to אִיְלִים (‘*ayilim*, “dry places”; cf. NCV, NLT, TEV). However, since all the versions support the MT reading, there is insufficient grounds for an emendation here. Although the imagery of changing rivers into islands is somewhat strange, J. N. Oswalt describes this imagery against the backdrop of rivers of the Near East. The receding of these rivers at times occasioned the appearance of previously submerged islands (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:126).  
<sup>9</sup> **sn** The imagery of this verse, which depicts the LORD bringing a curse of infertility to the earth, metaphorically describes how the LORD will destroy his enemies.  
<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a way they do not know” (so NASB); NRSV “a road they do not know.”  
<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in paths they do not know I will make them walk.”  
<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the rough ground into a level place.”  
<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “be ashamed with shame”; ASV, NASB “be utterly put to shame.”

Take notice,<sup>14</sup> you blind ones!  
 42:19 My servant is truly blind, my messenger is truly deaf. My covenant partner,<sup>15</sup> the servant of the LORD, is truly blind.<sup>16</sup>  
 42:20 You see<sup>17</sup> many things, but don’t comprehend;<sup>18</sup> their ears are open, but do not hear.”  
 42:21 The LORD wanted to exhibit his justice by magnifying his law and displaying it.<sup>19</sup>  
 42:22 But these people are looted and plundered; all of them are trapped in pits<sup>20</sup> and held captive<sup>21</sup> in prisons. They were carried away as loot with no one to rescue them; they were carried away as plunder, and no one says, “Bring that back!”<sup>22</sup>  
 42:23 Who among you will pay attention to this? Who will listen attentively in the future?<sup>23</sup>  
 42:24 Who handed Jacob over to the robber?

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “look to see”; NAB, NCV “look and see”; NRSV “look up and see.”  
<sup>15</sup> **tc** The precise meaning of מְשֻׁלָּם (*m<sup>e</sup>shullam*) in this context is uncertain. In later biblical Hebrew the form (which appears to be a Pual participle from the root שָׁלַם, *shalam*) occurs as a proper name, Meshullam. The Pual of שָׁלַם (“be complete”) is attested with the meaning “repaid, requited,” but that makes little sense here. BDB 1023 s.v. שָׁלַם relates the form to the denominative verb שָׁלַם (“be at peace”) and paraphrases “one in a covenant of peace” (J. N. Oswalt suggests “the covenanted one”; *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:128, n. 59) Some emend the form to מוֹשְׁלָם (*m<sup>o</sup>sh<sup>e</sup>lam*, “their ruler”) or to מְשֻׁלָּכִי (*m<sup>e</sup>shullakhi*, “my sent [or “commissioned”] one”), which fits nicely in the parallelism (note “my messenger” in the previous line). The translation above assumes an emendation to כְּמוֹ שׁוֹלְמִי (*k<sup>e</sup>mo shol<sup>e</sup>mi*, “like my ally”). *Isaiah* uses כְּמוֹ in 30:22 and perhaps 51:5; for שֻׁלְמִי (“my ally”) see Ps 7:5 HT (7:4 ET).  
<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like my messenger I send? Who is blind like my commissioned one, blind like the servant of the LORD?” The point of the rhetorical questions is that no one is as blind/deaf as this servant. In this context the LORD’s “servant” is exiled Israel (cf. 41:8-9), which is spiritually blind and deaf and has failed to fulfill God’s purpose for it. This servant stands in contrast to the ideal “Israel” of the servant songs.  
<sup>17</sup> **tn** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has a perfect, 2nd person masculine singular; the marginal reading (*Qere*) has an infinitive absolute, which functions here as a finite verb.  
<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “but you do not guard [i.e., retain in your memory]”; NIV “but have paid no attention.”  
<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “The LORD was pleased for the sake of his righteousness [or “justice”], he was magnifying [the] law and was making [it] glorious.” The LORD contrasts his good intentions for the people with their present crisis (v. 22). To demonstrate his just character and attract the nations, the LORD wanted to showcase his law among and through Israel (Deut 4:5-8). But Israel disobeyed (v. 24) and failed to carry out their commission.  
<sup>20</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has בְּחֻרִים (*bakhurim*, “young men”), but the text should be emended to בְּחֹרִים (*b<sup>e</sup>horim*, “in holes”).  
<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and made to be hidden”; NAB, NASB, NIV, TEV “hidden away in prisons.”  
<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they became loot and there was no one rescuing, plunder and there was no one saying, ‘Bring back.’”  
<sup>23</sup> **tn** The interrogative particle is understood in the second line by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

Who handed Israel over to the looters?<sup>1</sup>  
 Was it not the LORD, against whom we  
 sinned?  
 They refused to follow his commands;  
 they disobeyed his law.<sup>2</sup>  
**42:25** So he poured out his fierce anger on  
 them,  
 along with the devastation<sup>3</sup> of war.  
 Its flames encircled them, but they did  
 not realize it;<sup>4</sup>  
 it burned against them, but they did  
 notice.<sup>5</sup>

*The Lord Will Rescue His People*

**43:1** Now, this is what the LORD says,  
 the one who created you, O Jacob,  
 and formed you, O Israel:  
 “Don’t be afraid, for I will protect<sup>6</sup> you.  
 I call you by name, you are mine.  
**43:2** When you pass through the waters, I  
 am with you;  
 when you pass<sup>7</sup> through the streams, they  
 will not overwhelm you.  
 When you walk through the fire, you will  
 not be burned;  
 the flames will not harm<sup>8</sup> you.  
**43:3** For I am the LORD your God,  
 the Holy One of Israel,<sup>9</sup> your deliverer.  
 I have handed over Egypt as a ransom  
 price,  
 Ethiopia and Seba<sup>10</sup> in place of you.  
**43:4** Since you are precious and special in  
 my sight,<sup>11</sup>  
 and I love you,  
 I will hand over people in place of you,  
 nations in place of your life.  
**43:5** Don’t be afraid, for I am with you.  
 From the east I will bring your descen-  
 dants;  
 from the west I will gather you.

**43:6** I will say to the north, ‘Hand them  
 over!’  
 and to the south, ‘Don’t hold any back!’  
 Bring my sons from distant lands,  
 and my daughters from the remote re-  
 gions of the earth,  
**43:7** everyone who belongs to me,<sup>12</sup>  
 whom I created for my glory,  
 whom I formed – yes, whom I made!

*The Lord Declares His Sovereignty*

**43:8** Bring out the people who are blind,  
 even though they have eyes,  
 those who are deaf, even though they  
 have ears!  
**43:9** All nations gather together,  
 the peoples assemble.  
 Who among them announced this?  
 Who predicted earlier events for us?<sup>13</sup>  
 Let them produce their witnesses to tes-  
 tify they were right;  
 let them listen and affirm, ‘It is true.’  
**43:10** You are my witnesses,” says the  
 LORD,  
 “my servant whom I have chosen,  
 so that you may consider<sup>14</sup> and believe  
 in me,  
 and understand that I am he.  
 No god was formed before me,  
 and none will outlive me.<sup>15</sup>  
**43:11** I, I am the LORD,  
 and there is no deliverer besides me.  
**43:12** I decreed and delivered and pro-  
 claimed,  
 and there was no other god among you.  
 You are my witnesses,” says the LORD,  
 “that I am God.  
**43:13** From this day forward I am he;  
 no one can deliver from my power;<sup>16</sup>  
 I will act, and who can prevent it?”

*The Lord Will Do Something New*

**43:14** This is what the LORD says,  
 your protector,<sup>17</sup> the Holy One of Israel:<sup>18</sup>  
 “For your sake I send to Babylon  
 and make them all fugitives,<sup>19</sup>  
 turning the Babylonians’ joyful shouts  
 into mourning songs.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *tn* Heb “Who gave to the robber Jacob, and Israel to the looters?” In the first line the consonantal text (*Kethib*) has מְשֹׁשֶׁה (*m<sup>s</sup>shoseh*), a *Pol*el participle from שָׁסַה (*shasah*, “plunder”). The marginal reading (*Qere*) is מְשִׁיסָה (*m<sup>s</sup>shissah*), a noun meaning “plunder.” In this case one could translate “Who handed Jacob over as plunder?”

<sup>2</sup> *tn* Heb “they were not willing in his ways to walk, and they did not listen to his law.”

<sup>3</sup> *tn* Heb “strength” (so KJV, NASB); NAB “fury”; NASB “fierceness”; NIV “violence.”

<sup>4</sup> *tn* Heb “and it blazed against him all around, but he did not know.” The subject of the third feminine singular verb “blazed” is the divine feminine תְּכַמָּה (*khemah*, “anger”) mentioned in the previous line.

<sup>5</sup> *tn* Heb “and it burned against him, but he did not set [it] upon [the] heart.”

<sup>6</sup> *tn* Or “redeem.” See the note at 41:14. Cf. NCV “saved you”; CEV “rescued you”; NLT “ransomed you.”

<sup>7</sup> *tn* The verb is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>8</sup> *tn* Heb “burn” (so NASB); NAB, NRSV, NLT “consume”; NIV “set you ablaze.”

<sup>9</sup> *tn* See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>10</sup> *sn* *Seba* is not the same as Sheba in southern Arabia; cf. Gen 1:10; 1 Chr 1:9.

<sup>11</sup> *tn* Heb “Since you are precious in my eyes and you are honored.”

<sup>12</sup> *tn* Heb “everyone who is called by my name” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>13</sup> *tn* Heb “and the former things was causing us to hear?”

<sup>14</sup> *tn* Or “know” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>15</sup> *tn* Heb “and after me, there will not be”; NASB “there will be none after Me.”

<sup>16</sup> *tn* Heb “hand” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “No one can oppose what I do.”

<sup>17</sup> *tn* Or “kinsman redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>18</sup> *sn* See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>19</sup> *tn* Heb “and I bring down [as] fugitives all of them.”

<sup>20</sup> *tn* The Hebrew text reads literally, “as for the Babylonians, in ships their joyful shout.” This might be paraphrased, “even the Babylonians in the ships [over which] they joyfully shouted.” The point would be that the LORD caused the Babylonians to flee for safety in the ships in which they took such great pride. A slight change in vocalization yields the reading

43:15 I am the LORD, your Holy One,<sup>1</sup> the one who created Israel, your king.”

43:16 This is what the LORD says, the one who made a road through the sea, a pathway through the surging waters,

43:17 the one who led chariots and horses to destruction,<sup>2</sup> together with a mighty army.

They fell down,<sup>3</sup> never to rise again; they were extinguished, put out like a burning wick:

43:18 “Don’t remember these earlier events;<sup>4</sup>

don’t recall these former events.

43:19 “Look, I am about to do something new.

Now it begins to happen!<sup>5</sup> Do you not recognize<sup>6</sup> it?

Yes, I will make a road in the desert and paths<sup>7</sup> in the wilderness.

43:20 The wild animals of the desert honor me,

the jackals and ostriches, because I put water in the desert and streams in the wilderness,

to quench the thirst of my chosen people,

43:21 the people whom I formed for myself,

so they might praise me.”<sup>8</sup>

#### *The Lord Rebukes His People*

43:22 “But you did not call for me, O Jacob;

you did not long<sup>9</sup> for me, O Israel.

43:23 You did not bring me lambs for your burnt offerings;

you did not honor me with your sacrifices.

I did not burden you with offerings;

I did not make you weary by demanding<sup>10</sup> incense.

43:24 You did not buy me aromatic reeds;<sup>11</sup>

“into mourning songs,” which provides a good contrast with “joyful shout.” The prefixed *bet* (ב) would indicate identity.

<sup>1</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “led out chariots and horses.” The words “to destruction” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The verse refers to the destruction of the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “lay down”; NAB “lie prostrate together”; CEV “lie dead”; NRSV “they lie down.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the former things” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “forget all that.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “sprouts up”; NASB “will spring forth.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or “know” (KJV, ASV); NASB “be aware of”; NAB, NIV, NRSV “perceive.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The Hebrew texts has “streams,” probably under the influence of v. 20. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has תַּיְבוֹת (“paths”).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[so] they might declare my praise.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or “strive”; KJV, ASV, NRSV “been weary of me.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “with.” The words “by demanding” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** That is, “calamus” (so NIV); NCV, TEV, NLT “incense”; CEV “spices.”

you did not present to me<sup>12</sup> the fat of your sacrifices.

Yet you burdened me with your sins; you made me weary with your evil deeds.<sup>13</sup>

43:25 I, I am the one who blots out your rebellious deeds for my sake; your sins I do not remember.

43:26 Remind me of what happened! Let’s debate!

You, prove to me that you are right!<sup>14</sup>

43:27 The father of your nation<sup>15</sup> sinned; your spokesmen<sup>16</sup> rebelled against me.

43:28 So I defiled<sup>4</sup> your holy princes, and handed Jacob over to destruction, and subjected<sup>17</sup> Israel to humiliating abuse.”

#### *The Lord Will Renew Israel*

44:1 “Now, listen, Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen!”

44:2 This is what the LORD, the one who made you, says – the one who formed you in the womb and helps you:

“Don’t be afraid, my servant Jacob, Jeshurun,<sup>18</sup> whom I have chosen!

44:3 For I will pour water on the parched ground<sup>19</sup> and cause streams to flow<sup>20</sup> on the dry land.

I will pour my spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your children.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you did not saturate me”; NASB “Neither have you filled Me.”

<sup>13</sup> **sn** In vv. 22-24 the LORD appears to be condemning his people for failure to bring the proper sacrifices. However, this is problematic. If this refers to the nation’s behavior while in exile, such cultic service was impossible and could hardly be expected by the LORD. If this refers to the nation’s conduct before the exile, it contradicts other passages that depict Israel as bringing excessive sacrifices (see, e.g., Isa 1:11-14; Jer 6:20; Amos 4:4-5, 5:21-23). Rather than being a condemnation of Israel’s failure to bring sacrifices, these verses are better taken as a highly rhetorical comment on the worthlessness of Israel’s religious ritual. They may have brought sacrifices, but not to the LORD, for he did not accept them or even want them. See C. R. North, *Second Isaiah*, 127, and R. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCBC), 91.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you, tell in order that you may be right”; NAB “prove your innocence.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your first father.” This could refer to Abraham (see 51:2), but elsewhere in Isaiah he does not appear in a negative light (see 29:22; 41:8; 63:16). A more likely candidate is Jacob/Israel, also referred to as the nation’s “father” elsewhere (see 58:14; 63:16).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** On the meaning of the term לִיָּטִים (*lits*), see HALOT 590 s.v. לִיָּטִים. This may refer to the nation’s prophets, priests, and/or kings.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The word “subjected” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>18</sup> **sn** *Jeshurun* is a poetic name for Israel; it occurs here and in Deut 32:15; 33:5, 26.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the thirsty.” Parallelism suggests that dry ground is in view (see “dry land” in the next line.)

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and streams”; KJV “floods.” The verb “cause...to flow” is supplied in the second line for clarity and for stylistic reasons.



44:4 They will sprout up like a tree in the grass,<sup>1</sup> like poplars beside channels of water.  
 44:5 One will say, 'I belong to the LORD,' and another will use<sup>2</sup> the name 'Jacob.' One will write on his hand, 'The LORD's,' and use the name 'Israel.'<sup>3</sup>

*The Absurdity of Idolatry*

44:6 This is what the LORD, Israel's king, says, their protector,<sup>4</sup> the LORD who commands armies: "I am the first and I am the last, there is no God but me.  
 44:7 Who is like me? Let him make his claim!<sup>5</sup> Let him announce it and explain it to me – since I established an ancient people –<sup>6</sup> let them announce future events!<sup>7</sup>  
 44:8 Don't panic! Don't be afraid!<sup>8</sup> Did I not tell you beforehand and decree it? You are my witnesses! Is there any God but me?  
 There is no other sheltering rock;<sup>9</sup> I know of none.  
 44:9 All who form idols are nothing;

<sup>1</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term בֵּין (*ven*) is usually taken as a preposition, in which case one might translate, "among the grass." But בֵּין is probably the name of a tree (cf. C. R. North, *Second Isaiah*, 133). If one alters the preposition *bet* (בֵּ) to *kaf* (כּ), one can then read, "like a binu-tree." (The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> supports this reading.) This forms a nice parallel to "like poplars" in the next line. *khatsir* (חֲצִיר) is functioning as an adverbial accusative of location.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has a Qal verb form, "and another will call by the name of Jacob." With support from Symmachus (an ancient Greek textual witness), some read the Niphal, "and another will be called by the name of Jacob."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and by the name of Israel he will title." Some, with support from several ancient versions, prefer to change the Piel (active) verb form to a Pual (passive), "and he will be titled by the name of Israel."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "his kinsman redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "let him call" or "let him proclaim" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB "Let him stand up and speak."

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads, "from (the time) I established an ancient people, and the coming things." Various emendations have been proposed. One of the options assumes the reading מַשְׁמִי'ימ מֵעוֹלָם בְּיָמָיו (mashmi'im me'olan 'otiyot); This literally reads "the ones causing to hear from antiquity coming things," but more idiomatically would read "as for those who predict from antiquity what will happen" (cf. NAB, NEB, REB). The emendation directs the attention of the reader to those who claim to be able to predict the future, challenging them to actually do what they claim they can do. The MT presents Yahweh as an example to whom these alleged "predictors of the future" can compare themselves. Since the ancient versions are unanimous in their support of the MT, the emendations should be set aside.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* and those things which are coming let them declare for themselves."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** BDB 923 s.v. רָחַה derives this verb from an otherwise unattested root, while HALOT 403 s.v. יָרַח defines it as "be stupefied" on the basis of an Arabic cognate. The form is likely a corruption of הִרְיָאוּ, the reading attested in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "rock" or "rocky cliff," a title that depicts God as a protective refuge in his role as sovereign king; thus the translation "sheltering rock."

the things in which they delight are worthless.  
 Their witnesses cannot see; they recognize nothing, so they are put to shame.  
 44:10 Who forms a god and casts an idol that will prove worthless?<sup>10</sup>  
 44:11 Look, all his associates<sup>11</sup> will be put to shame; the craftsmen are mere humans.<sup>12</sup> Let them all assemble and take their stand! They will panic and be put to shame.  
 44:12 A blacksmith works with his tool<sup>13</sup> and forges metal over the coals. He forms it<sup>14</sup> with hammers; he makes it with his strong arm. He gets hungry and loses his energy;<sup>15</sup> he drinks no water and gets tired.  
 44:13 A carpenter takes measurements;<sup>16</sup> he marks out an outline of its form;<sup>17</sup> he scrapes<sup>18</sup> it with chisels, and marks it with a compass. He patterns it after the human form,<sup>19</sup> like a well-built human being, and puts it in a shrine.<sup>20</sup>  
 44:14 He cuts down cedars and acquires a cypress<sup>21</sup> or an oak. He gets<sup>22</sup> trees from the forest; he plants a cedar<sup>23</sup> and the rain makes it grow.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The rhetorical question is sarcastic. The sense is, "Who is foolish enough...?"

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The pronoun "his" probably refers to the one who forms/casts an idol (v. 10), in which case it refers to the craftsman's associates in the idol-manufacturing guild.

<sup>12</sup> **sn** The point seems to be this: If the idols are the mere products of human hands, then those who trust in them will be disappointed, for man-made gods are incapable of helping their "creators."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The noun מַקְנֵד (ma'atsad), which refers to some type of tool used for cutting, occurs only here and in Jer 10:3. See HALOT 615 s.v. מַקְנֵד.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Some English versions take the pronoun "it" to refer to an idol being fashioned by the blacksmith (cf. NIV, NCV, CEV). NLT understands the referent to be "a sharp tool," which is then used by the carpenter in the following verse to carve an idol from wood.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and there is no strength"; NASB "his strength fails."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "stretches out a line" (ASV similar); NIV "measures with a line."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he makes an outline with the [?]." The noun שֶׁרָד (shered) occurs only here; it apparently refers to some type of tool or marker. Cf. KJV "with a line"; ASV "with a pencil"; NAB, NRSV "with a stylus"; NASB "with red chalk"; NIV "with a marker."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "works" (so NASB) or "fashions" (so NRSV); NIV "he roughs it out."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he makes it like the pattern of a man"; NAB "like a man in appearance."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "like the glory of man to sit [in] a house"; NIV "that it may dwell in a shrine."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** It is not certain what type of tree this otherwise unattested noun refers to. Cf. ASV "a holm-tree" (NRSV similar).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "strengthens for himself," i.e., "secures for himself" (see BDB 55 s.v. אָרַן Pi.2).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Some prefer to emend אֲרֵן (*oren*) to אֲרֵז (*erez*, "cedar"), but the otherwise unattested noun appears to have an Akkadian cognate, meaning "cedar." See H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomata* (SBLDS), 44-45. HALOT 90 s.v. אֲרֵן offers the meaning "laurel."

44:15 A man uses it to make a fire;<sup>1</sup> he takes some of it and warms himself. Yes, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Then he makes a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.<sup>2</sup>

44:16 Half of it he burns in the fire – over that half he cooks<sup>3</sup> meat; he roasts a meal and fills himself. Yes, he warms himself and says, ‘Ah! I am warm as I look at the fire.’

44:17 With the rest of it he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships it. He prays to it, saying, ‘Rescue me, for you are my god!’

44:18 They do not comprehend or understand, for their eyes are blind and cannot see; their minds do not discern.<sup>4</sup>

44:19 No one thinks to himself, nor do they comprehend or understand and say to themselves:

‘I burned half of it in the fire – yes, I baked bread over the coals; I roasted meat and ate it.

With the rest of it should I make a disgusting idol?

Should I bow down to dry wood?<sup>5</sup>

44:20 He feeds on ashes;<sup>6</sup> his deceived mind misleads him.

He cannot rescue himself, nor does he say, ‘Is this not a false god I hold in my right hand?’<sup>7</sup>

44:21 Remember these things, O Jacob, O Israel, for you are my servant. I formed you to be my servant; O Israel, I will not forget you!<sup>8</sup>

44:22 I remove the guilt of your rebellious deeds as if they were a cloud, the guilt of your sins as if they were a cloud.<sup>9</sup>

Come back to me, for I protect<sup>10</sup> you.”

44:23 Shout for joy, O sky, for the LORD intervenes;<sup>11</sup>

shout out, you subterranean regions<sup>12</sup> of the earth.

O mountains, give a joyful shout;

you too, O forest and all your trees!<sup>13</sup>

For the LORD protects<sup>14</sup> Jacob;

he reveals his splendor through Israel.<sup>15</sup>

### The Lord Empowers Cyrus

44:24 This is what the LORD, your protector,<sup>16</sup> says,

the one who formed you in the womb:

“I am the LORD, who made everything,

who alone stretched out the sky,

who fashioned the earth all by myself,<sup>17</sup>

44:25 who frustrates the omens of the empty talkers<sup>18</sup>

and humiliates<sup>19</sup> the omen readers,

who overturns the counsel of the wise men<sup>20</sup>

and makes their advice<sup>21</sup> seem foolish,

44:26 who fulfills the oracles of his prophetic servants<sup>22</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and it becomes burning [i.e., firewood] for a man”; NAB “to serve man for fuel.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “them.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “eats” (so NASB); NAB, NRSV “roasts.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for their eyes are smeared over so they cannot see, so their heart cannot be wise.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** There is no formal interrogative sign here, but the context seems to indicate these are rhetorical questions. See GKC 473 §150.a.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “he eats on an ash heap.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Is it not a lie in my right hand?”

<sup>8</sup> **tc** The verb in the Hebrew text is a Niphal imperfect with a pronominal suffix. Although the Niphal ordinarily has the passive sense, it can have a reflexive nuance as well (see above translation). Some have suggested an emendation to a Qal form: “Do not forget me” (all the ancient versions, NEB, REB; see GKC 369 §117.x). “Do not forget me” would make a good parallel with “remember these things” in the first line. Since the MT is the harder reading and fits with Israel’s complaint that God had forgotten her (Isa 40:27), the MT reading should be retained (NASB, NKJV, NRSV, ESV). The passive has been rendered as an active in the translation in keeping with contemporary English style (so also NIV, NCV, TEV, NLT).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I blot out like a cloud your rebellious deeds, and like a cloud your sins.” “Rebellious deeds” and “sins” stand by metonymy for the guilt they produce. Both אָוֶן (*av*) and עָוֹן (*anan*) refer to the clouds in the sky. It is tempting for stylis-

tic purposes to translate the second with “fog” or “mist” (cf. NAB, NRSV “cloud...mist”; NIV “cloud...morning mist”; NLT “morning mists...clouds”), but this distinction between the synonyms is unwarranted here. The point of the simile seems to be this: The LORD forgives their sins, causing them to vanish just as clouds disappear from the sky (see Job 7:9; 30:15).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “redeem.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “acts”; NASB, NRSV “has done it”; NLT “has done this wondrous thing.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “lower regions.” This refers to Sheol and forms a merism with “sky” in the previous line. See Pss 63:9; 71:20.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “O forest and all the trees in it”; NASB, NRSV “and every tree in it.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “redeems.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** That is, by delivering Israel. Cf. NCV “showed his glory when he saved Israel”; TEV “has shown his greatness by saving his people Israel.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has “Who [was] with me?” The marginal reading (*Qere*) is “from with me,” i.e., “by myself.” See BDB 87 s.v. אִתִּי 4.c.

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has בְּרִיִּים (*baddim*), perhaps meaning “empty talkers” (BDB 95 s.v. בָּרָה). In the four other occurrences of this word (Job 11:3; Isa 16:6; Jer 48:30; 50:36) the context does not make the meaning of the term very clear. Its primary point appears to be that the words spoken are meaningless or false. In light of its parallelism with “omen readers,” some have proposed an emendation to בְּרִיִּים (*barim*, “seers”). The Mesopotamian *baru*-priests were divination specialists who played an important role in court life. See R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, 93-98. Rather than supporting an emendation, J. N. Oswalt [*Isaiah* (NICOT), 2:189, n. 79] suggests that Isaiah used בְּרִיִּים purposively as a derisive wordplay on the Akkadian word *baru* (in light of the close similarity of the *d* and *r* consonants).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or “makes fools of” (NIV, NRSV); NAB and NASB both similar.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “who turns back the wise” (so NRSV); NIV “overthrows the learning of the wise”; TEV “The words of the wise I refute.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “their knowledge” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the word of his servant.” The following context indicates that the LORD’s prophets are in view.

and brings to pass the announcements<sup>1</sup> of his messengers, who says about Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> ‘She will be inhabited,’ and about the towns of Judah, ‘They will be rebuilt, her ruins I will raise up,’  
**44:27** who says to the deep sea, ‘Be dry! I will dry up your sea currents,’  
**44:28** who commissions<sup>3</sup> Cyrus, the one I appointed as shepherd<sup>4</sup> to carry out all my wishes<sup>5</sup> and to decree concerning Jerusalem, ‘She will be rebuilt,’ and concerning the temple, ‘It will be reconstructed.’”<sup>6</sup>

**45:1** This is what the LORD says to his chosen<sup>7</sup> one, to Cyrus, whose right hand I hold<sup>8</sup> in order to subdue nations before him, and disarm kings,<sup>9</sup> to open doors before him, so gates remain unclosed:  
**45:2** “I will go before you and level mountains.<sup>10</sup> Bronze doors I will shatter and iron bars<sup>11</sup> I will hack through.  
**45:3** I will give you hidden treasures,<sup>12</sup> riches stashed away in secret places, so you may recognize that I am the LORD, the one who calls you by name, the God of Israel.

**45:4** For the sake of my servant Jacob, Israel, my chosen one, I call you by name and give you a title of respect, even though you do not recognize<sup>13</sup> me.  
**45:5** I am the LORD, I have no peer,<sup>14</sup> there is no God but me. I arm you for battle,<sup>15</sup> even though you do not recognize<sup>16</sup> me.  
**45:6** I do this<sup>17</sup> so people<sup>18</sup> will recognize from east to west that there is no God but me; I am the LORD, I have no peer.  
**45:7** I am<sup>19</sup> the one who forms light and creates darkness;<sup>20</sup> the one who brings about peace and creates calamity.<sup>21</sup> I am the LORD, who accomplishes all these things.  
**45:8** O sky, rain down from above! Let the clouds send down showers<sup>22</sup> of deliverance! Let the earth absorb it<sup>23</sup> so salvation may grow,<sup>24</sup> and deliverance may sprout up<sup>25</sup> along with it. I, the LORD, create it.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “counsel.” The Hebrew term עֵצָה (*etsah*) probably refers here to the divine plan as announced by the prophets. See HALOT 867 s.v. עֵצָה.

<sup>2</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “says to.” It is possible that the sentence is not completed, as the description of Cyrus and his God-given role is developed in the rest of the verse. 45:1 picks up where 44:28a leaves off with the LORD’s actual words to Cyrus finally being quoted in 45:2.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “my shepherd.” The shepherd motif is sometimes applied, as here, to a royal figure who is responsible for the well-being of the people whom he rules.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “that he might bring to completion all my desire.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and [concerning the] temple, you will be founded.” The preposition לְ (l) is understood by ellipsis at the beginning of the second line. The verb הִנְחַד (tinvased, “you will be founded”) is second masculine singular and is probably addressed to the personified temple (הֵיכָל [hēkhal, “temple”] is masculine).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “anointed” (so KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NCV “his appointed king.”

<sup>8</sup> **sn** The “right hand” is a symbol of activity and strength; the LORD directs Cyrus’ activities and assures his success.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the belts of kings I will loosen”; NRSV “strip kings of their robes”; NIV “strip kings of their armor.”

<sup>10</sup> **tc** The form הַדְּרִימִים (*hadurim*) makes little, if any, sense here. It is probably a corruption of an original הַרְרִימִים (*hararim*, “mountains”), the reduplicated form of הַר (*har*, “mountain”).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** That is, on the gates. Cf. CEV “break the iron bars on bronze gates.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “treasures of darkness” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “treasures from dark, secret places.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or “know” (NCV, NRSV, TEV, NLT); NIV “acknowledge.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and there is none besides.” On the use of וְיֹדֵעַ (*od*) here, see BDB 729 s.v. 1.c.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “gird you” (so NASB) or “strengthen you” (so NIV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Or “know” (NAB, NCV, NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT); NIV “have not acknowledged.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The words “I do this” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they” (so KJV, ASV); TEV, CEV “everyone”; NLT “all the world.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The words “I am” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text the participle at the beginning of v. 7 stands in apposition to “the LORD” in v. 6.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** On the surface v. 7a appears to describe God’s sovereign control over the cycle of day and night, but the following statement suggests that “light” and “darkness” symbolize “deliverance” and “judgment.”

<sup>21</sup> **sn** This verses affirms that God is ultimately sovereign over his world, including mankind and nations. In accordance with his sovereign will, he can cause wars to cease and peace to predominate (as he was about to do for his exiled people through Cyrus), or he can bring disaster and judgment on nations (as he was about to do to Babylon through Cyrus).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “let the clouds drip with”; KJV “let the skies pour down.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “open up” (so NASB); NIV, NLT “open wide.”

<sup>24</sup> **tc** The plural verb should be emended to a singular form. The *vav* (ו) ending is probably virtually dittographic (note the *yod* at the beginning of the following word).

<sup>25</sup> **tc** The Hiphil verb form תִּצְמַחְתִּי (*titsmakh*) should probably be emended to a Qal (תִּצְמַחְתִּי, *titsmakh*). The *mi* sequence at the end of the form is probably due to dittography (note the following יַחֲדָה, *yakhad*).

<sup>26</sup> **tn** The masculine singular pronominal suffix probably refers back to יַשׁוּעָה (*yasha*), “salvation”.

*The Lord Gives a Warning*

**45:9** One who argues with his Creator is in grave danger,<sup>1</sup> one who is like a mere<sup>2</sup> shard among the other shards on the ground!

The clay should not say to the potter,<sup>3</sup> “What in the world<sup>4</sup> are you doing? Your work lacks skill!”<sup>5</sup>

**45:10** Danger awaits one who says<sup>6</sup> to his father, “What in the world<sup>7</sup> are you fathering?” and to his mother, “What in the world are you bringing forth?”<sup>8</sup>

**45:11** This is what the LORD says, the Holy One of Israel,<sup>9</sup> the one who formed him, concerning things to come:<sup>10</sup> “How dare you question me<sup>11</sup> about my children!

How dare you tell me what to do with<sup>12</sup> the work of my own hands!

**45:12** I made the earth, I created the people who live<sup>13</sup> on it. It was me – my hands<sup>14</sup> stretched out the sky,<sup>15</sup> I give orders to all the heavenly lights.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Woe [to] the one who argues with the one who formed him.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The words “one who is like a mere” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons and clarification.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Should the clay say to the one who forms it?” The rhetorical question anticipates a reply, “Of course not!”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The words “in the world” are supplied in the translation to approximate in English idiom the force of the sarcastic question.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your work, there are no hands for it,” i.e., “your work looks like something made by a person who has no hands.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Woe [to] one who says” (NASB and NIV both similar); NCV “How terrible it will be.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** See the note at v. 9. This phrase occurs a second time later in this verse.

<sup>8</sup> **sn** Verses 9-10 may allude to the exiles’ criticism that the LORD does not appear to know what he is doing.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>10</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads “the one who formed him, the coming things.” Among various suggestions, some have proposed an emendation of יצרו (*yots’ro*, “the one who formed him”) to יצר (*yotser*, “the one who forms”; the suffixed form in the Hebrew text may be influenced by vv. 9-10, where the same form appears twice) and takes “coming things” as the object of the participle (either objective genitive or accusative): “the one who brings the future into being.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Ask me” The rhetorical command sarcastically expresses the LORD’s disgust with those who question his ways.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Do you command me about...?” The rhetorical question sarcastically expresses the LORD’s disgust with those who question his ways.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The words “who live” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I, even my hands”; NASB “I stretched out...with My hands”; NRSV “it was my hands that stretched out.” The same construction occurs at the beginning of v. 13.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and to all their host I commanded.” See the notes at 40:26.

**45:13** It is me – I stir him up and commission him,<sup>17</sup> I will make all his ways level. He will rebuild my city; he will send my exiled people home, but not for a price or a bribe,” says the LORD who commands armies.

*The Lord is the Nations’ Only Hope*

**45:14** This is what the LORD says: “The profit<sup>18</sup> of Egypt and the revenue<sup>19</sup> of Ethiopia, along with the Sabean, those tall men, will be brought to you<sup>20</sup> and become yours. They will walk behind you, coming along in chains.<sup>21</sup> They will bow down to you and pray to you:<sup>22</sup> ‘Truly God is with<sup>23</sup> you; he has no peer;<sup>24</sup> there is no other God!’”

**45:15** Yes, you are a God who keeps hidden,

O God of Israel, deliverer!

**45:16** They will all be ashamed and embarrassed; those who fashion idols will all be humiliated.<sup>25</sup>

**45:17** Israel will be delivered once and for all by the LORD,<sup>26</sup> you will never again be ashamed or humiliated.<sup>27</sup>

**45:18** For this is what the LORD says, the one who created the sky – he is the true God,<sup>28</sup> the one who formed the earth and made it; he established it,

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I stir him up in righteousness”; NASB “I have aroused him.” See the note at 41:2. Cyrus (cf. 44:28) is in view here.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “labor,” which stands metonymically for the fruits of labor, either “monetary profit,” or “products.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “merchandise” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB “the gain of Ethiopia”; CEV “the treasures of Ethiopia.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they will pass over to you”; NASB, NIV “will come over to you”; CEV “will belong to you.”

<sup>21</sup> **sn** Restored Israel is depicted here in typical ancient Near Eastern fashion as an imperial power that receives riches and slaves as tribute.

<sup>22</sup> **sn** Israel’s vassals are portrayed as so intimidated and awed that they treat Israel as an intermediary to God or subdeity.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “among.” Cf. KJV, ASV “Surely God is in thee.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “there is no other” (so NIV, NRSV). The same phrase occurs at the end of v. 18, in v. 21, and at the end of v. 22.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** “together they will walk in humiliation, the makers of images.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Israel will be delivered by the LORD [with] a permanent deliverance.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you will not be ashamed and you will not be humiliated for ages of future time.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* “he [is] the God.” The article here indicates uniqueness.



he did not create it without order,<sup>1</sup>  
 he formed it to be inhabited –  
 “I am the LORD, I have no peer.  
**45:19** I have not spoken in secret,  
 in some hidden place.<sup>2</sup>  
 I did not tell Jacob’s descendants,  
 ‘Seek me in vain!’<sup>3</sup>  
 I am the LORD,  
 the one who speaks honestly,  
 who makes reliable announcements.<sup>4</sup>  
**45:20** Gather together and come!  
 Approach together, you refugees from the  
 nations!  
 Those who carry wooden idols know  
 nothing,  
 those who pray to a god that cannot deliver.  
**45:21** Tell me! Present the evidence!<sup>5</sup>  
 Let them consult with one another!  
 Who predicted this in the past?  
 Who announced it beforehand?  
 Was it not I, the LORD?  
 I have no peer, there is no God but me,  
 a God who vindicates and delivers;<sup>6</sup>  
 there is none but me.  
**45:22** Turn to me so you can be delivered,<sup>7</sup>  
 all you who live in the earth’s remote  
 regions!  
 For I am God, and I have no peer.  
**45:23** I solemnly make this oath<sup>8</sup> –  
 what I say is true and reliable.<sup>9</sup>  
 ‘Surely every knee will bow to me,  
 every tongue will solemnly affirm;<sup>10</sup>  
**45:24** they will say about me,  
 “Yes, the LORD is a powerful deliverer.”<sup>11</sup>  
 All who are angry at him will cower be-  
 fore him.<sup>12</sup>  
**45:25** All the descendants of Israel will be  
 vindicated by the LORD  
 and will boast in him.<sup>13</sup>

*The Lord Carries His People*

**46:1** Bel<sup>14</sup> kneels down,  
 Nebo<sup>15</sup> bends low.  
 Their images weigh down animals and  
 beasts.<sup>16</sup>  
 Your heavy images are burdensome to  
 tired animals.<sup>17</sup>  
**46:2** Together they bend low and kneel  
 down;  
 they are unable to rescue the images;<sup>18</sup>  
 they themselves<sup>19</sup> head off into captivity.<sup>20</sup>  
**46:3** “Listen to me, O family of Jacob,<sup>21</sup>  
 all you who are left from the family of  
 Israel,<sup>22</sup>  
 you who have been carried from birth,<sup>23</sup>  
 you who have been supported from the  
 time you left the womb.<sup>24</sup>  
**46:4** Even when you are old, I will take  
 care of you,<sup>25</sup>  
 even when you have gray hair, I will  
 carry you.  
 I made you and I will support you;  
 I will carry you and rescue you.<sup>26</sup>  
**46:5** To whom can you compare and liken  
 me?  
 Tell me whom you think I resemble, so  
 we can be compared!  
**46:6** Those who empty out gold from a  
 purse  
 and weigh out silver on the scale<sup>27</sup>  
 hire a metalsmith, who makes it into a god.  
 They then bow down and worship it.  
**46:7** They put it on their shoulder and  
 carry it;  
 they put it in its place and it just stands  
 there;

cated and boast.”

<sup>14</sup> **sn** Bel was the name of a Babylonian god. The name was originally associated with Enlil, but later was applied to Marduk. See HALOT 132 s.v. בֵּל.

<sup>15</sup> **sn** Nebo is a variation of the name of the Babylonian god Nabu.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “their images belong to animals and beasts”; NIV “their idols are borne by beasts of burden”; NLT “are being hauled away.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “your loads are carried [as] a burden by a weary [animal].”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “[the] burden,” i.e., their images, the heavy burden carried by the animals.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb נַפְשָׁם (*nafsham*, “their souls/lives”) is equivalent here to a third masculine plural suffix, but the third feminine singular verb הִלְכוּהָ (*halakha*, “they go”) agrees with the feminine noun נַפְשָׁם (*nafesh*, “soul, life”).

<sup>20</sup> **sn** The downfall of Babylon is depicted here. The idols are carried off by the victorious enemy; the gods are likened to defeated captives who cower before the enemy and are taken into exile.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “house of Jacob”; TEV “descendants of Jacob.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “and all the remnant of the house of Israel.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “from the womb” (so NRSV); KJV “from the belly”; NAB “from your infancy.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “who have been lifted up from the womb.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “until old age, I am he” (NRSV similar); NLT “I will be your God throughout your lifetime.”

<sup>26</sup> **sn** Unlike the weary idol gods, whose images must be carried by animals, the LORD carries his weary people.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb “the reed,” probably referring to the beam of a scales. See BDB 889 s.v. קָנָה 4.c.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “unformed.” Gen 1:2 describes the world as “unformed” (תוהו, *tohu*) prior to God’s creative work, but God then formed the world and made it fit for habitation.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “in a place of a land of darkness” (ASV similar); NASB “in some dark land.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** “In vain” translates תוהו (*tohu*), used here as an adverbial accusative: “for nothing.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The translation above assumes that צִדְקָה (*tsedeq*) and מִישְׁרִים (*mesharim*) are adverbial accusatives (see 33:15). If they are taken as direct objects, indicating the content of what is spoken, one might translate, “who proclaims deliverance, who announces justice.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “Declare! Bring near!”; NASB “Declare and set forth your case.” See 41:21.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or “a righteous God and deliverer”; NASB, NIV, NRSV “a righteous God and a Savior.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The Niphal imperative with prefixed *vav* (ו) indicates purpose after the preceding imperative. The Niphal probably has a tolerative sense, “allow yourselves to be delivered, accept help.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “I swear by myself”; KJV, NASB “have sworn.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “a word goes out from my mouth [in] truth and will not return.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb “swear” (so KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “confess allegiance.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “‘Yes, in the LORD,’ one says about me, ‘is deliverance and strength.’”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “will come to him and be ashamed.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be vindicated and boast.”

it does not<sup>1</sup> move from its place.  
 Even when someone cries out to it, it  
 does not reply;  
 it does not deliver him from his distress.  
**46:8** Remember this, so you can be  
 brave!<sup>2</sup>  
 Think about it, you rebels!<sup>3</sup>  
**46:9** Remember what I accomplished in  
 antiquity!<sup>4</sup>  
 Truly I am God, I have no peer;<sup>5</sup>  
 I am God, and there is none like me,  
**46:10** who announces the end from the  
 beginning  
 and reveals beforehand<sup>6</sup> what has not yet  
 occurred,  
 who says, 'My plan will be realized,  
 I will accomplish what I desire,'  
**46:11** who summons an eagle<sup>7</sup> from the  
 east,  
 from a distant land, one who carries out  
 my plan.  
 Yes, I have decreed,<sup>8</sup>  
 yes, I will bring it to pass;  
 I have formulated a plan,  
 yes, I will carry it out.  
**46:12** Listen to me, you stubborn people,<sup>9</sup>  
 you who distance yourself from doing  
 what is right.<sup>10</sup>  
**46:13** I am bringing my deliverance near,  
 it is not far away;  
 I am bringing my salvation near,<sup>11</sup> it does  
 not wait.  
 I will save Zion;<sup>12</sup>  
 I will adorn Israel with my splendor."<sup>13</sup>

### Babylon Will Fall

**47:1** "Fall down! Sit in the dirt,  
 O virgin<sup>14</sup> daughter Babylon!

Sit on the ground, not on a throne,  
 O daughter of the Babylonians!  
 Indeed,<sup>15</sup> you will no longer be called  
 delicate and pampered.  
**47:2** Pick up millstones and grind flour!  
 Remove your veil,  
 strip off your skirt,  
 expose your legs,  
 cross the streams!  
**47:3** Let your private parts be exposed!  
 Your genitals will be on display!<sup>16</sup>  
 I will get revenge;  
 I will not have pity on anyone."<sup>17</sup>  
**47:4** says our protector –  
 the LORD who commands armies is his  
 name,  
 the Holy One of Israel.<sup>18</sup>  
**47:5** "Sit silently! Go to a hiding place,<sup>19</sup>  
 O daughter of the Babylonians!  
 Indeed,<sup>20</sup> you will no longer be called  
 'Queen of kingdoms.'  
**47:6** I was angry at my people;  
 I defiled my special possession  
 and handed them over to you.  
 You showed them no mercy;<sup>21</sup>  
 you even placed a very heavy burden on  
 old people.<sup>22</sup>  
**47:7** You said,  
 'I will rule forever as permanent queen!'<sup>23</sup>  
 You did not think about these things;<sup>24</sup>  
 you did not consider how it would turn  
 out.<sup>25</sup>  
**47:8** So now, listen to this,  
 O one who lives so lavishly,<sup>26</sup>  
 who lives securely,  
 who says to herself,<sup>27</sup>  
 'I am unique! No one can compare to me!'<sup>28</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "cannot," here and in the following two lines. The imperfect forms can indicate capability.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The meaning of the verb אָשַׁשׁ (*'ashash*, which appears here in the Hitpoel stem) is uncertain. BDB 84 s.v. אָשַׁשׁ relates it to a root meaning "found, establish" in Arabic; HALOT 100 s.v. II אָשַׁשׁ gives the meaning "pluck up courage." The imperative with *vav* (ו) may indicate purpose following the preceding imperative.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "return [it], rebels, to heart"; NRSV "recall it to mind, you transgressors."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "remember the former things, from antiquity"; KJV, ASV "the former things of old."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and there is no other" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or "from long ago"; KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV "from ancient times."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or, more generally, "a bird of prey" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV; see 18:6).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "spoken"; KJV "I have spoken it."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "strong of heart [or, mind]"; KJV "stouthearted"; NAB "fainthearted"; NIV "stubborn-hearted."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "who are far from righteousness [or perhaps, "deliverance"]."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "my salvation." The verb "I am bringing near" is understood by ellipsis (note the previous line).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I will place in Zion salvation"; NASB "I will grant salvation in Zion."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to Israel my splendor"; KJV, ASV "for Israel my glory."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* בְּתוּלָה (*b<sup>2</sup>tolah*) often refers to a virgin, but the phrase "virgin daughter" is apparently stylized (see also 23:12;

37:22). In the extended metaphor of this chapter, where Babylon is personified as a queen (vv. 5, 7), she is depicted as being both a wife and mother (vv. 8-9).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "For" (NASB, NRSV).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Your shame will be seen." In this context "shame" is a euphemism referring to the genitals.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I will not meet a man." The verb פָּגַע (*pagah*) apparently carries the nuance "meet with kindness" here (cf. 64:5, and see BDB 803 s.v. *Qal.2*).

<sup>18</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads, "Our redeemer – the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] is his name, the Holy One of Israel." The ancient Greek version adds "says" before "our redeemer." אָמַר (*'amar*) may have accidentally dropped from the text by virtual haplography. Note that the preceding word אָדָם (*adam*) is graphically similar.

<sup>19</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.  
<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "darkness," which may indicate a place of hiding where a fugitive would seek shelter and protection.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Or "For" (NASB, NRSV).

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or "compassion."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "on the old you made very heavy your yoke."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Forever I [will be] permanent queen"; NIV "the eternal queen"; CEV "queen forever."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "you did not set these things upon your heart [or "mind"]."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "you did not remember its outcome"; NAB "you disregarded their outcome."

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "voluptuous one" (NAB); NAB "you sensual one"; NLT "You are a pleasure-crazy kingdom."

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the one who says in her heart."

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I [am], and besides me there is no other." See Zeph 2:15.

I will never have to live as a widow;  
I will never lose my children.<sup>1</sup>

47:9 Both of these will come upon you  
suddenly, in one day!

You will lose your children and be wid-  
owed.<sup>2</sup>

You will be overwhelmed by these trag-  
edies,<sup>3</sup>

despite<sup>4</sup> your many incantations  
and your numerous amulets.<sup>5</sup>

47:10 You were complacent in your evil  
deeds;<sup>6</sup>

you thought,<sup>7</sup> ‘No one sees me.’

Your self-professed<sup>8</sup> wisdom and knowl-  
edge lead you astray,

when you say, ‘I am unique! No one can  
compare to me!’<sup>9</sup>

47:11 Disaster will overtake you;  
you will not know how to charm it away.<sup>10</sup>

Destruction will fall on you;

you will not be able to appease it.

Calamity will strike you suddenly,  
before you recognize it.<sup>11</sup>

47:12 Persist<sup>12</sup> in trusting<sup>13</sup> your amulets  
and your many incantations,

which you have faithfully recited<sup>14</sup> since  
your youth!

Maybe you will be successful<sup>15</sup> –  
maybe you will scare away disaster.<sup>16</sup>

47:13 You are tired out from listening to  
so much advice.<sup>17</sup>

Let them take their stand –

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I will not live [as] a widow, and I will not know loss of children.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “loss of children and widowhood.” In the Hebrew text the phrase is in apposition to “both of these” in line 1.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “according to their fullness, they will come upon you.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** For other examples of the preposition *bet* (ב) having the sense of “although, despite,” see BDB 90 s.v. III.7.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** Reference is made to incantations and amulets, both of which were important in Mesopotamian religion. They were used to ward off danger and demons.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you trusted in your evil”; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “wickedness.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “said”; NAB “said to yourself” NAB “said in your heart.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The words “self-professed” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** See the note at v. 8.

<sup>10</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has שְׁחָרָה (*shakhrāh*), which is either a suffixed noun (“its dawning,” i.e., origin) or infinitive (“to look early for it”). Some have suggested an emendation to שְׁחָדָה (*shakhadah*), a suffixed infinitive from שָׁחַד (*shakhad*), “[how] to buy it off”; see BDB 1005 s.v. שָׁחַד. This forms a nice parallel with the following couplet. The above translation is based on a different etymology of the verb in question. HALOT 1466 s.v. III שָׁחַד references a verbal root with these letters (שָׁחַד) that refers to magical activity.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you will not know”; NIV “you cannot foresee.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “stand” (so KJV, ASV); NASB, NRSV “Stand fast.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The word “trusting” is supplied in the translation for clarification. See v. 9.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in that which you have toiled.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “maybe you will be able to profit.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “maybe you will cause to tremble.” The object “disaster” is supplied in the translation for clarification. See the note at v. 9.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you are tired because of the abundance of your advice.”

the ones who see omens in the sky,  
who gaze at the stars,  
who make monthly predictions –  
let them rescue you from the disaster that  
is about to overtake you!<sup>18</sup>

47:14 Look, they are like straw,  
which the fire burns up;

they cannot rescue themselves  
from the heat<sup>19</sup> of the flames.

There are no coals to warm them,  
no firelight to enjoy.<sup>20</sup>

47:15 They will disappoint you,<sup>21</sup>  
those you have so faithfully dealt with  
since your youth.<sup>22</sup>

Each strays off in his own direction,<sup>23</sup>  
leaving no one to rescue you.”

### *The Lord Appeals to the Exiles*

48:1 Listen to this, O family of Jacob,<sup>24</sup>  
you who are called by the name ‘Israel,’  
and are descended from Judah,<sup>25</sup>

who take oaths in the name of the LORD,  
and invoke<sup>26</sup> the God of Israel –

but not in an honest and just manner.<sup>27</sup>

48:2 Indeed, they live in the holy city,<sup>28</sup>  
they trust in<sup>29</sup> the God of Israel,

whose name is the LORD who commands  
armies.

48:3 “I announced events beforehand,<sup>30</sup>

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “let them stand and rescue you – the ones who see omens in the sky, who gaze at the stars, who make known by months – from those things which are coming upon you.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “hand,” here a metaphor for the strength or power of the flames.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “there is no coal [for?] their food, light to sit before it.” Some emend לַחֲמָם (*lakhamm*, “their food”) to לְחַמָּם (*l’khummm*, “to warm them”); see HALOT 328 s.v. חָמָם. This statement may allude to Isa 44:16, where idolaters are depicted warming themselves over a fire made from wood, part of which was used to form idols. The fire of divine judgment will be no such campfire; its flames will devour and destroy.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “So they will be to you”; NIV “That is all they can do for you.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “that for which you toiled, your traders from your youth.” The omen readers and star gazers are likened to merchants with whom Babylon has had an ongoing economic relationship.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “each to his own side, they err.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “house of Jacob”; TEV, CEV “people of Israel.”

<sup>25</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally “and from the waters of Judah came out.” נִמְמֵי (*nimmme*) could be a corruption of the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, which corrects a similar form to “from inner parts of” in 39:7, does not do it here.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* “cause to remember”; KJV, ASV “make mention of.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* “not in truth and not in righteousness.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they call themselves [or “are called”] in the holy city.” The precise meaning of the statement is uncertain. The Niphal of קָרָא (*qara*) is combined with the preposition בֵּן (*min*) only here. When the Qal of קָרָא is used with בֵּן, the preposition often indicates the place from which one is summoned (see 46:11). So one could translate, “from the holy city they are summoned,” meaning that they reside there.

<sup>29</sup> **tn** *Heb* “lean on” (so NASB, NRSV); NAB, NIV “rely on.”

<sup>30</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the former things beforehand I declared.”

I issued the decrees and made the predictions;<sup>1</sup>

suddenly I acted and they came to pass.  
48:4 I did this<sup>2</sup> because I know how stubborn you are.

Your neck muscles are like iron  
and your forehead like bronze.<sup>3</sup>

48:5 I announced them to you beforehand;  
before they happened, I predicted them  
for you,

so you could never say,  
‘My image did these things,  
my idol, my cast image, decreed them.’

48:6 You have heard; now look at all the  
evidence!<sup>4</sup>

Will you not admit that what I say is  
true?<sup>5</sup>

From this point on I am announcing to  
you new events  
that are previously unrevealed and you do  
not know about.<sup>6</sup>

48:7 Now they come into being,<sup>7</sup> not in  
the past;

before today you did not hear about them,  
so you could not say,  
‘Yes,<sup>8</sup> I know about them.’

48:8 You did not hear,  
you do not know,

you were not told beforehand.<sup>9</sup>

For I know that you are very deceitful;<sup>10</sup>  
you were labeled<sup>11</sup> a rebel from birth.

48:9 For the sake of my reputation<sup>12</sup> I hold  
back my anger;

for the sake of my prestige<sup>13</sup> I restrain my-  
self from destroying you.<sup>14</sup>

48:10 Look, I have refined you, but not as  
silver;

I have purified you<sup>15</sup> in the furnace of  
misery.

48:11 For my sake alone<sup>16</sup> I will act,

for how can I allow my name to be de-  
filed?<sup>17</sup>

I will not share my glory with anyone  
else!<sup>18</sup>

48:12 Listen to me, O Jacob,  
Israel, whom I summoned!

I am the one;

I am present at the very beginning  
and at the very end.<sup>19</sup>

48:13 Yes, my hand founded the earth;  
my right hand spread out the sky.

I summon them;  
they stand together.

48:14 All of you, gather together and lis-  
ten!

Who among them<sup>20</sup> announced these  
things?

The LORD’s ally<sup>21</sup> will carry out his desire  
against Babylon;  
he will exert his power against the Baby-  
lonians.<sup>22</sup>

48:15 I, I have spoken –  
yes, I have summoned him;  
I lead him and he will succeed.<sup>23</sup>

48:16 Approach me! Listen to this!

From the very first I have not spoken in  
secret;

when it happens,<sup>24</sup> I am there.”

So now, the sovereign LORD has sent me,  
accompanied by his spirit.<sup>25</sup>

48:17 This is what the LORD, your protec-  
tor,<sup>26</sup> says,

the Holy One of Israel:<sup>27</sup>

“I am the LORD your God,  
who teaches you how to succeed,  
who leads you in the way you should go.

48:18 If only you had obeyed my<sup>28</sup> com-  
mandments,

prosperity would have flowed to you like  
a river,<sup>29</sup>

deliverance would have come to you like  
the waves of the sea.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “and from my mouth they came forth and I caused them to be heard.”

<sup>2</sup> tn The words “I did this” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text v. 4 is subordinated to v. 3.

<sup>3</sup> sn The image is that of a person who has tensed the muscles of the face and neck as a sign of resolute refusal.

<sup>4</sup> tn Heb “gaze [at] all of it”; KJV “see all this.”

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb “[as for] you, will you not declare?”

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “and hidden things, and you do not know them.”

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb “are created” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “They are brand new.”

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb “look”; KJV, NASB “Behold.”

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “beforehand your ear did not open.”

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb “deceiving, you deceive.” The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>11</sup> tn Or “called” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>12</sup> tn Heb “for the sake of my name” (so NAB, NASB); NLT “for my own sake.”

<sup>13</sup> tn Heb “and my praise.” לְמַעַן (l<sup>e</sup>ma’an, “for the sake of”) is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “I restrain [myself] concerning you not to cut you off.”

<sup>15</sup> tc The Hebrew text has בִּתְרִיתִיךָ (b<sup>e</sup>khartikka, “I have chosen you”), but the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads correctly בִּדְ נִתְבַּח (“I have tested you”). The metallurgical background of the imagery suggests that purification through testing is the idea.

<sup>16</sup> tn The Hebrew text repeats לְמַעַנִי (l<sup>e</sup>ma’ani, “for my

sake”) for emphasis.

<sup>17</sup> tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “for how can it be de-  
filed?” The subject of the verb is probably “name” (v. 9).

<sup>18</sup> sn See 42:8.

<sup>19</sup> tn Heb “I [am] he, I [am the] first, also I [am the] last.”

<sup>20</sup> sn This probably refers to the idol gods (see v. 5).

<sup>21</sup> tn Or “friend,” or “covenant partner.”

<sup>22</sup> tn The LORD’s ally is a reference to Cyrus.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “and his arm [against] the Babylonians.”

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb “and his way will be prosperous.”

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb “from the time of its occurring.”

<sup>26</sup> sn The speaker here is not identified specifically, but he is probably Cyrus, the LORD’s “ally” mentioned in vv. 14-15.

<sup>27</sup> tn Heb “your redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>28</sup> sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>29</sup> tn Heb “paid attention to” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “had listened to.”

<sup>30</sup> tn Heb “like a river your peace would have been.” שְׁלוֹמֶךָ (shalom) probably refers here to the peace and prosperity which God promised in return for obedience to the covenant.

<sup>31</sup> tn Heb “and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.” תְּדַאֲחֶךָ (ts<sup>e</sup>daqah) probably refers here to divine deliverance from enemies. See v. 19.



**48:19** Your descendants would have been as numerous as sand,<sup>1</sup> and your children<sup>2</sup> like its granules. Their name would not have been cut off and eliminated from my presence.<sup>3</sup>

**48:20** Leave Babylon!  
Flee from the Babylonians!  
Announce it with a shout of joy!  
Make this known!  
Proclaim it throughout the earth!<sup>4</sup>  
Say, "The LORD protects<sup>5</sup> his servant Jacob.

**48:21** They do not thirst as he leads them through dry regions;  
he makes water flow out of a rock for them;  
he splits open a rock and water flows out.<sup>6</sup>

**48:22** There will be no prosperity for the wicked," says the LORD.

*Ideal Israel Delivers the Exiles*

**49:1** Listen to me, you coastlands!<sup>7</sup>  
Pay attention, you people who live far away!

The LORD summoned me from birth;<sup>8</sup>  
he commissioned me when my mother brought me into the world.<sup>9</sup>

**49:2** He made my mouth like a sharp sword,  
he hid me in the hollow of his hand;  
he made me like a sharpened<sup>10</sup> arrow,  
he hid me in his quiver.<sup>11</sup>

**49:3** He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, through whom I will reveal my splendor."<sup>12</sup>

**49:4** But I thought,<sup>13</sup> "I have worked in vain;

I have expended my energy for absolutely nothing."<sup>14</sup>

But the LORD will vindicate me;  
my God will reward me.<sup>15</sup>

**49:5** So now the LORD says,  
the one who formed me from birth<sup>16</sup> to be his servant –

he did this<sup>17</sup> to restore Jacob to himself,  
so that Israel might be gathered to him;  
and I will be honored<sup>18</sup> in the LORD'S sight,

for my God is my source of strength<sup>19</sup> –

**49:6** he says, "Is it too insignificant a task for you to be my servant,  
to reestablish the tribes of Jacob,  
and restore the remnant<sup>20</sup> of Israel?<sup>21</sup>  
I will make you a light to the nations,<sup>22</sup>  
so you can bring<sup>23</sup> my deliverance to the remote regions of the earth."

**49:7** This is what the LORD,  
the protector<sup>24</sup> of Israel, their Holy One,<sup>25</sup>  
says

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "like sand"; NCV "as many as the grains of sand."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "and the issue from your inner parts."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "and his name would not be cut off and would not be destroyed from before me."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "to the end of the earth" (so KJV, NASB, NRSV).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "redeems." See the note at 41:14.

<sup>6</sup> **sn** The translation above (present tense) assumes that this verse describes God's provision for returning Babylonian exiles (see v. 20; 35:6; 49:10) in terms reminiscent of the Exodus from Egypt (see Exod 17:6).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or "islands" (NASB, NIV); NLT "in far-off lands."

**sn** The LORD's special servant, introduced in chap. 42, speaks here of his commission.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb "called me from the womb."

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb "from the inner parts of my mother he mentioned my name."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "polished" (so KJV, ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); NASB "a select arrow."

<sup>11</sup> **sn** The figurative language emphasizes the servant's importance as the LORD's effective instrument. The servant's mouth, which stands metonymically for his words, is compared to a sharp sword because he will be an effective spokesman on God's behalf (see 50:4). The LORD holds his hand on the servant, ready to draw and use him at the appropriate time. The servant is like a sharpened arrow reserved in a quiver for just the right moment.

<sup>12</sup> **sn** This verse identifies the servant as *Israel*. This seems to refer to the exiled nation (cf. 41:8-9; 44:1-2, 21; 45:4; 48:20), but in vv. 5-6 this servant says he has been commissioned to reconcile Israel to God, so he must be distinct from the exiled nation. This servant is an ideal "Israel" who, like Moses of old, mediates a covenant for the nation (see v. 8), leads them out of bondage (v. 9a), and carries out God's original plan for Israel by positively impacting the pagan nations (see v. 6b). By living according to God's law, Israel was to be a model of God's standards of justice to the surrounding nations (Deut 4:6-8). The sinful nation failed, but the servant, the ideal "Israel," will succeed by establishing justice throughout the earth.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "said" (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT "I replied."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "for nothing and emptiness." Synonyms are combined to emphasize the common idea.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb "But my justice is with the LORD, and my reward [or "wage"] with my God."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "from the womb" (so KJV, NASB).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The words "he did this" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text the infinitive construct of purpose is subordinated to the previous statement.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The vav (ו) + imperfect is translated here as a result clause; one might interpret it as indicating purpose, "and so I might be honored."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "and my God is [perhaps, "having been"] my strength." The disjunctive structure (vav [ו] + subject + verb) is interpreted here as indicating a causal circumstantial clause.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "the protected [or "preserved"] ones."

<sup>21</sup> **sn** The question is purely rhetorical; it does not imply that the servant was dissatisfied with his commission or that he minimized the restoration of Israel.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** See the note at 42:6.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb "be" (so KJV, ASV); CEV "you must take."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb "redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

<sup>25</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

to the one who is despised<sup>1</sup> and rejected<sup>2</sup>  
by nations,<sup>3</sup>  
a servant of rulers:  
“Kings will see and rise in respect,<sup>4</sup>  
princes will bow down,  
because of the faithful LORD,  
the Holy One of Israel who has chosen  
you.”

**49:8** This is what the LORD says:  
“At the time I decide to show my favor, I  
will respond to you;  
in the day of deliverance I will help you;  
I will protect you<sup>5</sup> and make you a cov-  
enant mediator for people,<sup>6</sup>  
to rebuild<sup>7</sup> the land<sup>8</sup>  
and to reassign the desolate property.  
**49:9** You will say<sup>9</sup> to the prisoners, ‘Come  
out,’  
and to those who are in dark dungeons,<sup>10</sup>  
‘Emerge.’<sup>11</sup>

They will graze beside the roads;  
on all the slopes they will find pasture.  
**49:10** They will not be hungry or thirsty;  
the sun’s oppressive heat will not beat  
down on them,<sup>12</sup>  
for one who has compassion on them will  
guide them;  
he will lead them to springs of water.  
**49:11** I will make all my mountains into  
a road;

I will construct my roadways.”  
**49:12** Look, they come from far away!  
Look, some come from the north and  
west,  
and others from the land of Sinim!<sup>13</sup>  
**49:13** Shout for joy, O sky!<sup>14</sup>  
Rejoice, O earth!  
Let the mountains give a joyful shout!  
For the LORD consoles his people  
and shows compassion to the<sup>15</sup> oppressed.

### The Lord Remembers Zion

**49:14** “Zion said, ‘The LORD has aban-  
doned me,  
the sovereign master<sup>16</sup> has forgotten me.’  
**49:15** Can a woman forget her baby who  
nurses at her breast?<sup>17</sup>  
Can she withhold compassion from the  
child she has borne?<sup>18</sup>  
Even if mothers<sup>19</sup> were to forget,  
I could never forget you!<sup>20</sup>  
**49:16** Look, I have inscribed your name<sup>21</sup>  
on my palms;  
your walls are constantly before me.  
**49:17** Your children hurry back,  
while those who destroyed and devas-  
tated you depart.  
**49:18** Look all around you!<sup>22</sup>  
All of them gather to you.  
As surely as I live,” says the LORD,  
“you will certainly wear all of them like  
jewelry;  
you will put them on as if you were a  
bride.  
**49:19** Yes, your land lies in ruins;  
it is desolate and devastated.<sup>23</sup>  
But now you will be too small to hold  
your residents,  
and those who devoured you will be far  
away.

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally “to [one who] despises life.” It is preferable to read with the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> לִבֵּי לִי־וִי, which should be vocalized as a passive participle, לִבְיָוִי (*liv-yay*, “to the one despised with respect to life” [לִבְיָוִי is a genitive of specification]). The consonantal sequence וִי was probably misread as ה in the MT tradition. The contextual argument favors the 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reading. As J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:294) points out, the three terse phrases “convey a picture of lowliness, worthlessness, and helplessness.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** MT’s Piel participle (“to the one who rejects”) does not fit contextually. The form should be revocalized as a Pual, “to the one rejected.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Parallelism (see “rulers,” “kings,” “princes”) suggests that the singular גֵּרִי (*geri*) be emended to a plural or understood in a collective sense (see 55:5).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** For this sense of קָוַם (*qum*), see Gen 19:1; 23:7; 33:10; Lev 19:32; 1 Sam 20:41; 25:41; 1 Kgs 2:19; Job 29:8.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The translation assumes the verb is derived from the root נָצַר (*natsar*, “protect”). Some prefer to derive it from the root יָצַר (*yatsar*, “form”).

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a covenant of people.” A person cannot literally be a covenant; בְּרִית (b<sup>r</sup>*rit*) is probably metonymic here, indicating a covenant mediator. Here אָמ (*am*, “people”) appears to refer to Israel. See the note at 42:6.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The Hiphil of קָוַם (*qum*, “arise”) is probably used here in the sense of “rebuild.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The “land” probably stands by metonymy for the ruins within it.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to say.” In the Hebrew text the infinitive construct is subordinated to what precedes.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in darkness” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “the prisoners of darkness.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “show yourselves” (so ASV, NAB, NASB).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the heat and the sun will not strike them.” In Isa 35:7, its only other occurrence in the OT, שָׁרָב (*sharav*) stands parallel to “parched ground” and in contrast to “pool.” In later Hebrew and Aramaic it refers to “dry heat, heat of the sun” (Jastrow 1627 s.v.). Here it likely has this nuance and forms a hendiadys with “sun.”

<sup>13</sup> **tc** The MT reads “Sinim” here; the Dead Sea Scrolls read “Syene,” a location in Egypt associated with modern Aswan. A number of recent translations adopt this reading: “Syene” (NAB, NRSV); “Aswan” (NIV); “Egypt” (NLT).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The precise location of the land of Sinim is uncertain, but since the north and west are mentioned in the previous line, it was a probably located in the distant east or south.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “O heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “his” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדוֹנָי (*adonay*).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “her suckling”; NASB “her nursing child.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “so as not to have compassion on the son of her womb?”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “these” (so ASV, NASB).

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you.” Here the pronoun is put by metonymy for the person’s name.  
<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Lift up around your eyes and see.”  
<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Indeed your ruins and your desolate places, and the land of your destruction.” This statement is abruptly terminated in the Hebrew text and left incomplete.

49:20 Yet the children born during your time of bereavement will say within your hearing, 'This place is too cramped for us,<sup>1</sup> make room for us so we can live here.'<sup>2</sup>  
 49:21 Then you will think to yourself,<sup>3</sup> 'Who bore these children for me? I was bereaved and barren, dismissed and divorced.<sup>4</sup> Who raised these children? Look, I was left all alone; where did these children come from?'"  
 49:22 This is what the sovereign LORD says: "Look I will raise my hand to the nations; I will raise my signal flag to the peoples. They will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.  
 49:23 Kings will be your children's<sup>5</sup> guardians; their princesses will nurse your children.<sup>6</sup> With their faces to the ground they will bow down to you and they will lick the dirt on<sup>7</sup> your feet. Then you will recognize that I am the LORD; those who wait patiently for me are not put to shame.  
 49:24 Can spoils be taken from a warrior, or captives be rescued from a conqueror?<sup>8</sup>  
 49:25 Indeed," says the LORD, "captives will be taken from a warrior; spoils will be rescued from a conqueror. I will oppose your adversary and I will rescue your children.  
 49:26 I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will get drunk on their own blood, as if it were wine.<sup>9</sup> Then all humankind<sup>10</sup> will recognize that I am the LORD, your deliverer, your protector,<sup>11</sup> the powerful Ruler of Jacob."<sup>12</sup>

50:1 This is what the LORD says: "Where is your mother's divorce certificate by which I divorced her? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you?<sup>13</sup> Look, you were sold because of your sins,<sup>14</sup> because of your rebellious acts I divorced your mother.<sup>15</sup>  
 50:2 Why does no one challenge me when I come? Why does no one respond when I call?<sup>16</sup> Is my hand too weak<sup>17</sup> to deliver<sup>18</sup> you? Do I lack the power to rescue you? Look, with a mere shout<sup>19</sup> I can dry up the sea; I can turn streams into a desert, so the fish rot away and die from lack of water.<sup>20</sup>  
 50:3 I can clothe the sky in darkness; I can cover it with sackcloth."<sup>21</sup>

### *The Servant Perseveres*

50:4 The sovereign LORD has given me the capacity to be his spokesman,<sup>21</sup> so that I know how to help the weary.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>13</sup> **sn** The LORD challenges the exiles (Zion's children) to bring incriminating evidence against him. The rhetorical questions imply that Israel accused the LORD of divorcing his wife (Zion) and selling his children (the Israelites) into slavery to pay off a debt.

<sup>14</sup> **sn** The LORD admits that he did sell the Israelites, but it was because of their sins, not because of some debt he owed. If he had sold them to a creditor, they ought to be able to point him out, but the preceding rhetorical question implies they would not be able to do so.

<sup>15</sup> **sn** The LORD admits he did divorce Zion, but that too was the result of the nation's sins. The force of the earlier rhetorical question comes into clearer focus now. The question does not imply that a certificate does not exist and that no divorce occurred. Rather, the question asks for the certificate to be produced so the accuser can see the reason for the divorce in black and white. The LORD did not put Zion away arbitrarily.

<sup>16</sup> **sn** The present tense translation of the verbs assumes that the LORD is questioning why Israel does not attempt to counter his arguments. Another possibility is to take the verbs as referring to past events: "Why did no one meet me when I came? Why did no one answer when I called?" In this case the LORD might be asking why Israel rejected his calls to repent and his offer to deliver them.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "short" (so NAB, NASB, NIV).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Or "ransom" (NAB, NASB, NIV).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "with my rebuke."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb "the fish stink from lack of water and die from thirst."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "has given to me a tongue of disciples."

**sn** Verses 4-11 contain the third of the so-called servant songs, which depict the career of the LORD's special servant, envisioned as an ideal Israel (49:3) who rescues the exiles and fulfills God's purposes for the world. Here the servant alludes to opposition (something hinted at in 49:4), but also expresses his determination to persevere with the LORD's help.

<sup>22</sup> **tc** Heb "to know [?] the weary with a word." Comparing it with Arabic and Aramaic cognates yields the meaning of "help, sustain." Nevertheless, the meaning of עֵזֶר (*'ut*) is uncertain. The word occurs only here in the OT (see BDB 736 s.v.). Various scholars have suggested an emendation to עָנֹת (*'anot*) עָנָה (*'anah*, "answer"): "so that I know how to respond kindly to the weary." Since the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the Vulgate support the MT reading, that reading is re-

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "me." The singular is collective.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "draw near to me so I can dwell."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "and you will say in your heart."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or "exiled and thrust away"; NIV "exiled and rejected."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb "your," but Zion here stands by metonymy for her children (see v. 22b).

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "you." See the preceding note.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or "at your feet" (NAB, NIV); NLT "from your feet."

<sup>8</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has צַדִּיק (*tsadiq*, "a righteous [one]"), but this makes no sense in the parallelism. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads correctly גֵּרִי ("violent [one], tyrant"; see v. 25).

<sup>9</sup> **sn** Verse 26a depicts siege warfare and bloody defeat. The besieged enemy will be so starved they will their own flesh. The bloodstained bodies lying on the blood-soaked battle site will look as if they collapsed in drunkenness.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Heb "flesh" (so KJV, NASB).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "your redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "the powerful [one] of Jacob." See 1:24.

He wakes me up every morning;  
he makes me alert so I can listen atten-  
tively as disciples do.<sup>1</sup>

**50:5** The sovereign LORD has spoken to  
me clearly;<sup>2</sup>

I have not rebelled,  
I have not turned back.

**50:6** I offered my back to those who at-  
tacked,<sup>3</sup>

my jaws to those who tore out my beard;  
I did not hide my face  
from insults and spitting.

**50:7** But the sovereign LORD helps me,  
so I am not humiliated.

For that reason I am steadfastly re-  
solved;<sup>4</sup>

I know I will not be put to shame.

**50:8** The one who vindicates me is close  
by.

Who dares to argue with me? Let us con-  
front each other!<sup>5</sup>

Who is my accuser?<sup>6</sup> Let him challenge me!<sup>7</sup>

**50:9** Look, the sovereign LORD helps me.  
Who dares to condemn me?

Look, all of them will wear out like  
clothes;  
a moth will eat away at them.

**50:10** Who among you fears the LORD?  
Who obeys<sup>8</sup> his servant?

Whoever walks in deep darkness,<sup>9</sup>  
without light,  
should trust in the name of the LORD  
and rely on his God.

**50:11** Look, all of you who start a fire  
and who equip yourselves with<sup>10</sup> flaming  
arrows,<sup>11</sup>

walk<sup>12</sup> in the light<sup>13</sup> of the fire you started  
and among the flaming arrows you  
ignited!<sup>14</sup>

This is what you will receive from me:<sup>15</sup>  
you will lie down in a place of pain.<sup>16</sup>

*There is Hope for the Future*

**51:1** “Listen to me, you who pursue godli-  
ness,<sup>17</sup>  
who seek the LORD!

Look at the rock from which you were  
chiseled,  
at the quarry<sup>18</sup> from which you were  
dug!<sup>19</sup>

**51:2** Look at Abraham, your father,  
and Sarah, who gave you birth.<sup>20</sup>  
When I summoned him, he was a lone  
individual,<sup>21</sup>

but I blessed him<sup>22</sup> and gave him numer-  
ous descendants.<sup>23</sup>

**51:3** Certainly the LORD will console Zion;  
he will console all her ruins.

He will make her wilderness like Eden,  
her desert like the Garden of the LORD.  
Happiness and joy will be restored to<sup>24</sup>  
her,

thanksgiving and the sound of music.

**51:4** Pay attention to me, my people!  
Listen to me, my people!

For<sup>25</sup> I will issue a decree,<sup>26</sup>

I will make my justice a light to the na-  
tions.<sup>27</sup>

**51:5** I am ready to vindicate,<sup>28</sup>  
I am ready to deliver,<sup>29</sup>

I will establish justice among the na-  
tions.<sup>30</sup>

The coastlands<sup>31</sup> wait patiently for me;  
they wait in anticipation for the revela-  
tion of my power.<sup>32</sup>

**51:6** Look up at the sky!

Look at the earth below!

For the sky will dissipate<sup>33</sup> like smoke,  
and the earth will wear out like clothes;  
its residents will die like gnats.

But the deliverance I give<sup>34</sup> is permanent;

tained.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “he arouses for me an ear, to hear like disciples.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “makes me obedient.” The text reads lit-  
erally, “has opened for me an ear.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “who beat [me].”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb “Therefore I set my face like flint.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “Let us stand together!”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “Who is the master of my judgment?”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “let him approach me”; NAB, NIV “Let him con-  
front me.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “[who] listens to the voice of his servant?” The in-  
terrogative is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The plural indicates degree. Darkness may refer to ex-  
ile and/or moral evil.

<sup>10</sup> **tc** Several more recent commentators have proposed an  
emendation of כְּאֵשׁוֹרִי (*m<sup>e</sup>azz<sup>ere</sup>*, “who put on”) to כְּאֵשׁוֹרִי  
(*m<sup>e</sup>iri*, “who light”). However, both Qumran scrolls of Isaiah and the  
Vulgate support the MT reading (cf. NIV, ESV).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** On the meaning of זִיקוֹת (*zīqot*, “flaming arrows”), see  
HALOT 268 s.v. זִיקוֹת.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The imperative is probably rhetorical and has a predic-  
tive force.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “flame” (so ASV).

<sup>14</sup> **sn** Perhaps the servant here speaks to his enemies and  
warns them that they will self-destruct.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “from my hand” (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>16</sup> **sn** The imagery may be that of a person who becomes ill

and is forced to lie down in pain on a sickbed. Some see this  
as an allusion to a fiery place of damnation because of the  
imagery employed earlier in the verse.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or “righteousness” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB “jus-  
tice”; NLT “hope for deliverance.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “the excavation of the hole.”

<sup>19</sup> **sn** The “rock” and “quarry” refer here to Abraham and  
Sarah, the progenitors of the nation.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** Although Abraham and Sarah are distant ancestors  
of the people the prophet is addressing, they are spoken of as  
the immediate parents.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “one”; NLT “was alone”; TEV “was childless.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** “Bless” may here carry the sense of “endue with po-  
tency, reproductive power.” See Gen 1:28.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “and I made him numerous.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “found in” (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Or “certainly.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb “instruction [or “a law”] will go out from me.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb “and my justice for a light to the nations I will  
cause to rest.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Heb “my righteousness [or “vindication”] is near.”

<sup>29</sup> **tn** Heb “my deliverance goes forth.”

<sup>30</sup> **tn** Heb “and my arms will judge [on behalf of] nations.”

<sup>31</sup> **tn** Or “islands” (NIV); TEV “Distant lands.”

<sup>32</sup> **tn** Heb “for my arm” (so NIV, NRSV).

<sup>33</sup> **tn** Heb “will be torn in pieces.” The perfect indicates the  
certitude of the event, from the LORD’s rhetorical perspective.

<sup>34</sup> **tn** Heb “my deliverance.” The same Hebrew word can



the vindication I provide<sup>1</sup> will not disappear.<sup>2</sup>

**51:7** Listen to me, you who know what is right,  
you people who are aware of my law!<sup>3</sup>  
Don't be afraid of the insults of men;  
don't be discouraged because of their abuse!

**51:8** For a moth will eat away at them like clothes;  
a clothes moth will devour them like wool.  
But the vindication I provide<sup>4</sup> will be permanent;  
the deliverance I give will last.<sup>5</sup>

**51:9** Wake up! Wake up!  
Clothe yourself with strength, O arm of the LORD!<sup>5</sup>

Wake up as in former times, as in antiquity!

Did you not smash<sup>6</sup> the Proud One?<sup>7</sup>  
Did you not<sup>8</sup> wound the sea monster?<sup>9</sup>

**51:10** Did you not dry up the sea,  
the waters of the great deep?  
Did you not make<sup>10</sup> a path through the depths of the sea,  
so those delivered from bondage<sup>11</sup> could cross over?

**51:11** Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return;  
they will enter Zion with a happy shout.  
Unending joy will crown them,<sup>12</sup>

happiness and joy will overwhelm<sup>13</sup> them;  
grief and suffering will disappear.<sup>14</sup>

**51:12** "I, I am the one who consoles you.<sup>15</sup>  
Why are you afraid of mortal men,  
of mere human beings who are as short-lived as grass?"<sup>16</sup>

**51:13** Why do you forget<sup>17</sup> the LORD, who made you,  
who stretched out the sky<sup>18</sup>  
and founded the earth?  
Why do you constantly tremble all day long<sup>19</sup>

at the anger of the oppressor,  
when he makes plans to destroy?  
Where is the anger of the oppressor?<sup>20</sup>

**51:14** The one who suffers<sup>21</sup> will soon be released;  
he will not die in prison,<sup>22</sup>  
he will not go hungry.<sup>23</sup>

**51:15** I am the LORD your God,  
who churns up the sea so that its waves surge.  
The LORD who commands armies is his name!

#### Zion's Time to Celebrate

**51:16** I commission you<sup>24</sup> as my spokesman;<sup>25</sup>

I cover you with the palm of my hand,<sup>26</sup>

here to a crown (cf. 2 Sam 1:10). The statement may also be an ironic twist on the idiom "earth/dust on the head" (cf. 2 Sam 1:2; 13:19; 15:32; Job 2:12), referring to a mourning practice.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb "overtake" (so NIV); NASB "they will obtain."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb "grief and groaning will flee."

<sup>15</sup> **tc** The plural suffix should probably be emended to the second masculine singular (which is used in v. 13). The final *mem* (ם) is probably dittographic; note the *mem* at the beginning of the next word.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb "Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, and of the son of man who [as] grass is given up?" The feminine singular forms should probably be emended to the masculine singular (see v. 13). They have probably been influenced by the construction אֶת־הַיָּהוָה (*at-hi*) in vv. 9-10.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb "and that you forget."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Or "the heavens" (also in v. 16). The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb "and that you tremble constantly all the day."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** The question anticipates the answer, "Ready to disappear!" See v. 14.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb "who is stooped over" (under a burden).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb "the pit" (so KJV); ASV, NAB "die and go down into the pit"; NASB, NIV "dungeon"; NCV "prison."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb "he will not lack his bread."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The addressee (second masculine singular, as in vv. 13, 15) in this verse is unclear. The exiles are addressed in the immediately preceding verses (note the critical tone of vv. 12-13 and the reference to the exiles in v. 14). However, it seems unlikely that they are addressed in v. 16, for the addressee appears to be commissioned to tell Zion, who here represents the restored exiles, "you are my people." The addressee is distinct from the exiles. The language of v. 16a is reminiscent of 49:2 and 50:4, where the LORD's special servant says he is God's spokesman and effective instrument. Perhaps the LORD, having spoken to the exiles in vv. 1-15, now responds to this servant, who spoke just prior to this in 50:4-11.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb "I place my words in your mouth."

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb "with the shadow of my hand."

also be translated "salvation" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); cf. CEV "victory."

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb "my righteousness [or "vindication"]."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb "will not be shattered [or "dismayed"]."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb "people (who have) my law in their heart."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Heb "my vindication"; many English versions "my righteousness"; NRSV, TEV "my deliverance"; CEV "my victory."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** The arm of the LORD is a symbol of divine military power. Here it is personified and told to arouse itself from sleep and prepare for action.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb "Are you not the one who smashed?" The feminine singular forms agree grammatically with the feminine noun "arm." The Hebrew text has הַמַּכְהִיֶּטֶת (*hammakhisevet*), from the verbal root הָכַסַּב (*khatsav*, "hew, chop"). The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has, probably correctly, הַרְבִּיצִית, from the verbal root הָכַסַּח (*makhats*, "smash") which is used in Job 26:12 to describe God's victory over "the Proud One."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** This title רַהַב, *rahav*, "proud one") is sometimes translated as a proper name: "Rahab" (cf. NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV). It is used here of a symbolic sea monster, known elsewhere in the Bible and in Ugaritic myth as Leviathan. This sea creature symbolizes the forces of chaos that seek to destroy the created order. In the Bible "the Proud One" opposes God's creative work, but is defeated (see Job 26:12; Ps 89:10). Here the title refers to Pharaoh's Egyptian army that opposed Israel at the Red Sea (see v. 10, and note also Isa 30:7 and Ps 87:4, where the title is used of Egypt).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The words "did you not" are understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line). The rhetorical questions here and in v. 10 expect the answer, "Yes, you certainly did!"

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Hebrew תַּנִּין (*tannin*) is another name for the symbolic sea monster. See the note at 27:1. In this context the sea creature represents Egypt. See the note on the title "Proud One" earlier in this verse.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, "Are you not the one who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made...?"

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb "the redeemed" (so ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); KJV "the ransomed."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb "[will be] on their head[s]." "Joy" may be likened

to establish<sup>1</sup> the sky and to found the earth,  
to say to Zion, ‘You are my people.’”<sup>2</sup>

**51:17** Wake up! Wake up!  
Get up, O Jerusalem!  
You drank from the cup the LORD passed  
to you,  
which was full of his anger!<sup>3</sup>  
You drained dry  
the goblet full of intoxicating wine.<sup>4</sup>

**51:18** There was no one to lead her  
among all the children she bore;  
there was no one to take her by the hand  
among all the children she raised.

**51:19** These double disasters confronted  
you.

But who feels sorry for you?  
Destruction and devastation,  
famine and sword.

But who consoles you?<sup>5</sup>

**51:20** Your children faint;  
they lie at the head of every street  
like an antelope in a snare.

They are left in a stupor by the LORD’s  
anger,

by the battle cry of your God.<sup>6</sup>

**51:21** So listen to this, oppressed one,  
who is drunk, but not from wine!

**51:22** This is what your sovereign master,<sup>7</sup>  
the LORD your God, says:

“Look, I have removed from your hand  
the cup of intoxicating wine,<sup>8</sup>  
the goblet full of my anger.<sup>9</sup>

You will no longer have to drink it.

**51:23** I will put it into the hand of your  
tormentors!<sup>10</sup>

who said to you, ‘Lie down, so we can  
walk over you.’

You made your back like the ground,  
and like the street for those who walked  
over you.”

**52:1** Wake up! Wake up!  
Clothe yourself with strength, O Zion!  
Put on your beautiful clothes,  
O Jerusalem,<sup>11</sup> holy city!

For uncircumcised and unclean pagans  
will no longer invade you.

**52:2** Shake off the dirt!<sup>12</sup>

Get up, captive!<sup>13</sup> Jerusalem!

Take off the iron chains around your neck,  
O captive daughter Zion!

**52:3** For this is what the LORD says:

“You were sold for nothing,  
and you will not be redeemed for money.”

**52:4** For this is what the sovereign LORD  
says:

“In the beginning my people went to live  
temporarily in Egypt;

Assyria oppressed them for no good reason.

**52:5** And now, what do we have here?”<sup>14</sup>  
says the LORD.

“Indeed my people have been carried  
away for nothing,

those who rule over them taunt,”<sup>15</sup> says  
the LORD,

“and my name is constantly slandered<sup>16</sup>  
all day long.

**52:6** For this reason my people will know  
my name,

for this reason they will know<sup>17</sup> at that  
time<sup>18</sup> that I am the one who says,

‘Here I am.’”

**52:7** How delightful it is to see approach-  
ing over the mountains<sup>19</sup>

the feet of a messenger who announces  
peace,

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has לִיטוֹא (‘*lintoa*’, “to plant”). Several scholars prefer to emend this form to לִיטוֹת (‘*linoat*’) from נָטוּהוּ (‘*natah*’, “to stretch out”); see v. 13, as well as 40:22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; cf. NAB, NCV, NRSV. However, since the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, LXX (and Aquila and Symmachus), and Vulgate support the MT reading, there is no need to emend the form. The interpretation is clear enough: Yahweh fixed the sky in its place.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** The infinitives in v. 16b are most naturally understood as indicating the purpose of the divine actions described in v. 16a. The relationship of the third infinitive to the commission is clear enough – the LORD has made the addressee (his special servant?) his spokesman so that the latter might speak encouraging words to those in Zion. But how do the first two infinitives relate? The text seems to indicate that the LORD has commissioned the addressee so that the latter might create the universe! Perhaps creation imagery is employed metaphorically here to refer to the transformation that Jerusalem will experience (see 65:17–18).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[you] who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his anger.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the goblet, the cup [that causes] staggering, you drank, you drained.”

<sup>5</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has אֲנַחְמֶכֶּחַ (‘*anakhamekh*’), a first person form, but the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reads correctly אֲנַחְמֶכֶּחַ (‘*yanakhamekh*’), a third person form.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “those who are full of the anger of the LORD, the shout [or “rebuke”] of your God.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדוֹנָי (‘*adonay*’).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the cup of [= that causes] staggering” (so ASV, NAB, NRSV); NASB “the cup of reeling.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the goblet of the cup of my anger.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** That is, to make them drink it.

<sup>11</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Shake yourself free from the dirt.”

<sup>13</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has שְׁבִי (‘*shvi*’), which some understand as a feminine singular imperative from יָשַׁב (‘*yashav*’, “sit”). The LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and the Targum support the MT reading (the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> does indirectly). Some interpret this to mean “take your throne”: The Lord exhorts Jerusalem to get up from the dirt and sit, probably with the idea of sitting in a place of honor (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:361). However, the form is likely a corruption of שְׁבִיָּה (‘*shviyyah*’, “captive”), which appears in the parallel line.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and now what [following the marginal reading (*Qere*) to me here?”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The verb appears to be a Hiphil form from the root לָלַץ (‘*yalal*’, “howl”), perhaps here in the sense of “mock.” Some emend the form to הוֹלָלוּ (‘*hollalo*’) and understand a Polel form of the root לָלַץ meaning here “mock, taunt.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The verb is apparently a Hitpolal form (with assimilated *tav*, ת) from the root נָאֵץ (‘*na’ats*’), but GKC 151-52 §55.b explains it as a mixed form, combining Pual and Hitpolel readings.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The verb is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in that day” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “How delightful on the mountains.”

a messenger who brings good news, who announces deliverance, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”<sup>1</sup>  
**52:8** Listen,<sup>2</sup> your watchmen shout; in unison they shout for joy, for they see with their very own eyes<sup>3</sup> the LORD’s return to Zion.  
**52:9** In unison give a joyful shout, O ruins of Jerusalem! For the LORD consoles his people; he protects<sup>4</sup> Jerusalem.  
**52:10** The LORD reveals<sup>5</sup> his royal power<sup>6</sup> in the sight of all the nations; the entire<sup>7</sup> earth sees our God deliver.<sup>8</sup>  
**52:11** Leave! Leave! Get out of there! Don’t touch anything unclean! Get out of it! Stay pure, you who carry the LORD’s holy items!<sup>9</sup>  
**52:12** Yet do not depart quickly or leave in a panic.<sup>10</sup> For the LORD goes before you; the God of Israel is your rear guard.

### The Lord Will Vindicate His Servant

**52:13** “Look, my servant will succeed!<sup>11</sup> He will be elevated, lifted high, and greatly exalted<sup>12</sup> –  
**52:14** (just as many were horrified by the sight of you)<sup>13</sup> he was so disfigured<sup>14</sup> he no longer looked like a man;<sup>15</sup>

**1 tn** Or “has become king.” When a new king was enthroned, his followers would give this shout. For other examples of this enthronement formula (Qal perfect 3rd person masculine singular כָּלַךְ [*malakh*]), followed by the name of the king, see 2 Sam 15:10; 1 Kgs 1:11, 13, 18; 2 Kgs 9:13. The LORD is an eternal king, but here he is pictured as a victorious warrior who establishes his rule from Zion.

**2 tn** קוֹל (*qol*, “voice”) is used at the beginning of the verse as an interjection.

**3 tn** Heb “eye in eye”; KJV, ASV “eye to eye”; NAB “directly, before their eyes.”

**4 tn** Or “redeems.” See the note at 41:14.

**5 tn** Heb “lays bare”; NLT “will demonstrate.”

**6 tn** Heb “his holy arm.” This is a metonymy for his power.

**7 tn** Heb “the remote regions,” which here stand for the extremities and everything in between.

**8 tn** Heb “the deliverance of our God.” “God” is a subjective genitive here.

**9 tn** Heb “the vessels of the LORD” (so KJV, NAB).

**10 tn** Heb “or go in flight”; NAB “leave in headlong flight.”

**11 tn** Heb “act wisely,” which by metonymy means “succeed.”

**12 tn** This piling up of synonyms emphasizes the degree of the servant’s coming exaltation.

**13 tn** Some witnesses read “him,” which is more consistent with the context, where the servant is spoken about, not addressed. However, it is possible that the LORD briefly addresses the servant here. The present translation assumes the latter view and places the phrase in parentheses.

**14 tn** Heb “such was the disfigurement.” The noun בִּישְׁתָּה (*mishkhat*) occurs only here. It may be derived from the verbal root שָׁחַת (*shakhat*, “be ruined”; see BDB 1007-8 s.v. שָׁחַת). The construct form appears here before a prepositional phrase (cf. GKC 421 §130.a).

**15 tn** Heb “from a man his appearance.” The preposition מִן

**52:15** his form was so marred he no longer looked human<sup>16</sup> –  
 so now<sup>17</sup> he will startle<sup>18</sup> many nations. Kings will be shocked by his exaltation,<sup>19</sup> for they will witness something unannounced to them, and they will understand something they had not heard about.  
**53:1** Who would have believed<sup>20</sup> what we<sup>21</sup> just heard?<sup>22</sup>  
 When<sup>23</sup> was the LORD’s power<sup>24</sup> revealed through him?  
**53:2** He sprouted up like a twig before God,<sup>25</sup>

(*min*) here carries the sense “away from,” i.e., “so as not to be.” See BDB 583 s.v.

**16 tn** Heb “and his form from the sons of men.” The preposition מִן (*min*) here carries the sense “away from,” i.e., “so as not to be.”

**17 tn** This statement completes the sentence begun in v. 14a. The introductory כִּן (*ken*) answers to the introductory כִּי־אֲשֶׁר (*ka’asher*) of v. 14a. Verses 14b-15a are parenthetical, explaining why many were horrified.

**18 tn** Traditionally the verb יָזַח (*yazzeh*, a Hiphil stem) has been understood as a causative of נָזַח (*nazah*, “spurt, spatter”) and translated “sprinkle.” In this case the passage pictures the servant as a priest who “sprinkles” (or spiritually cleanses) the nations. Though the verb יָזַח does occur in the Hiphil with the meaning “sprinkle,” the usual interpretation is problematic. In all other instances where the object or person sprinkled is indicated, the verb is combined with a preposition. This is not the case in Isaiah 52:15, unless one takes the following עָלָיו (*alayv*, “on him”) with the preceding line. But then one would have to emend the verb to a plural, make the nations the subject of the verb “sprinkle,” and take the servant as the object. Consequently some interpreters doubt the cultic idea of “sprinkling” is present here. Some emend the text; others propose a homonymic root meaning “spring, leap,” which in the Hiphil could mean “cause to leap, startle” and would fit the parallelism of the verse nicely.

**19 tn** Heb “Because of him kings will shut their mouths,” i.e., be speechless.

**20 tn** The perfect has a hypothetical force in this rhetorical question. For another example, see Gen 21:7.

**21 sn** The speaker shifts here from God to an unidentified group (note the first person plural pronouns throughout vv. 1-6). The content of the speech suggests that the prophet speaks here as representative of the sinful nation Israel. The group acknowledges its sin and recognizes that the servant suffered on their behalf.

**22 tn** The first half of v. 1 is traditionally translated, “Who has believed our report?” or “Who has believed our message?” as if the group speaking is lamenting that no one will believe what they have to say. But that doesn’t seem to be the point in this context. Here the group speaking does not cast itself in the role of a preacher or evangelist. No, they are repentant sinners, who finally see the light. The phrase “our report” can mean (1) the report which we deliver, or (2) the report which was delivered to us. The latter fits better here, where the report is most naturally taken as the announcement that has just been made in 52:13-15.

**23 tn** Heb “to whom?” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

**24 tn** Heb “the arm of the LORD.” The “arm of the LORD” is a metaphor of military power; it pictures the LORD as a warrior who bares his arm, takes up his weapon, and crushes his enemies (cf. 51:9-10; 63:5-6). But Israel had not seen the LORD’s military power at work in the servant.

**25 tn** Heb “before him.” Some suggest an emendation to “before us.” If the third singular suffix of the Hebrew text is retained, it probably refers to the LORD (see v. 1b). For a defense of this reading, see R. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCBC), 173-74.

like a root out of parched soil;<sup>1</sup>  
 he had no stately form or majesty that  
 might catch our attention,<sup>2</sup>  
 no special appearance that we should  
 want to follow him.<sup>3</sup>

**53:3** He was despised and rejected by  
 people,<sup>4</sup>  
 one who experienced pain and was ac-  
 quainted with illness;  
 people hid their faces from him;<sup>5</sup>  
 he was despised, and we considered him  
 insignificant.<sup>6</sup>

**53:4** But he lifted up our illnesses,  
 he carried our pain;<sup>7</sup>  
 even though we thought he was being  
 punished,  
 attacked by God, and afflicted for some-  
 thing he had done.<sup>8</sup>

**53:5** He was wounded because of<sup>9</sup> our  
 rebellious deeds,  
 crushed because of our sins;  
 he endured punishment that made us  
 well;<sup>10</sup>  
 because of his wounds we have been  
 healed.<sup>11</sup>

**53:6** All of us had wandered off like  
 sheep;  
 each of us had strayed off on his own  
 path,  
 but the LORD caused the sin of all of us to  
 attack him.<sup>12</sup>

**53:7** He was treated harshly and afflicted,<sup>13</sup>  
 but he did not even open his mouth.

Like a lamb led to the slaughtering block,  
 like a sheep silent before her shearers,  
 he did not even open his mouth.<sup>14</sup>

**53:8** He was led away after an unjust trial<sup>15</sup> –  
 but who even cared?<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, he was cut off from the land of  
 the living;<sup>17</sup>  
 because of the rebellion of his own<sup>18</sup>  
 people he was wounded.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Elsewhere the Hiphil of פָּגַע (*paḡa'*) means "to intercede verbally" (Jer 15:11; 36:25) or "to intervene militarily" (Isa 59:16), but neither nuance fits here. Apparently here the Hiphil is the causative of the normal Qal meaning, "encounter, meet, touch." The Qal sometimes refers to a hostile encounter or attack; when used in this way the object is normally introduced by the preposition בְּ (*bet*, see Josh 2:16; Judg 8:21; 15:12, etc.). Here the causative Hiphil has a double object – the LORD makes "sin" attack "him" (note that the object attacked is introduced by the preposition בְּ. In their sin the group was like sheep who had wandered from God's path. They were vulnerable to attack; the guilt of their sin was ready to attack and destroy them. But then the servant stepped in and took the full force of the attack.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The translation assumes the Niphal is passive; another option is take the clause (note the subject + verb pattern) as concessive and the Niphal as reflexive, "though he humbled himself."

<sup>14</sup> **sn** This verse emphasizes the servant's silent submission. The comparison to a sheep does not necessarily suggest a sacrificial metaphor. Sheep were slaughtered for food as well as for sacrificial rituals, and עֲבָרָה (*evakhi*) need not refer to sacrificial slaughter (see Gen 43:16; Prov 7:22; 9:2; Jer 50:27; note also the use of the related verb in Exod 21:37 HT [22:1 ET]; Deut 28:31; 1 Sam 25:11).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. The present translation assumes that מִן (*min*) here has an instrumental sense ("by, through") and understands עֲוֹרָה וּמִימְשִׁיפָה (*otser umimmishpat*, "coercion and legal decision") as a hendiadys meaning "coercive legal decision," thus "an unjust trial." Other interpretive options include: (1) "without [for this sense of מִן, see BDB 578 s.v. 1.b] hindrance and proper judicial process," i.e., "unfairly and with no one to defend him," (2) "from [in the sense of "after," see BDB 581 s.v. 4.b] arrest and judgment."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and his generation, who considers?" (NASB similar). Some understand "his generation" as a reference to descendants. In this case the question would suggest that he will have none. However, אָדָם (*ad*) may be taken here as specifying a new subject (see BDB 85 s.v. 1 אָדָם 3). If "his generation" refers to the servant's contemporary generation, one may then translate, "As for his contemporary generation, who took note?" The point would be that few were concerned about the harsh treatment he received.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** The "land of the living" is an idiom for the sphere where people live, in contrast to the underworld realm of the dead. See, for example, Ezek 32:23-27.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads "my people," a reading followed by most English versions, but this is problematic in a context where the first person plural predominates, and where God does not appear to speak again until v. 11b. Therefore, it is preferable to read with the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> מִימְשִׁיפָה ("his people"). In this case, the group speaking in these verses is identified as the servant's people (compare פְּשָׁעֵי עַמִּי *peša'enu*, "our rebellious deeds") in v. 5 with פְּשָׁעֵי עַמִּי *peša' ammi*, "the rebellion of his people" in v. 8).

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The metaphor in this verse suggests insignificance.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "that we might see him." The *vav* conjunctive prefixed to the imperfect introduces a result clause here. See GKC 504-5 §166.a.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "that we should desire him." The *vav* conjunctive prefixed to the imperfect introduces a result clause here. See GKC 504-5 §166.a.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "lacking of men." If the genitive is taken as specifying ("lacking with respect to men"), then the idea is that he lacked company because he was rejected by people. Another option is to take the genitive as indicating genus or larger class (i.e., "one lacking among men"). In this case one could translate, "he was a transient" (cf. the use of חַדְלָה [*khadel*] in Ps 39:5 HT [39:4 ET]).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "like a hiding of the face from him," i.e., "like one before whom the face is hidden" (see BDB 712 s.v. מִתְחַלֵּף).

<sup>6</sup> **sn** The servant is likened to a seriously ill person who is shunned by others because of his horrible disease.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Illness and pain stand by metonymy (or perhaps as metaphors) for sin and its effects, as vv. 11-12 make clear.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** The words "for something he had done" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The group now realizes he suffered because of his identification with them, not simply because he was a special target of divine anger.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The preposition מִן (*min*) has a causal sense (translated "because of") here and in the following clause.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the punishment of our peace [was] on him." שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ (*shalomenu*, "peace") is here a genitive of result, i.e., "punishment that resulted in our peace."

<sup>11</sup> **sn** Continuing to utilize the imagery of physical illness, the group acknowledges that the servant's willingness to carry their illnesses (v. 4) resulted in their being healed. Healing is a metaphor for forgiveness here.



53:9 They intended to bury him with criminals,<sup>1</sup> but he ended up in a rich man's tomb,<sup>2</sup> because<sup>3</sup> he had committed no violent deeds, nor had he spoken deceitfully.  
53:10 Though the LORD desired to crush him and make him ill, once restitution is made,<sup>4</sup> he will see descendants and enjoy long life,<sup>5</sup>

and the LORD's purpose will be accomplished through him.  
53:11 Having suffered, he will reflect on his work, he will be satisfied when he understands what he has done.<sup>6</sup>  
"My servant<sup>7</sup> will acquit many,<sup>8</sup> for he carried their sins.<sup>9</sup>  
53:12 So I will assign him a portion with the multitudes,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "one assigned his grave with criminals." The subject of the singular is impersonal; English typically uses "they" in such constructions.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** This line reads literally, "and with the rich in his death." בְּמֵתוֹ (b<sup>e</sup>metov) combines a preposition, a plural form of the noun מוֹת (mot), and a third masculine singular suffix. The plural of the noun is problematic and the י may be the result of virtual dittography. The form should probably be emended to בְּמֵתוֹ (bamato, singular noun). The relationship between this line and the preceding one is uncertain. The parallelism appears to be synonymous (note "his grave" and "in his death"), but "criminals" and "the rich" hardly make a compatible pair in this context, for they would not be buried in the same kind of tomb. Some emend עֲשִׂיר רֵעַ ('ashir, "rich") to עֲשִׂי רֵעַ ('ase ra', "doers of evil") but the absence of the ayin (ע) is not readily explained in this graphic environment. Others suggest an emendation to שְׂעִירִים (s<sup>e</sup>irim, "he-goats, demons"), but the meaning in this case is not entirely transparent and the proposal assumes that the form suffered from both transposition and the inexplicable loss of a final mem. Still others relate עֲשִׂיר ('ashir) to an alleged Arabic cognate meaning "mob." See HALOT 896 s.v. עֲשִׂיר. Perhaps the parallelism is antithetical, rather than synonymous. In this case, the point is made that the servant's burial in a rich man's tomb, in contrast to a criminal's burial, was appropriate, for he had done nothing wrong.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** If the second line is antithetical, then עַל ('al) is probably causal here, explaining why the servant was buried in a rich man's tomb, rather than that of criminal. If the first two lines are synonymous, then עַל is probably concessive: "even though...."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The meaning of this line is uncertain. It reads literally, "if you/she makes, a reparation offering, his life." The verb תְּשִׁיחַ (tasim) could be second masculine singular, in which case it would have to be addressed to the servant or to God. However, the servant is only addressed once in this servant song (see 52:14a), and God either speaks or is spoken about in this servant song; he is never addressed. Furthermore, the idea of God himself making a reparation offering is odd. If the verb is taken as third feminine singular, then the feminine noun נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh) at the end of the line is the likely subject. In this case one can take the suffixed form of the noun as equivalent to a pronoun and translate, "if he [literally, "his life"] makes a reparation offering."

**sn** What constitutes the servant's reparation offering? Some might think his suffering, but the preceding context views this as past, while the verb here is imperfect in form. The offering appears to be something the servant does after his suffering has been completed. Perhaps the background of the language can be found in the Levitical code, where a healed leper would offer a reparation offering as part of the ritual to achieve ceremonial cleanliness (see Lev 14). The servant was pictured earlier in the song as being severely ill. This illness (a metaphor for the effects of the people's sin) separated him from God. However, here we discover the separation is not final; once reparation is made, so to speak, he will again experience the LORD's favor.

<sup>5</sup> **sn** The idiomatic and stereotypical language emphasizes the servant's restoration to divine favor. Having numerous descendants and living a long life are standard signs of divine blessing. See Job 42:13-16.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he will be satisfied by his knowledge," i.e., "when he knows." The preposition is understood as temporal and the suffix as a subjective genitive. Some take בְּדַעְתּוֹ (b<sup>e</sup>da'to, "by his knowledge") with what follows and translate "by knowledge of him," understanding the preposition as instrumental and the suffix as objective.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** The song ends as it began (cf. 52:13-15), with the LORD announcing the servant's vindication and exaltation.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he will acquit, a righteous one, my servant, many." עֲדִיק (tsadiq) may refer to the servant, but more likely it is dittographic (note the preceding verb יַעֲדִיק, yatsdiq). The precise meaning of the verb (the Hiphil of עָדַק, tsadaq) is debated. Elsewhere the Hiphil is used at least six times in the sense of "make righteous" in a legal sense, i.e., "pronounce innocent, acquit" (see Exod 23:7; Deut 25:1; 1 Kgs 8:32 = 2 Chr 6:23; Prov 17:15; Isa 5:23). It can also mean "render justice" (as a royal function, see 2 Sam 15:4; Ps 82:3), "concede" (Job 27:5), "vindicate" (Isa 50:8), and "lead to righteousness" (by teaching and example, Dan 12:3). The preceding context and the next line suggest a legal sense here. Because of his willingness to carry the people's sins, the servant is able to "acquit" them.

**sn** Some (e.g., H. M. Orlinsky, "The So-called 'Suffering Servant' in Isaiah 53,22," VTSup 14 [1967]: 3-133) object to this legal interpretation of the language, arguing that it would be unjust for the righteous to suffer for the wicked and for the wicked to be declared innocent. However, such a surprising development is consistent with the ironic nature of this song. It does seem unfair for the innocent to die for the guilty. But what is God to do when all have sinned and wandered off like stray sheep (cf. v. 6)? Covenant law demands punishment, but punishment in this case would mean annihilation of what God has created. God's justice, as demanded by the law, must be satisfied. To satisfy his justice, he does something seemingly unjust. He punishes his sinless servant, the only one who has not strayed off! In the progress of biblical revelation, we discover that the sinless servant is really God in the flesh, who offers himself because he is committed to the world he has created. If his justice can only be satisfied if he himself endures the punishment, then so be it. What appears to be an act of injustice is really love satisfying the demands of justice!

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The circumstantial clause (note the vav [ו] + object + subject + verb pattern) is understood as causal here. The prefixed verb form is either a preterite or an imperfect used in a customary manner.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Scholars have debated the precise meaning of the term רַבִּים (rabbin) that occurs five times in this passage (Isa 52:14, 15; 53:11, 12 [2x]). Its two broad categories of translation are "much"/"many" and "great" (HALOT 1171-72 s.v. רַב). Unlike other Hebrew terms for might or strength, this term is linked with numbers or abundance. In all sixteen uses outside of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 (articular and plural) it signifies an inclusive meaning: "the majority" or "the multitude" (J. Jeremias, TDNT 6:536-37). This term occurs in parallelism with עֲשׂוּמִים (atsumim), which normally signifies "numerous" or "large" or "powerful" (through large numbers). Like רַבִּים (rabbin), it refers to greatness in numbers (cf. Deut 4:38; 7:1; 9:1; 11:34). It emphasizes the multitudes with whom the Servant will share the spoil of his victory. As J. Olley wrote: "Yahweh has won the victory and vindicates his Servant, giving to him many subservient people, together with their spoils. These numerous peoples in turn receive blessing, sharing in the 'peace' resulting from Yahweh's victory and the Servant's suffering" (John W. Olley, "The Many: How Is Isa 53,12a to

he will divide the spoils of victory with the powerful,<sup>1</sup> because he willingly submitted<sup>2</sup> to death and was numbered with the rebels, when he lifted up the sin of many and intervened<sup>3</sup> on behalf of the rebels.”

*Zion Will Be Secure*

**54:1** “Shout for joy, O barren one who has not given birth!

Give a joyful shout and cry out, you who have not been in labor!

For the children of the desolate one are more numerous than the children of the married woman,” says the LORD.

**54:2** Make your tent larger, stretch your tent curtains farther out!<sup>4</sup> Spare no effort, lengthen your ropes, and pound your stakes deep.<sup>5</sup>

**54:3** For you will spread out to the right and to the left;

your children will conquer<sup>6</sup> nations and will resettle desolate cities.

**54:4** Don’t be afraid, for you will not be put to shame!

Don’t be intimidated,<sup>7</sup> for you will not be humiliated!

You will forget about the shame you experienced in your youth; you will no longer remember the disgrace of your abandonment.<sup>8</sup>

**54:5** For your husband is the one who made you – the LORD who commands armies is his name.

He is your protector,<sup>9</sup> the Holy One of Israel.<sup>10</sup>

He is called “God of the entire earth.”

**54:6** “Indeed, the LORD will call you back

like a wife who has been abandoned and suffers from depression,<sup>11</sup> like a young wife when she has been rejected,” says your God.

**54:7** “For a short time I abandoned<sup>12</sup> you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

**54:8** In a burst<sup>13</sup> of anger I rejected you<sup>14</sup> momentarily, but with lasting devotion I will have compassion on you.”

says your protector,<sup>15</sup> the LORD.

**54:9** “As far as I am concerned, this is like in Noah’s time,<sup>16</sup>

when I vowed that the waters of Noah’s flood<sup>17</sup> would never again cover the earth.

In the same way I have vowed that I will not be angry at you or shout at you.

**54:10** Even if the mountains are removed and the hills displaced,

my devotion will not be removed from you,

nor will my covenant of friendship<sup>18</sup> be displaced.”

says the LORD, the one who has compassion on you.

**54:11** “O afflicted one, driven away,<sup>19</sup> and unconsolated!

Look, I am about to set your stones in antimony and I lay your foundation with lapis-lazuli.

**54:12** I will make your pinnacles out of gems,<sup>20</sup>

your gates out of beryl,<sup>21</sup>

and your outer wall<sup>22</sup> out of beautiful<sup>23</sup> stones.

**54:13** All your children will be followers of the LORD,

and your children will enjoy great prosperity.<sup>24</sup>

**54:14** You will be reestablished when I vindicate you.<sup>25</sup>

Be Understood,” *Bib* 68 [1987]: 330-56).

<sup>1</sup> **sn** The servant is compared here to a warrior who will be richly rewarded for his effort and success in battle.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “because he laid bare his life”; traditionally, ASV “because he (+ hath KJV) poured out his soul (life NIV) unto death.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The Hiphil of *פגא* (*pagā*) can mean “cause to attack” (v. 6), “urge, plead verbally” (Jer 15:11; 36:25), or “intervene militarily” (Isa 59:16). Perhaps the third nuance fits best here, for military imagery is employed in the first two lines of the verse.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the curtains of our dwelling places let them stretch out.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your stakes strengthen.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or “take possession of”; NAB “shall dispossess.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Or “embarrassed”; NASB “humiliated...disgraced.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Another option is to translate, “the disgrace of our widowhood” (so NRSV). However, the following context (vv. 6-7) refers to Zion’s husband, the LORD, abandoning her, not dying. This suggests that an *almanah* (*almanah*) was a woman who had lost her husband, whether by death or abandonment.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or “redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>10</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “like a woman abandoned and grieved in spirit.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Or “forsook” (NASB).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** According to BDB 1009 s.v. *שָׁטַף* here is an alternate form of *שָׁטַף* (*shetef*, “flood”). Some relate the word to an alleged Akkadian cognate meaning “strength.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I hid my face from you.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “For [or “indeed”] the waters of Noah [is] this to me.” *כִּי־יָמֵי* (*ki-me*, “for the waters of”) should be emended to *כְּיָמֵי* (*ke<sup>h</sup>mey*, “like the days of”), which is supported by the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and all the ancient versions except LXX.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the waters of Noah” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “peace” (so many English versions); NLT “of blessing.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Or, more literally, “windblown, storm tossed.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Perhaps, “rubies” (so ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>21</sup> **tn** On the meaning of *עֲדָקֶךָ* (*eqdaqh*), which occurs only here, see HALOT 82 s.v.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “border” (so ASV); NASB “your entire wall.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “delightful”; KJV “pleasant.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and great [will be] the peace of your sons.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in righteousness [or “vindication”] you will be

You will not experience oppression;<sup>1</sup>  
indeed, you will not be afraid.  
You will not be terrified,<sup>2</sup>  
for nothing frightening<sup>3</sup> will come near  
you.

**54:15** If anyone dares to<sup>4</sup> challenge you, it  
will not be my doing!  
Whoever tries to challenge you will be  
defeated.<sup>5</sup>

**54:16** Look, I create the craftsman,  
who fans the coals into a fire  
and forges a weapon.<sup>6</sup>  
I create the destroyer so he might devastate.

**54:17** No weapon forged to be used  
against you will succeed;  
you will refute everyone who tries to ac-  
cuse you.<sup>7</sup>

This is what the LORD will do for his  
servants –  
I will vindicate them,<sup>8</sup>  
says the LORD.

### *The Lord Gives an Invitation*

**55:1** “Hey,<sup>9</sup> all who are thirsty, come to  
the water!

You who have no money, come!  
Buy and eat!

Come! Buy wine and milk  
without money and without cost!<sup>10</sup>

**55:2** Why pay money for something that  
will not nourish you?<sup>11</sup>

Why spend<sup>12</sup> your hard-earned money<sup>13</sup> on  
something that will not satisfy?

established.” The precise meaning of צְדָקָה (*tsedaqah*) here is uncertain. It could mean “righteousness, justice,” indicating that the city will be a center for justice. But the context focuses on deliverance, suggesting that the term means “deliverance, vindication” here.

**1** *tn* *Heb* “Be far from oppression!” The imperative is used here in a rhetorical manner to express certainty and assurance. See GKC 324 §110.c.

**2** *tn* *Heb* “from terror.” The rhetorical command, “be far” is understood by ellipsis here. Note the preceding context.

**3** *tn* *Heb* “it,” i.e., the “terror” just mentioned.

**4** *tn* The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb here for emphasis.

**5** *tn* *Heb* “will fall over you.” The expression נָפַל עָלַי (*nafal 'al*) can mean “attack,” but here it means “fall over to,” i.e., “surrender to.”

**6** *tn* *Heb* “who brings out an implement for his work.”

**7** *tn* *Heb* “and every tongue that rises up for judgment with you will prove to be guilty.”

**8** *tn* *Heb* “this is the inheritance of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication from me.”

**9** *tn* The Hebrew term הוי (*hoy*, “woe, ah”) was used in funeral laments and is often prefixed to judgment oracles for rhetorical effect. But here it appears to be a simple interjection, designed to grab the audience’s attention. Perhaps there is a note of sorrow or pity. See BDB 223 s.v.

**10** *sn* The statement is an oxymoron. Its ironic quality adds to its rhetorical impact. The statement reminds one of the norm (one must normally buy commodities) as it expresses the astounding offer. One might paraphrase the statement: “Come and take freely what you normally have to pay for.”

**11** *tn* *Heb* “for what is not food.”

**12** *tn* The interrogative particle and the verb “spend” are understood here by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

**13** *tn* *Heb* “your labor,” which stands by metonymy for that which one earns.

Listen carefully<sup>14</sup> to me and eat what is  
nourishing!<sup>15</sup>

Enjoy fine food!<sup>16</sup>

**55:3** Pay attention and come to me!

Listen, so you can live!<sup>17</sup>

Then I will make an unconditional cov-  
enantal promise to<sup>18</sup> you,  
just like the reliable covenantal promises  
I made to David.<sup>19</sup>

**55:4** Look, I made him a witness to na-  
tions,<sup>20</sup>

a ruler and commander of nations.”

**55:5** Look, you will summon nations<sup>21</sup> you  
did not previously know;

nations<sup>22</sup> that did not previously know  
you will run to you,

because of the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel,<sup>23</sup>

for he bestows honor on you.

**55:6** Seek the LORD while he makes him-  
self available,<sup>24</sup>

call to him while he is nearby!

**55:7** The wicked need to abandon their  
lifestyle<sup>25</sup>

**14** *tn* The infinitive absolute follows the imperative and lends emphasis to the exhortation.

**15** *tn* *Heb* “good” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

**16** *tn* *Heb* “Let your appetite delight in fine food.”

*sn* Nourishing, fine food here represents the blessings God freely offers. These include forgiveness, a new covenantal relationship with God, and national prominence (see vv. 3-6).

**17** *tn* The jussive with *vav* (ו) conjunctive following the imperative indicates purpose/result.

*sn* To *live* here refers to covenantal blessing, primarily material prosperity and national security (see vv. 4-5, 13, and Deut 30:6, 15, 19-20).

**18** *tn* Or “an eternal covenant with.”

**19** *tn* *Heb* “the reliable expressions of loyalty of David.” The syntactical relationship of תְּכַדֶּה (*khāsde*, “expressions of loyalty”) to the preceding line is unclear. If the term is appositional to בְּרִית (*brit*, “covenant”), then the LORD here transfers the promises of the Davidic covenant to the entire nation. Another option is to take תְּכַדֶּה (*khāsde*) as an adverbial accusative and to translate “according to the reliable covenantal promises.” In this case the new covenantal arrangement proposed here is viewed as an extension or perhaps fulfillment of the Davidic promises. A third option, the one reflected in the above translation, is to take the last line as comparative. In this case the new covenant being proposed is analogous to the Davidic covenant. Verses 4-5, which compare David’s international prominence to what Israel will experience, favors this view. In all three of these interpretations, “David” is an objective genitive; he is the recipient of covenantal promises. A fourth option would be to take David as a subjective genitive and understand the line as giving the basis for the preceding promise: “Then I will make an unconditional covenantal promise to you, because of David’s faithful acts of covenantal loyalty.”

**20** *sn* Ideally the Davidic king was to testify to the nations of God’s greatness (cf. Pss 18:50 HT [18:49 ET]; 22:28 HT [22:27 ET]). See J. H. Eaton, *Kingship in the Psalms* (SBT), 182-84.

**21** *tn* *Heb* “a nation,” but the singular is collective here, as the plural verbs in the next line indicate (note that both “know” and “run” are third plural forms).

**22** *tn* *Heb* “a nation,” but the singular is collective here, as the plural verbs that follow indicate.

**23** *sn* See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

**24** *tn* *Heb* “while he allows himself to be found.” The Niphal form has a tolerative force here.

**25** *tn* *Heb* “Let the wicked one abandon his way.” The sin-

and sinful people their plans.<sup>1</sup>  
 They should return<sup>2</sup> to the LORD, and he  
 will show mercy to them,<sup>3</sup>  
 and to their God, for he will freely for-  
 give them.<sup>4</sup>  
**55:8** “Indeed,<sup>5</sup> my plans<sup>6</sup> are not like<sup>7</sup>  
 your plans,  
 and my deeds<sup>8</sup> are not like<sup>9</sup> your deeds,  
**55:9** for just as the sky<sup>10</sup> is higher than the  
 earth,  
 so my deeds<sup>11</sup> are superior to<sup>12</sup> your  
 deeds  
 and my plans<sup>13</sup> superior to your plans.  
**55:10**<sup>14</sup> The rain and snow fall from the  
 sky  
 and do not return,  
 but instead water the earth  
 and make it produce and yield crops,  
 and provide seed for the planter and food  
 for those who must eat.  
**55:11** In the same way, the promise that I  
 make  
 does not return to me, having accom-  
 plished nothing.<sup>15</sup>  
 No, it is realized as I desire  
 and is fulfilled as I intend.”<sup>16</sup>

gular is collective.

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “and the man of evil his thoughts.” The singular is collective.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “let him return.” The singular is collective, meaning “let them.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The imperfect with *vav* (ו) conjunctive after the jussive indicates purpose/result.

<sup>4</sup> **sn** The appeal and promise of vv. 6-7 echoes the language of Deut 4:25-31; 30:1-10; and 1 Kgs 8:46-53, all of which anticipate the exile and speak of the prerequisites for restoration.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or “For” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV).

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or “thoughts” (so many English versions).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “are not.” “Like” is interpretive, but v. 9 indicates that a comparison is in view.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “ways” (so many English versions).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “are not.” “Like” is interpretive, but v. 9 indicates that a comparison is in view.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “ways” (so many English versions).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “are higher than.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or “thoughts” (so many English versions).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** This verse begins in the Hebrew text with כִּי בְּאִשֶׁר (ki *ka'asher*, “for, just as”), which is completed by כִּן (ken, “so, in the same way”) at the beginning of v. 11. For stylistic reasons, this lengthy sentence is divided up into separate sentences in the translation.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Heb “so is the word which goes out from my mouth, it does not return to empty.” “Word” refers here to divine promises, like the ones made just prior to and after this (see vv. 7b, 12-13).

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “but it accomplishes what I desire, and succeeds [on the mission] which I send it.”

**sn** Verses 8-11 focus on the reliability of the divine word and support the promises before (vv. 3-5, 7b) and after (vv. 12-13) this. Israel can be certain that repentance will bring forgiveness and a new covenantal relationship because God’s promises are reliable. In contrast to human plans (or “thoughts”), which are destined to fail (Ps 94:11) apart from divine approval (Prov 19:21), and human deeds (or “ways”), which are evil and lead to destruction (Prov 1:15-19; 3:31-33; 4:19), God’s plans are realized and his deeds accomplish something positive.

**55:12** Indeed you will go out with joy;  
 you will be led along in peace;  
 the mountains and hills will give a joyful  
 shout before you,  
 and all the trees in the field will clap their  
 hands.

**55:13** Evergreens will grow in place of  
 thorn bushes,  
 firs will grow in place of nettles;  
 they will be a monument to the LORD,<sup>17</sup>  
 a permanent reminder that will remain.<sup>18</sup>

### *The Lord Invites Outsiders to Enter*

**56:1** This is what the LORD says,  
 “Promote<sup>19</sup> justice! Do what is right!  
 For I am ready to deliver you;  
 I am ready to vindicate you openly.<sup>20</sup>  
**56:2** The people who do this will be  
 blessed.<sup>21</sup>

the people who commit themselves to  
 obedience,<sup>22</sup>  
 who observe the Sabbath and do not de-  
 file it,  
 who refrain from doing anything that is  
 wrong.<sup>23</sup>

**56:3** No foreigner who becomes a fol-  
 lower of<sup>24</sup> the LORD should say,  
 ‘The LORD will certainly<sup>25</sup> exclude me  
 from his people.’

The eunuch should not say,  
 ‘Look, I am like a dried-up tree.’”

**56:4** For this is what the LORD says:  
 “For the eunuchs who observe my Sab-  
 baths

and choose what pleases me  
 and are faithful to<sup>26</sup> my covenant,  
**56:5** I will set up within my temple and  
 my walls a monument<sup>27</sup>  
 that will be better than sons and daugh-  
 ters.

I will set up a permanent monument<sup>28</sup> for  
 them that will remain.

**56:6** As for foreigners who become fol-  
 lowers of<sup>29</sup> the LORD and serve him,  
 who love the name of the LORD and want  
 to be his servants –

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Heb “to the LORD for a name.” For שֵׁם (*shem*) used in the sense of “monument,” see also 56:5, where it stands parallel to יָד (yad).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Or, more literally, “a permanent sign that will not be cut off.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “guard”; KJV “Keep”; NAB “Observe”; NASB “Pre-serve”; NIV, NRSV “Maintain.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “for near is my deliverance to enter, and my vindication [or “righteousness”] to be revealed.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “blessed is the man who does this.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Heb “the son of mankind who takes hold of it.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb and who keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Heb “who attaches himself to.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Heb “and take hold of” (so KJV); NASB “hold fast.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Heb “a hand and a name.” For other examples where יָד (yad) refers to a monument, see HALOT 388 s.v.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Heb “name” (so KJV, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>29</sup> **tn** Heb “who attach themselves to.”



all who observe the Sabbath and do not defile it,

and who are faithful to<sup>1</sup> my covenant –  
56:7 I will bring them to my holy moun-  
tain;

I will make them happy in the temple  
where people pray to me.<sup>2</sup>

Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will  
be accepted on my altar,  
for my temple will be known as a temple  
where all nations may pray.”<sup>3</sup>

56:8 The sovereign LORD says this,  
the one who gathers the dispersed of  
Israel:

“I will still gather them up.”<sup>4</sup>

### The Lord Denounces Israel's Paganism

56:9 All you wild animals in the fields,  
come and devour,

all you wild animals in the forest!

56:10 All their watchmen<sup>5</sup> are blind,  
they are unaware.<sup>6</sup>

All of them are like mute dogs,  
unable to bark.

They pant,<sup>7</sup> lie down,  
and love to snooze.

56:11 The dogs have big appetites;  
they are never full.<sup>8</sup>

They are shepherds who have no under-  
standing;

they all go their own way,  
each one looking for monetary gain.<sup>9</sup>

56:12 Each one says,<sup>10</sup>  
‘Come on, I’ll get some wine!  
Let’s guzzle some beer!

Tomorrow will be just like today!  
We’ll have everything we want!<sup>11</sup>

57:1 The godly<sup>12</sup> perish,  
but no one cares.<sup>13</sup>

Honest people disappear,<sup>14</sup>  
when no one<sup>15</sup> minds<sup>16</sup>  
that the godly<sup>17</sup> disappear<sup>18</sup> because of<sup>19</sup>  
evil.<sup>20</sup>

57:2 Those who live uprightly enter a  
place of peace;

they rest on their beds.<sup>21</sup>

57:3 But approach, you sons of omen  
readers,

you offspring of adulteresses and prosti-  
tutes!<sup>22</sup>

57:4 At whom are you laughing?

At whom are you opening your mouth  
and sticking out your tongue?

You are the children of rebels,  
the offspring of liars,<sup>23</sup>

57:5 you who practice ritual sex<sup>24</sup> under  
the oaks and every green tree,

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb “great, [in] abundance, very much,” i.e., “very great indeed.” See HALOT 452 s.v. רָתַר.

<sup>12</sup> tn Or “righteous” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “the just man”; TEV “Good people.”

<sup>13</sup> tn Or perhaps, “understands.” Heb “and there is no man who sets [it] upon [his] heart.”

<sup>14</sup> tn Heb “Men of loyalty are taken away.” The Niphal of אָסַף (*asaf*) here means “to die.”

<sup>15</sup> tn The Hebrew term בְּעֵינַי (*b<sup>e</sup>en*) often has the nuance “when there is no.” See Prov 8:24; 11:14; 14:4; 15:22; 26:20; 29:18.

<sup>16</sup> tn Or “realizes”; Heb “understands” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>17</sup> tn Or “righteous” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “the just man.”

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “are taken away.” The Niphal of אָסַף (*asaf*) here means “to die.”

<sup>19</sup> tn The term מִפְּנֵי שִׁשְׁחָק (*mipp<sup>e</sup>ne*, “from the face of”) often has a causal nuance. It also appears with the Niphal of אָסַף (*asaph*, “gather”) in 2 Chr 12:5: אֲשֶׁר־נִאֲסַפוּ אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַם מִפְּנֵי שִׁשְׁחָק (*asher-ne’esphu ‘el-y<sup>e</sup>rushalam mipp<sup>e</sup>ney shishaq*, “who had gathered at Jerusalem because of [i.e., due to fear of] Shishak”).

<sup>20</sup> tn The translation assumes that this verse, in proverbial fashion, laments society’s apathy over the persecution of the godly. The second half of the verse observes that such apathy results in more widespread oppression. Since the next verse pictures the godly being taken to a place of rest, some interpret the second half of v. 1 in a more positive vein. According to proponents of this view, God removes the godly so that they might be spared suffering and calamity, a fact which the general populace fails to realize.

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb “he enters peace, they rest on their beds, the one who walks straight ahead of himself.” The tomb is here viewed in a fairly positive way as a place where the dead are at peace and sleep undisturbed.

<sup>22</sup> tc The Hebrew text reads literally, “offspring of an adulterer [masculine] and [one who] has committed adultery.” Perhaps the text has suffered from transposition of *vav* (ו) and *tav* (ת) and בְּנֵי־אֲדוּלְתָהּ וְבְנֵי־זוֹנָה (*m<sup>e</sup>na’ef v<sup>e</sup>vattizneh*) should be emended to בְּנֵי־אֲדוּלְתָהּ וְזוֹנָה (*m<sup>e</sup>na’efet v<sup>e</sup>zonah*, “an adulteress and a prostitute”). Both singular nouns would be understood in a collective sense. Most modern English versions render both forms as nouns.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb “Are you not children of rebellion, offspring of a lie?” The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, “Of course you are!”

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb “inflame yourselves”; NRSV “burn with lust.” This verse alludes to the practice of ritual sex that accompanied pagan fertility rites.

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb “and take hold of”; NAB “hold to”; NIV, NRSV “hold fast.”

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb “in the house of my prayer.”

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations.”

<sup>4</sup> tn The meaning of the statement is unclear. The text reads literally, “Still I will gather upon him to his gathered ones.” Perhaps the preposition לְ (*lamed*) before “gathered ones” introduces the object of the verb, as in Jer 49:5. The third masculine singular suffix on both נִקְבְּצִי (*alavy*) and נִקְבְּצִי (*niqbatsayv*) probably refers to “Israel.” In this case one can translate literally, “Still I will gather to him his gathered ones.”

<sup>5</sup> sn The “watchmen” are probably spiritual leaders, most likely prophets and priests, responsible for giving the people moral direction.

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb “they do not know”; KJV “they are all ignorant”; NIV “they all lack knowledge.”

<sup>7</sup> tn The Hebrew text has הוֹזִים (*hozim*), which appears to be derived from an otherwise unattested verbal root הָזַח (*hazah*). On the basis of alleged cognates, BDB 223 s.v. הוּזָה offers the definition “dream, rave” while HALOT 243 s.v. הוּזָה lists “pant.” In this case the dog metaphor of the preceding lines continues. The reference to dogs at the beginning of v. 11 favors the extension of the metaphor. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has הוֹזִים (“seers”) here. In this case the “watchmen” are directly identified as prophets and depicted as lazy.

<sup>8</sup> sn The phrase *never full* alludes to the greed of the leaders.

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb “for his gain from his end.”

<sup>10</sup> tn The words “each one says” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

who slaughter children near the streams  
under the rocky overhangs.<sup>1</sup>

**57:6** Among the smooth stones of the  
stream are the idols you love;  
they, they are the object of your devo-  
tion.<sup>2</sup>

You pour out liquid offerings to them,  
you make an offering.  
Because of these things I will seek ven-  
geance.<sup>3</sup>

**57:7** On every high, elevated hill you pre-  
pare your bed;  
you go up there to offer sacrifices.

**57:8** Behind the door and doorpost you  
put your symbols.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed,<sup>5</sup> you depart from me<sup>6</sup> and go up  
and invite them into bed with you.<sup>7</sup>  
You purchase favors from them,<sup>8</sup>  
you love their bed,  
and gaze longingly<sup>9</sup> on their genitals.<sup>10</sup>

**57:9** You take olive oil as tribute<sup>11</sup> to your  
king.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **sn** This apparently alludes to the practice of child sacrifice (cf. TEV, CEV, NLT).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “among the smooth stones of the stream [is] your portion, they, they [are] your lot.” The next line indicates idols are in view.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The text reads literally, “Because of these am I relenting?” If the prefixed interrogative particle is retained at the beginning of the sentence, then the question would be rhetorical, with the Niphal of נָחַם (*nakhām*) probably being used in the sense of “relent, change one’s mind.” One could translate: “Because of these things, how can I relent?” However, the initial letter he may be dittographic (note the final ה [h] on the preceding word). In this case one may understand the verb in the sense of “console oneself, seek vengeance,” as in 1:24.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** The precise referent of זָבָחוֹ (*zikkaron*) in this context is uncertain. Elsewhere the word refers to a memorial or commemorative sign. Here it likely refers to some type of idolatrous symbol.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Or “for” (KJV, NRSV).

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “from me you uncover.” The translation assumes an emendation of the Piel form גָּלִית (*gillit*, “you uncover”), which has no object expressed here, to the Qal גָּלִית (*galit*, “you depart”).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you make wide your bed” (NASB similar).

<sup>8</sup> **tc** *Heb* “and you [second masculine singular, unless the form be taken as third feminine singular] cut for yourself [feminine singular] from them.” Most English translations retain the MT reading in spite of at least three problems. This section makes significant use of feminine verbs and noun suffixes because of the sexual imagery. The verb in question is likely a 2nd person masculine singular verb. Nevertheless, this kind of fluctuation in gender appears elsewhere (GKC 127-28 §47.k and 462 §144.p; cf. Jer 3:5; Ezek 22:4; 23:32; cf. J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:473, n. 13). Secondly, when this verbal root signifies establishing a covenant, it is normally accompanied by the noun for “covenant” (בְּרִית, *b<sup>c</sup>rit*). Finally, this juxtaposition of the verb “to cut” and “covenant” normally is followed by the preposition “with,” while here it is “from.” The translation above assumes an emendation of וַתִּקְרַחַהּ (*va-tikhrah*, “and you cut”) to וַתִּקְרַחַת (*v<sup>c</sup>kharith*, “and you purchase”) from the root קָרַח (*kharah*); see HALOT 497 s.v. II ברה.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has simply יָהָה (*khazah*, “gaze”). The adverb “longingly” is interpretive (see the context, where sexual lust is depicted).

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[at] a hand you gaze.” The term יָד (*yad*, “hand”) probably has the sense of “power, manhood” here, where it is used, as in Ugaritic, as a euphemism for the genitals. See HALOT 387 s.v. I יד.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you journey with oil.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the king.” Since the context refers to idolatry and

along with many perfumes.<sup>13</sup>  
You send your messengers to a distant  
place;

you go all the way to Sheol.<sup>14</sup>  
**57:10** Because of the long distance you  
must travel, you get tired,<sup>15</sup>  
but you do not say, “I give up.”<sup>16</sup>  
You get renewed energy,<sup>17</sup>  
so you don’t collapse.<sup>18</sup>

**57:11** Whom are you worried about?  
Whom do you fear, that you would act so  
deceitfully  
and not remember me  
or think about me?<sup>19</sup>

Because I have been silent for so long,<sup>20</sup>  
you are not afraid of me.<sup>21</sup>

**57:12** I will denounce your so-called righ-  
teousness and your deeds,<sup>22</sup>  
but they will not help you.

**57:13** When you cry out for help, let your  
idols<sup>23</sup> help you!

The wind blows them all away,<sup>24</sup>  
a breeze carries them away.<sup>25</sup>

But the one who looks to me for help<sup>26</sup>  
will inherit the land

and will have access to<sup>27</sup> my holy moun-  
tain.”

**57:14** He says,<sup>28</sup>

“Build it! Build it! Clear a way!

Remove all the obstacles out of the way  
of my people!”

child sacrifice (see v. 5), some emend מֶלֶךְ (*melekh*, “king”) to “Molech.” Perhaps Israel’s devotion to her idols is likened here to a subject taking tribute to a ruler.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and you multiply your perfumes.”

<sup>14</sup> **sn** Israel’s devotion to her idols is inordinate, irrational, and self-destructive.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “by the greatness [i.e., “length,” see BDB 914 s.v. רב 2] of your way you get tired.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “it is hopeless” (so NAB, NASB, NIV); NRSV “it is useless.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the life of your hand you find.” The term יָהָה (*khayah*, “life”) is here used in the sense of “renewal” (see BDB 312 s.v.) while יָד (*yad*) is used of “strength.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you do not grow weak.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you do not place [it] on your heart.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Is it not [because] I have been silent, and from long ago?”

<sup>21</sup> **sn** God’s patience with sinful Israel has caused them to think that they can sin with impunity and suffer no consequences.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I, I will declare your righteousness and your deeds.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has קִבּוּצֵיכֶם (*qibbutsayikh*, “your gatherings”), an otherwise unattested noun from the verbal root קָבַץ (*qavats*, “gather”). Perhaps this alludes to their religious assemblies and by metonymy to their rituals. Since idolatry is a prominent theme in the context, some understand this as a reference to a collection of idols. The second half of the verse also favors this view.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all of them a wind lifts up.”

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a breath takes [them] away.”

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Or “seeks refuge in me.” “Seeking refuge” is a metonymy for “being loyal to.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* “possess, own.” The point seems to be that he will have free access to God’s presence, as if God’s temple mount were his personal possession.

<sup>28</sup> **tn** Since God is speaking throughout this context, perhaps we should emend the text to “and I say.” However, divine speech is introduced in v. 15.

**57:15** For this is what the high and exalted one says,  
the one who rules<sup>1</sup> forever, whose name  
is holy:  
“I dwell in an exalted and holy place,  
but also with the discouraged and humili-  
ated,<sup>2</sup>  
in order to cheer up the humiliated  
and to encourage the discouraged.<sup>3</sup>  
**57:16** For I will not be hostile<sup>4</sup> forever  
or perpetually angry,  
for then man’s spirit would grow faint  
before me,<sup>5</sup>  
the life-giving breath I created.  
**57:17** I was angry because of their sinful  
greed;  
I attacked them and angrily rejected  
them,<sup>6</sup>  
yet they remained disobedient and stub-  
born.<sup>7</sup>  
**57:18** I have seen their behavior,<sup>8</sup>  
but I will heal them and give them rest,  
and I will once again console those who  
mourn.<sup>9</sup>  
**57:19** I am the one who gives them reason  
to celebrate.<sup>10</sup>  
Complete prosperity<sup>11</sup> is available both to  
those who are far away and those who  
are nearby,”  
says the LORD, “and I will heal them.  
**57:20** But the wicked are like a surging  
sea  
that is unable to be quiet;  
its waves toss up mud and sand.  
**57:21** There will be no prosperity,” says  
my God, “for the wicked.”

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Heb “the one who dwells forever.” שֹׁכֵן עַד (*shokhen 'ad*) is sometimes translated “the one who lives forever,” and understood as a reference to God’s eternal existence. However, the immediately preceding and following descriptions (“high and exalted” and “holy”) emphasize his sovereign rule. In the next line, he declares, “I dwell in an exalted and holy [place],” which refers to the place from which he rules. Therefore it is more likely that שֹׁכֵן עַד (*shokhen 'ad*) means “I dwell [in my lofty palace] forever” and refers to God’s eternal kingship.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Heb “and also with the crushed and lowly of spirit.” This may refer to the repentant who have humbled themselves (see 66:2) or more generally to the exiles who have experienced discouragement and humiliation.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Heb “to restore the lowly of spirit and to restore the heart of the crushed.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “argue,” or “accuse” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Heb “for a spirit from before me would be faint.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Heb “and I struck him, hiding, and I was angry.” פָּנִים (*panayim*, “face”) is the implied object of “hiding.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Heb “and he walked [as an] apostate in the way of his heart.”

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Heb “his ways” (so KJV, NASB, NIV); TEV “how they acted.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Heb “and I will restore consolation to him, to his mourners.”

<sup>10</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has literally, “one who creates fruit of lips.” Perhaps the pronoun אָנִי (*'ani*) should be inserted after the participle; it may have been accidentally omitted by haplography: אֲנִי יוֹבֵר אֶת־לִפְתָּי (*bore' [ani] nuv s'fatayim*). “Fruit of the lips” is often understood as a metonymy for praise; perhaps it refers more generally to joyful shouts (see v. 18).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Heb “Peace, peace.” The repetition of the noun emphasizes degree.

*The Lord Desires Genuine Devotion*

**58:1** “Shout loudly! Don’t be quiet!  
Yell as loud as a trumpet!  
Confront my people with their rebellious  
deeds;<sup>12</sup>  
confront Jacob’s family with their sin!<sup>13</sup>  
**58:2** They seek me day after day;  
they want to know my requirements,<sup>14</sup>  
like a nation that does what is right  
and does not reject the law of their God.  
They ask me for just decrees;  
they want to be near God.  
**58:3** They lament,<sup>15</sup> “Why don’t you  
notice when we fast?  
Why don’t you pay attention when we  
humble ourselves?  
Look, at the same time you fast, you sat-  
isfy your selfish desires,<sup>16</sup>  
you oppress your workers.<sup>17</sup>  
**58:4** Look, your fasting is accompanied  
by<sup>18</sup> arguments, brawls,  
and fistfights.<sup>19</sup>  
Do not fast as you do today,  
trying to make your voice heard in  
heaven.  
**58:5** Is this really the kind of fasting I  
want?<sup>20</sup>  
Do I want a day when people merely  
humble themselves,<sup>21</sup>  
bowing their heads like a reed  
and stretching out<sup>22</sup> on sackcloth and  
ashes?  
Is this really what you call a fast,  
a day that is pleasing to the LORD?  
**58:6** No, this is the kind of fast I want.<sup>23</sup>  
I want you<sup>24</sup> to remove the sinful chains,  
to tear away the ropes of the burdensome  
yoke,  
to set free the oppressed,<sup>25</sup>  
and to break every burdensome yoke.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** Heb “declare to my people their rebellion.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Heb “and to the house of Jacob their sin.” The verb “de-  
clare” is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Heb “ways” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, TEV); NLT  
“my laws.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The words “they lament” are supplied in the translation  
for clarification.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Heb “you find pleasure”; NASB “you find your desire.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “debtors.” See HALOT 865 s.v. \* עָבַר  
עָבַר.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** Heb “you fast for” (so NASB); NRSV “you fast only to  
quarrel.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** Heb “and for striking with a sinful fist.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Heb “choose” (so NASB, NRSV); NAB “wish.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Heb “a day when man humbles himself.” The words  
“Do I want” are supplied in the translation for stylistic rea-  
sons.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or “making [their] bed.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** Heb “Is this not a fast I choose?” “No” is supplied in  
the translation for clarification.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The words “I want you” are supplied in the translation  
for stylistic reasons.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Heb “crushed.”

58:7 I want you<sup>1</sup> to share your food with the hungry and to provide shelter for homeless, oppressed people.<sup>2</sup>

When you see someone naked, clothe him!  
Don't turn your back on your own flesh and blood!<sup>3</sup>

58:8 Then your light will shine like the sunrise,<sup>4</sup> your restoration will quickly arrive;<sup>5</sup> your godly behavior<sup>6</sup> will go before you, and the LORD's splendor will be your rear guard.<sup>7</sup>

58:9 Then you will call out, and the LORD will respond; you will cry out, and he will reply, 'Here I am.'

You must<sup>8</sup> remove the burdensome yoke from among you and stop pointing fingers and speaking sinfully.

58:10 You must<sup>9</sup> actively help the hungry and feed the oppressed.<sup>10</sup> Then your light will dispel the darkness,<sup>11</sup> and your darkness will be transformed into noonday.<sup>12</sup>

58:11 The LORD will continually lead you; he will feed you even in parched regions.<sup>13</sup>

He will give you renewed strength,<sup>14</sup> and you will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring that continually produces water.

58:12 Your perpetual ruins will be rebuilt;<sup>15</sup> you will reestablish the ancient foundations.

You will be called, 'The one who repairs broken walls, the one who makes the streets inhabitable again.'<sup>16</sup>

58:13 You must<sup>17</sup> observe the Sabbath<sup>18</sup> rather than doing anything you please on my holy day.<sup>19</sup>

You must look forward to the Sabbath<sup>20</sup> and treat the LORD's holy day with respect.<sup>21</sup>

You must treat it with respect by refraining from your normal activities, and by refraining from your selfish pursuits and from making business deals.<sup>22</sup>

58:14 Then you will find joy in your relationship to the LORD,<sup>23</sup> and I will give you great prosperity,<sup>24</sup> and cause crops to grow on the land I gave to your ancestor Jacob."<sup>25</sup> Know for certain that the LORD has spoken.<sup>26</sup>

*Injustice Brings Alienation from God*

59:1 Look, the LORD's hand is not too weak<sup>27</sup> to deliver you;

his ear is not too deaf to hear you.<sup>28</sup>  
59:2 But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God;

dwelling." The idea of "paths to dwell in" is not a common notion. Some have proposed emending נתיבות (*n<sup>o</sup>tivot*, "paths") to נתיבות (*n<sup>o</sup>tivot*, "ruins"), a passive participle from נתן (*nata*, "tear down"; see HALOT 732 s.v. נתיב), because tighter parallelism with the preceding line is achieved. However, none of the textual sources support this emendation. The line may mean that paths must be repaired in order to dwell in the land.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Lit., "if you." In the Hebrew text vv. 13-14 are one long conditional sentence. The protasis ("if" clauses appear in v. 13), with the apodosis ("then" clause) appearing in v. 14.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "if you turn from the Sabbath your feet."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "[from] doing your desires on my holy day." The Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> supplies the preposition מן (*min*) on "doing."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and call the Sabbath a pleasure"; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV "a delight."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and [call] the holy [day] of the LORD honored." On קדוש (*qadosh*, "holy") as indicating a time period, see BDB 872 s.v. 2.e (cf. also Neh 8:9-11).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and you honor it [by refraining] from accomplishing your ways, from finding your desire and speaking a word." It is unlikely that the last phrase ("speaking a word") is a prohibition against talking on the Sabbath; instead it probably refers to making transactions or plans (see Hos 10:4). Some see here a reference to idle talk (cf. 2 Sam 19:30).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** For a parallel use of the phrase "find joy in" (Hitpa'el of נגן [*anag*] followed by the preposition על [*al*]), see Ps 37:4.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the land." The statement seems to be an allusion to Deut 32:13, where it is associated, as here, with God's abundant provision of food.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and I will cause you to eat the inheritance of Jacob your father." The Hebrew term נחלה (*nakhlah*) likely stands by metonymy for the crops that grow on Jacob's "inheritance" (i.e., the land he inherited as a result of God's promise).

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." The introductory כִּי (*ki*) may be asseverative (as reflected in the translation) or causal/explanatory, explaining why the preceding promise will become reality (because it is guaranteed by the divine word).

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* "short" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* "or his ear too heavy [i.e., "dull"] to hear."

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Is it not?" The rhetorical question here expects a positive answer, "It is!"

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and afflicted [ones], homeless [ones] you should bring [into] a house." On the meaning of קרויים (*m<sup>o</sup>rudim*, "homeless") see HALOT 633 s.v. קרוי.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and from your flesh do not hide yourself."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will burst out like the dawn."

**sn** Light here symbolizes God's favor and restored blessing, as the immediately following context makes clear.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "prosper"; KJV "spring forth speedily."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** Or "righteousness." Their godly behavior will be on display for all to see.

<sup>7</sup> **sn** The nation will experience God's protective presence.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "if you." In the Hebrew text vv. 9b-10 are one long conditional sentence. The protasis ("if" clauses appear in vv. 9b-10a), with the apodosis ("then" clause) appearing in v. 10b.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "if you." See the note on "you must" in v. 9b.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "If you furnish for the hungry [with] your being, and the appetite of the oppressed you satisfy."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will rise in the darkness."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and your darkness [will be] like noonday."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "he will satisfy in parched regions your appetite."

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and your bones he will strengthen."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and they will build from you ancient ruins."

<sup>16</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has "the one who restores paths for



your sins have caused him to reject you  
and not listen to your prayers.<sup>1</sup>

**59:3** For your hands are stained with blood  
and your fingers with sin;  
your lips speak lies,  
your tongue utters malicious words.

**59:4** No one is concerned about justice;<sup>2</sup>  
no one sets forth his case truthfully.  
They depend on false words<sup>3</sup> and tell lies;  
they conceive of oppression<sup>4</sup>  
and give birth to sin.

**59:5** They hatch the eggs of a poisonous  
snake  
and spin a spider's web.

Whoever eats their eggs will die,  
a poisonous snake is hatched.<sup>5</sup>

**59:6** Their webs cannot be used for cloth-  
ing;  
they cannot cover themselves with what  
they make.

Their deeds are sinful;  
they commit violent crimes.<sup>6</sup>

**59:7** They are eager to do evil,<sup>7</sup>  
quick to shed innocent blood.<sup>8</sup>

Their thoughts are sinful;  
they crush and destroy.<sup>9</sup>

**59:8** They are unfamiliar with peace;  
their deeds are unjust.<sup>10</sup>

They use deceitful methods,  
and whoever deals with them is unfamil-  
iar with peace.<sup>11</sup>

**59:10** We grope along the wall like the  
blind,  
we grope like those who cannot see;<sup>20</sup>  
we stumble at noontime as if it were  
evening.

Though others are strong, we are like  
dead men.<sup>21</sup>

**59:11** We all growl like bears,  
we coo mournfully like doves;  
we wait for deliverance,<sup>22</sup> but there is  
none,

for salvation, but it is far from us.

**59:12** For you are aware of our many re-  
bellious deeds,<sup>23</sup>

and our sins testify against us;  
indeed, we are aware of our rebellious  
deeds;

we know our sins all too well.<sup>24</sup>

**59:13** We have rebelled and tried to de-  
ceive the LORD;

we turned back from following our God.  
We stir up<sup>25</sup> oppression and rebellion;

we tell lies we concocted in our minds.<sup>26</sup>

**59:14** Justice is driven back;  
godliness<sup>27</sup> stands far off.

Indeed,<sup>28</sup> honesty stumbles in the city  
square

and morality is not even able to enter.

**59:15** Honesty has disappeared;  
the one who tries to avoid evil is robbed.

The LORD watches and is displeased,<sup>29</sup>  
for there is no justice.

### *Israel Confesses its Sin*

**59:9** For this reason deliverance<sup>12</sup> is far  
from us<sup>13</sup>

and salvation does not reach us.

We wait for light,<sup>14</sup> but see only darkness;<sup>15</sup>  
we wait for<sup>16</sup> a bright light,<sup>17</sup> but live<sup>18</sup> in  
deep darkness.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup> tn Heb "and your sins have caused [his] face to be hid-  
den from you so as not to hear."

<sup>2</sup> tn Heb "no one pleads with justice."

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb "nothing"; NAB "emptiness."

<sup>4</sup> tn Or "trouble" (NIV), or "harm."

<sup>5</sup> tn Heb "that which is pressed in hatches [as] a snake."

<sup>6</sup> tn Heb "their deeds are deeds of sin, and the work of  
violence [is] in their hands."

<sup>7</sup> tn Heb "their feet run to evil."

<sup>8</sup> tn Heb "they quickly pour out innocent blood."

<sup>9</sup> tn Heb "their thoughts are thoughts of sin, destruction  
and crushing [are] in their roadways."

<sup>10</sup> tn Heb "a way of peace they do not know, and there is no  
justice in their pathways."

<sup>11</sup> tn Heb "their paths they make crooked, everyone who  
walks in it does not know peace."

<sup>12</sup> tn מִשְׁפָּט (mishpat), which refers to "justice" in the earlier  
verses, here refers to "justice from God," or "vindication." Be-  
cause the people are unjust, God refuses to vindicate them  
before their enemies. See v. 11.

<sup>13</sup> sn The prophet speaks on behalf of the sinful nation and  
confesses its sins.

<sup>14</sup> sn Light here symbolizes prosperity and blessing.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb "but, look, darkness"; NIV "but all is darkness."

<sup>16</sup> tn The words "we wait for" are supplied in the translation;  
the verb is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>17</sup> tn The plural noun form may indicate degree here.

<sup>18</sup> tn Or "walk about"; NCV "all we have is darkness."

<sup>19</sup> tn The plural noun form may indicate degree here.

### *The Lord Intervenes*

**59:16** He sees there is no advocate;<sup>30</sup>  
he is shocked<sup>31</sup> that no one intervenes.

So he takes matters into his own hands;<sup>32</sup>  
his desire for justice drives him on.<sup>33</sup>

**59:17** He wears his desire for justice<sup>34</sup> like  
body armor,<sup>35</sup>  
and his desire to deliver is like a helmet  
on his head.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb "like there are no eyes."

<sup>21</sup> tn Heb among the strong, like dead men."

<sup>22</sup> tn See the note at v. 9.

<sup>23</sup> tn Heb "for many are our rebellious deeds before you."

<sup>24</sup> tn Heb "indeed [or 'for'] our rebellious deeds (are) with  
us, and our sins, we know them."

<sup>25</sup> tn Heb "speaking." A new sentence was started here in  
the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>26</sup> tn Heb "conceiving and uttering from the heart words of  
falsehood."

<sup>27</sup> tn Or "righteousness" (ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); KJV, NAB  
"justice."

<sup>28</sup> tn Or "for" (KJV, NRSV).

<sup>29</sup> tn Heb "and it is displeasing in his eyes."

<sup>30</sup> tn Heb "man" (so KJV, ASV); TEV "no one to help."

<sup>31</sup> tn Or "appalled" (NAB, NIV, NRSV), or "disgusted."

<sup>32</sup> tn Heb "and his arm delivers for him."

<sup>33</sup> tn Heb "and his justice [or "righteousness"] supports  
him."

<sup>34</sup> tn Or "righteousness" (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NCV  
"goodness."

<sup>35</sup> tn Or "a breastplate" (traditional; so many English ver-  
sions); TEV "a coat of armour."

<sup>36</sup> tn Heb "and [as] a helmet deliverance on his head."

He puts on the garments of vengeance<sup>1</sup> and wears zeal like a robe.

**59:18** He repays them for what they have done, dispensing angry judgment to his adversaries

and punishing his enemies.<sup>2</sup> He repays the coastlands.<sup>3</sup>

**59:19** In the west, people respect<sup>4</sup> the

LORD's reputation,<sup>5</sup> in the east they recognize his splendor.<sup>6</sup>

For he comes like a rushing<sup>7</sup> stream driven on by wind sent from the LORD.<sup>8</sup>

**59:20** "A protector<sup>9</sup> comes to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their rebellious deeds,"<sup>10</sup> says the LORD.

**59:21** "As for me, this is my promise to<sup>11</sup> them," says the LORD. "My spirit, who is upon you, and my words, which I have placed in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth or from the mouths of your children and descendants from this time forward,"<sup>12</sup> says the LORD.

### *Zion's Future Splendor*

**60:1** "Arise! Shine! For your light arrives! The splendor<sup>13</sup> of the LORD shines on you!

**60:2** For, look, darkness covers the earth and deep darkness covers<sup>14</sup> the nations, but the LORD shines on you; his splendor<sup>15</sup> appears over you.

**60:3** Nations come to your light, kings to your bright light.

**60:4** Look all around you!<sup>16</sup> They all gather and come to you – your sons come from far away and your daughters are escorted by guardians.

**60:5** Then you will look and smile,<sup>17</sup> you will be excited and your heart will

swell with pride.<sup>18</sup> For the riches of distant lands<sup>19</sup> will belong to you and the wealth of nations will come to you.

**60:6** Camel caravans will cover your roads,<sup>20</sup> young camels from Midian and Ephah. All the merchants of Sheba<sup>21</sup> will come, bringing gold and incense and singing praises to the LORD.<sup>22</sup>

**60:7** All the sheep of Kedar will be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth will be available to you as sacrifices.<sup>23</sup>

They will go up on my altar acceptably,<sup>24</sup> and I will bestow honor on my majestic temple.

**60:8** Who are these who float along<sup>25</sup> like a cloud, who fly like doves to their shelters?<sup>26</sup>

**60:9** Indeed, the coastlands<sup>27</sup> look eagerly for me,

the large ships<sup>28</sup> are in the lead, bringing your sons from far away, along with their silver and gold, to honor the LORD your God,<sup>29</sup> the Holy One of Israel,<sup>30</sup> for he has bestowed honor on you.

**60:10** Foreigners will rebuild your walls; their kings will serve you.

Even though I struck you down in my anger,

I will restore my favor and have compassion on you.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and he puts on the clothes of vengeance [as] a garment."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in accordance with deeds, so he repays, anger to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or "islands" (KJV, NIV).

<sup>4</sup> **tc** *Heb* "fear." A few medieval Hebrew MSS read "see."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and they fear from the west the name of the LORD."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and from the rising of the sun his splendor."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "narrow"; NAB, NIV, NRSV "pent-up."

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the wind of the LORD drives it on." The term *רוּחַ* (*ruakh*) could be translated "breath" here (see 30:28).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or "redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and to those who turn from rebellion in Jacob."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Or "my covenant with" (so many English versions); NCV "my agreement with."

**sn** The LORD promises the repentant (note "to them") that they and their offspring will possess his spirit and function as his spokesmen. In this regard they follow in the footsteps of the LORD's special servant. See 42:1; 49:2; 51:16.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from now and on into the future."

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or "glory" (so most English versions).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The verb "covers" is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or "glory" (so most English versions); TEV "the brightness of his presence."

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "Lift up around your eyes and see!"

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or "shine," or "be radiant" (NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and it will tremble and be wide, your heart."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the wealth of the sea," i.e., wealth that is transported from distant lands via the sea.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "an abundance of camels will cover you."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all of them, from Sheba."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and they will announce the praises of the LORD."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will serve you," i.e., be available as sacrifices (see the next line). Another option is to understand these "rams" as symbolic of leaders who will be subject to the people of Zion. See v. 10.

<sup>24</sup> **tc** *Heb* "they will go up on acceptance [on] my altar." Some have suggested that the preposition *עַל* (*'al*) is ditto-graphic (note the preceding *עַלֹּו* [*ya'alu*]). Consequently, the form should be emended to *לְרִצּוֹן* (*Pratson*, "acceptably"; see BDB 953 s.v. *רִצּוֹן*). However, the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> has both *לְרִצּוֹן* followed by the preposition *עַל*, which would argue against deleting the preposition. As the above translation seeks to demonstrate, the preposition *עַל* (*'al*) indicates a norm ("in accordance with acceptance" or "acceptably"; *IBHS* 218 §11.2.13e, n. 111) and the "altar" functions as an objective accusative with a verb of motion (cf. Gen 49:4; Lev 2:2; Num 13:17; J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:534, n. 14).

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "fly" (so KJV, NASB, NRSV); NAB, NIV "fly along."

<sup>26</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to their windows," i.e., to the openings in their coops. See HALOT 83 s.v. *אֲרָבָה*.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Or "islands" (NIV); CEV "distant islands"; TEV "distant lands."

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the ships of Tarshish." See the note at 2:16.

<sup>29</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to the name of the LORD your God."

<sup>30</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

<sup>31</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in my favor I will have compassion on you."

**60:11** Your gates will remain open at all times; they will not be shut during the day or at night, so that the wealth of nations may be delivered, with their kings leading the way.<sup>1</sup>  
**60:12** Indeed,<sup>2</sup> nations or kingdoms that do not serve you will perish; such nations will be totally destroyed.<sup>3</sup>  
**60:13** The splendor of Lebanon will come to you, its evergreens, firs, and cypresses together, to beautify my palace;<sup>4</sup> I will bestow honor on my throne room.<sup>5</sup>  
**60:14** The children of your oppressors will come bowing to you; all who treated you with disrespect will bow down at your feet. They will call you, ‘The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’<sup>6</sup>  
**60:15** You were once abandoned and despised, with no one passing through, but I will make you<sup>7</sup> a permanent source of pride and joy to coming generations.  
**60:16** You will drink the milk of nations; you will nurse at the breasts of kings.<sup>8</sup> Then you will recognize that I, the LORD, am your deliverer, your protector,<sup>9</sup> the powerful Ruler of Jacob.<sup>10</sup>  
**60:17** Instead of bronze, I will bring you gold, instead of iron, I will bring you silver, instead of wood, I will bring you<sup>11</sup> bronze, instead of stones, I will bring you<sup>12</sup> iron. I will make prosperity<sup>13</sup> your overseer, and vindication your sovereign ruler.<sup>14</sup>

**60:18** Sounds of violence<sup>15</sup> will no longer be heard in your land, or the sounds of<sup>16</sup> destruction and devastation within your borders. You will name your walls, ‘Deliverance,’ and your gates, ‘Praise.’  
**60:19** The sun will no longer supply light for you by day, nor will the moon’s brightness shine on you; the LORD will be your permanent source of light – the splendor of your God will shine upon you.<sup>17</sup>  
**60:20** Your sun will no longer set; your moon will not disappear;<sup>18</sup> the LORD will be your permanent source of light; your time<sup>19</sup> of sorrow will be over.  
**60:21** All of your people will be godly;<sup>20</sup> they will possess the land permanently. I will plant them like a shoot; they will be the product of my labor, through whom I reveal my splendor.<sup>21</sup>  
**60:22** The least of you will multiply into<sup>22</sup> a thousand; the smallest of you will become a large nation. When the right time comes, I the LORD will quickly do this!<sup>23</sup>

*The Lord Will Rejuvenate His People*

**61:1** The spirit of the sovereign LORD is upon me, because the LORD has chosen<sup>24</sup> me.<sup>25</sup> He has commissioned<sup>26</sup> me to encourage<sup>27</sup> the poor, to help<sup>28</sup> the brokenhearted, to decree the release of captives, and the freeing of prisoners,

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “led in procession.” The participle is passive.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or “For” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); TEV “But.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or “holy place, sanctuary.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the place of my feet.” See Ezek 43:7, where the LORD’s throne is called the “place of the soles of my feet.”

<sup>6</sup> **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Instead of your being abandoned and despised, with no one passing through, I will make you.”

<sup>8</sup> **sn** The nations and kings are depicted as a mother nursing her children. Restored Zion will be nourished by them as she receives their wealth as tribute.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** Or “redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

<sup>10</sup> **sn** See 1:24 and 49:26.

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The words “I will bring you” are supplied in the translation; they are understood by ellipsis (see the preceding lines).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The words “I will bring you” are supplied in the translation; they are understood by ellipsis (see the first two lines of the verse).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** Or “peace” (KJV and many other English versions).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The plural indicates degree. The language is ironic; in the past Zion was ruled by oppressive tyrants, but now personified prosperity and vindication will be the only things that will “dominate” the city.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The words “sounds of” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** The words “sounds of” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and your God for your splendor.”

<sup>18</sup> **sn** In this verse “sun” and “moon” refer to the LORD’s light, which will replace the sun and moon (see v. 19). Light here symbolizes the restoration of divine blessing and prosperity in conjunction with the LORD’s presence. See 30:26.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “days” (so KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>20</sup> **tn** Or “righteous” (NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “just.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “a shoot of his planting, the work of my hands, to reveal splendor.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “will become” (so NASB, NIV).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I, the LORD, in its time, I will quickly do it.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “appointed,” i.e., designated to carry out an assigned task.

<sup>25</sup> **sn** The speaker is not identified, but he is distinct from the LORD and from Zion’s suffering people. He possesses the divine spirit, is God’s spokesman, and is sent to release prisoners from bondage. The evidence suggests he is the LORD’s special servant, described earlier in the servant songs (see 42:1-4, 7; 49:2, 9; 50:4; see also 51:16).

<sup>26</sup> **tn** Or “sent” (NAB); NCV “has appointed me.”

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Or “proclaim good news to.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to bind up [the wounds of].”

**61:2** to announce the year when the LORD will show his favor, the day when our God will seek vengeance,<sup>1</sup> to console all who mourn, **61:3** to strengthen those who mourn in Zion, by giving them a turban, instead of ashes, oil symbolizing joy,<sup>2</sup> instead of mourning, a garment symbolizing praise,<sup>3</sup> instead of discouragement.<sup>4</sup> They will be called oaks of righteousness,<sup>5</sup> trees planted by the LORD to reveal his splendor.<sup>6</sup>

**61:4** They will rebuild the perpetual ruins and restore the places that were desolate;<sup>7</sup> they will reestablish the ruined cities, the places that have been desolate since ancient times.

**61:5**<sup>8</sup> "Foreigners will take care of<sup>9</sup> your sheep; foreigners will work in your fields and vineyards.

**61:6** You will be called, 'the LORD's priests, servants of our God.'<sup>10</sup> You will enjoy<sup>11</sup> the wealth of nations and boast about<sup>12</sup> the riches you receive from them.<sup>13</sup>

**61:7** Instead of shame, you will get a double portion,<sup>14</sup> instead of humiliation, they will rejoice over the land they receive.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "to announce the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of our God's vengeance.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* "oil of joy" (KJV, ASV); NASB, NIV, NRSV "the oil of gladness."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "garment of praise."

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a faint spirit" (so NRSV); KJV, ASV "the spirit of heaviness"; NASB "a spirit of fainting."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Rather than referring to the character of the people, *צִדִּיק (tsedeq)* may carry the nuance "vindication" here, suggesting that God's restored people are a testimony to his justice. See v. 2, which alludes to the fact that God will take vengeance against the enemies of his people. Cf. NAB "oaks of justice."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a planting of the LORD to reveal splendor."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and the formerly desolate places they will raise up."

<sup>8</sup> **sn** The LORD speaks in vv. 7-8 (and possibly v. 9). It is not clear where the servant's speech (see vv. 1-3a) ends and the LORD's begins. Perhaps the direct address to the people signals the beginning of the LORD's speech.

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will stand [in position] and shepherd."

<sup>10</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text adds, "it will be said concerning you."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "eat" (KJV, NAB, NASB); NIV "feed on"; NLT "be fed with."

<sup>12</sup> **tc** The form in the Hebrew text is probably a corruption of *יִתְאָבֵר (yit'amm<sup>6</sup>ru)*, a Hitpael from *אָבַר (amar)*, meaning "boast about" (see HALOT 67 s.v. אָבַר, HALOT 416 s.v. יָבַר, and BDB 56 s.v. אָבַר).

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* "their glory" (i.e., riches).

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* "instead of your shame, a double portion."

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and [instead of] humiliation they will rejoice [over] their portion." The term *תַּחַת (takhat)*, "instead of" is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

Yes,<sup>16</sup> they will possess a double portion in their land and experience lasting joy.

**61:8** For I, the LORD, love justice and hate robbery and sin.

I will repay them because of my faithfulness;<sup>17</sup>

I will make a permanent covenant with them.

**61:9** Their descendants will be known among the nations, their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will recognize that the LORD has blessed them.<sup>18</sup>

**61:10**<sup>19</sup> will greatly rejoice<sup>20</sup> in the LORD; I will be overjoyed because of my God.<sup>21</sup> For he clothes me in garments of deliverance; he puts on me a robe symbolizing vindication.<sup>22</sup>

I look like a bridegroom when he wears a turban as a priest would;

I look like a bride when she puts on her jewelry.<sup>23</sup>

**61:11** For just as the ground produces its crops and a garden yields its produce, so the sovereign LORD will cause deliverance<sup>24</sup> to grow, and give his people reason to praise him in the sight of all the nations.<sup>25</sup>

### *The Lord Takes Delight in Zion*

**62:1** "For the sake of Zion I will not be silent; for the sake of Jerusalem<sup>26</sup> I will not be quiet, until her vindication shines brightly<sup>27</sup> and her deliverance burns like a torch."

**62:2** Nations will see your vindication, and all kings your splendor.

You will be called by a new name that the LORD himself will give you.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* "therefore" (so KJV, NASB); NIV "and so."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "in faithfulness"; NASB, NRSV, NLT "faithfully."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "all who see them will recognize them, that they [are] descendants [whom] the LORD has blessed."

<sup>19</sup> **sn** The speaker in vv. 10-11 is not identified, but it is likely that the personified nation (or perhaps Zion) responds here to the LORD's promise of restoration.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "my being is happy in my God"; NAB "in my God is the joy of my soul."

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* "robe of vindication"; KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV "robe of righteousness."

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "like a bridegroom [who] acts like a priest [by wearing] a turban, and like a bride [who] wears her jewelry." The words "I look" are supplied for stylistic reasons and clarification.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "righteousness," but the context seems to emphasize deliverance and restoration (see v. 10 and 62:1).

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and praise before all the nations."

<sup>26</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* "goes forth like brightness."

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* "which the mouth of the LORD will designate."



62:3 You will be a majestic crown in the hand of the LORD,  
a royal turban in the hand of your God.  
62:4 You will no longer be called, “Abandoned,”  
and your land will no longer be called  
“Desolate.”  
Indeed,<sup>1</sup> you will be called “My Delight  
is in Her,”<sup>2</sup>  
and your land “Married.”<sup>3</sup>  
For the LORD will take delight in you,  
and your land will be married to him.<sup>4</sup>  
62:5 As a young man marries a young  
woman,  
so your sons<sup>5</sup> will marry you.  
As a bridegroom rejoices over a bride,  
so your God will rejoice over you.  
62:6 I<sup>6</sup> post watchmen on your walls, O  
Jerusalem;  
they should keep praying all day and all  
night.<sup>7</sup>  
You who pray to<sup>8</sup> the LORD, don’t be  
silent!  
62:7 Don’t allow him to rest until he rees-  
tablishes Jerusalem,<sup>9</sup>  
until he makes Jerusalem the pride<sup>10</sup> of  
the earth.  
62:8 The LORD swears an oath by his right  
hand,  
by his strong arm:<sup>11</sup>

“I will never again give your grain  
to your enemies as food,  
and foreigners will not drink your wine,  
which you worked hard to produce.

62:9 But those who harvest the grain<sup>12</sup> will  
eat it,  
and will praise the LORD.  
Those who pick the grapes will drink the  
wine<sup>13</sup>  
in the courts of my holy sanctuary.”  
62:10 Come through! Come through the  
gates!  
Prepare the way for the people!  
Build it! Build the roadway!  
Remove the stones!  
Lift a signal flag for the nations!  
62:11 Look, the LORD announces to the  
entire earth:<sup>14</sup>  
“Say to Daughter Zion,  
‘Look, your deliverer comes!  
Look, his reward is with him  
and his reward goes before him!’”<sup>15</sup>  
62:12 They will be called, “The Holy  
People,  
the Ones Protected<sup>16</sup> by the LORD.”  
You will be called, “Sought After,  
City Not Abandoned.”

### *The Victorious Divine Warrior*

63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom,<sup>17</sup>  
dressed in bright red, coming from Boz-  
rah?<sup>18</sup>  
Who<sup>19</sup> is this one wearing royal attire,<sup>20</sup>  
who marches confidently<sup>21</sup> because of his  
great strength?  
“It is I, the one who announces vindica-  
tion,  
and who is able to deliver!”<sup>22</sup>  
63:2 Why are your clothes red?  
Why do you look like someone who has  
stomped on grapes in a vat?<sup>23</sup>  
63:3 “I have stomped grapes in the wine-  
press all by myself;

<sup>1</sup> **tn** Or “for”; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “but.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Hebrew *הִפְצִי־בָה* (*kheftsi-vah*), traditionally transliterated “Hephzibah” (so KJV, ASV, NIV).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Hebrew *בְּעֻלָּה* (*b<sup>e</sup>ulah*), traditionally transliterated “Beulah” (so KJV, ASV, NIV).

<sup>4</sup> **tn** That is, the land will be restored to the LORD’s favor and once again enjoy his blessing and protection. To indicate the land’s relationship to the LORD, the words “to him” have been supplied at the end of the clause.

<sup>5</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has “your sons,” but this produces an odd metaphor and is somewhat incongruous with the parallelism. In the context (v. 4b, see also 54:5-7) the LORD is the one who “marries” Zion. Therefore several prefer to emend “your sons” to *בְּנֵיךָ* (*bonayikh*, “your builder”; e.g., NRSV). In Ps 147:2 the LORD is called the “builder of Jerusalem.” However, this emendation is not the best option for at least four reasons. First, although the Lord is never called the “builder” of Jerusalem in Isaiah, the idea of Zion’s children possessing the land does occur (Isa 49:20; 54:3; cf. also 14:1; 60:21). Secondly, all the ancient versions support the MT reading. Thirdly, although the verb *בָּנָה* (*ba’al*) can mean “to marry,” its basic idea is “to possess.” Consequently, the verb stresses a relationship more than a state. All the ancient versions render this verb “to dwell in” or “to dwell with.” The point is not just that the land will be reinhabited, but that it will be in a relationship of “belonging” to the Israelites. Hence a relational verb like *בָּנָה* is used (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:581). Finally, “sons” is a well-known metaphor for “inhabitants” (J. de Waard, *Isaiah*, 208).

<sup>6</sup> **sn** The speaker here is probably the prophet.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all day and all night continually they do not keep silent.” The following lines suggest that they pray for the LORD’s intervention and restoration of the city.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or “invoke”; NIV “call on”; NASB, NRSV “remind.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** “Jerusalem” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons; note the following line.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[the object of] praise.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** The LORD’s right hand and strong arm here symbolize his power and remind the audience that his might guarantees the fulfillment of the following promise.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “it,” the grain mentioned in v. 8a.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and those who gather it will drink it.” The masculine singular pronominal suffixes attached to “gather” and “drink” refer back to the masculine noun *תִּירוֹשׁ* (*tirosah*, “wine”) in v. 8b.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to the end of the earth” (so NASB, NRSV).

<sup>15</sup> **sn** As v. 12 indicates, the returning exiles are the LORD’s reward/prize. See also 40:10 and the note there.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Or “the redeemed of the LORD” (KJV, NAB).

<sup>17</sup> **sn** Edom is here an archetype for the LORD’s enemies. See 34:5.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[in] bright red garments, from Bozrah.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis; note the first line of the verse.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “honored in his clothing”; KJV, ASV “glorious in his apparel.”

<sup>21</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text has *צָעָדָה* (*tsa’ah*), which means “stoop, bend” (51:14). The translation assumes an emendation to *צָעָדָה* (*tsa’ad*, “march”; see BDB 858 s.v. *צָעָדָה*).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I, [the one] speaking in vindication [or “righteousness”], great to deliver.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and your garments like one who treads in a vat?”

no one from the nations joined me.  
 I stomped on them<sup>1</sup> in my anger;  
 I trampled them down in my rage.  
 Their juice splashed on my garments,  
 and stained<sup>2</sup> all my clothes.  
**63:4** For I looked forward to the day of  
 vengeance,  
 and then payback time arrived.<sup>3</sup>  
**63:5** I looked, but there was no one to  
 help;  
 I was shocked because there was no one  
 offering support.<sup>4</sup>  
 So my right arm accomplished deliver-  
 ance;  
 my raging anger drove me on.<sup>5</sup>  
**63:6** I trampled nations in my anger,  
 I made them drunk<sup>6</sup> in my rage,  
 I splashed their blood on the ground.”<sup>7</sup>

*A Prayer for Divine Intervention*

**63:7** I will tell of the faithful acts of the  
 LORD,  
 of the LORD’s praiseworthy deeds.  
 I will tell about all<sup>8</sup> the LORD did for us,  
 the many good things he did for the fam-  
 ily of Israel,<sup>9</sup>  
 because of<sup>10</sup> his compassion and great  
 faithfulness.  
**63:8** He said, “Certainly they will be my  
 people,  
 children who are not disloyal.”<sup>11</sup>  
 He became their deliverer.  
**63:9** Through all that they suffered, he  
 suffered too.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **sn** Nations, headed by Edom, are the object of the LORD’s anger (see v. 6). He compares military slaughter to stomping on grapes in a vat.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and I stained.” For discussion of the difficult verb form, see HALOT 170 s.v. נָטַל. Perhaps the form is mixed, combining the first person forms of the imperfect (note the *alef* prefix) and perfect (note the *-i-* ending).

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my revenge came.” The term נְאוּלַי (*g<sup>o</sup>ulai*) is sometimes translated here “my redemption,” for the verbal root נָל often means “deliver, buy back.” אֲנָל (*go’el*, “kinsman-redeemer”) was responsible for protecting the extended family’s interests, often by redeeming property that had been sold outside the family. However, the responsibilities of a נָל extended beyond financial concerns. He was also responsible for avenging the shed blood of a family member (see Num 35:19-27; Deut 19:6-12). In Isa 63:4, where vengeance is a prominent theme (note the previous line), it is probably this function of the family protector that is in view. The LORD pictures himself as a blood avenger who waits for the day of vengeance to arrive and then springs into action.

<sup>4</sup> **sn** See Isa 59:16 for similar language.

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and my anger, it supported me”; NIV “my own wrath sustained me.”

<sup>6</sup> **sn** See Isa 49:26 and 51:23 for similar imagery.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and I brought down to the ground their juice.”

“Juice” refers to their blood (see v. 3).

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “according to all which.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “greatness of goodness to the house of Israel which he did for them.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “according to.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “children [who] do not act deceitfully.” Here the verb refers to covenantal loyalty.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in all their distress, there was distress to him” (reading לוֹ [*lo*] with the margin/*Qere*).

The messenger sent from his very pres-  
 ence<sup>13</sup> delivered them.  
 In his love and mercy he protected<sup>14</sup> them;  
 he lifted them up and carried them  
 throughout ancient times.<sup>15</sup>  
**63:10** But they rebelled and offended<sup>16</sup> his  
 holy Spirit,<sup>17</sup>  
 so he turned into an enemy  
 and fought against them.  
**63:11** His people remembered the ancient  
 times.<sup>18</sup>  
 Where is the one who brought them up  
 out of the sea,  
 along with the shepherd of<sup>19</sup> his flock?  
 Where is the one who placed his holy  
 Spirit among them,<sup>20</sup>  
**63:12** the one who made his majestic  
 power available to Moses,<sup>21</sup>  
 who divided the water before them,  
 gaining for himself a lasting reputation,<sup>22</sup>  
**63:13** who led them through the deep  
 water?  
 Like a horse running on flat land<sup>23</sup> they  
 did not stumble.  
**63:14** Like an animal that goes down into  
 a valley to graze,<sup>24</sup>  
 so the Spirit of the LORD granted them  
 rest.  
 In this way<sup>25</sup> you guided your people,

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the messenger [or “angel”] of his face”; NIV “the angel of his presence.”

**sn** This may refer to the “angel of God” mentioned in Exod 14:19, who in turn may be identical to the divine “presence” (literally, “face”) referred to in Exod 33:14-15 and Deut 4:37. Here in Isa 63 this messenger may be equated with God’s “holy Spirit” (see vv. 10-11) and “the Spirit of the LORD” (v. 14). See also Ps 139:7, where God’s “Spirit” seems to be equated with his “presence” (literally, “face”) in the synonymous parallel structure.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “redeemed” (KJV, NAB, NIV), or “delivered.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all the days of antiquity”; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “days of old.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Or “grieved, hurt the feelings of.”

<sup>17</sup> **sn** The phrase “holy Spirit” occurs in the OT only here (in v. 11 as well) and in Ps 51:11 (51:13 HT), where it is associated with the divine presence.

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and he remembered the days of antiquity, Moses, his people.” The syntax of the statement is unclear. The translation assumes that “his people” is the subject of the verb “remembered.” If original, “Moses” is in apposition to “the days of antiquity,” more precisely identifying the time period referred to. However, the syntactical awkwardness suggests that “Moses” may have been an early marginal note (perhaps identifying “the shepherd of his flock” two lines later) that has worked its way into the text.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has a plural form, which if retained and taken as a numerical plural, would probably refer to Moses, Aaron, and the Israelite tribal leaders at the time of the Exodus. Most prefer to emend the form to the singular (רֹדֵף, *ra’ah*) and understand this as a reference just to Moses.

<sup>20</sup> **sn** See the note at v. 10.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “who caused to go at the right hand of Moses the arm of his splendor.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “making for himself a lasting name.”

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in the desert [or “steppe”].”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The words “to graze” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** Or “so” (KJV, ASV), or “thus” (NAB, NRSV).

gaining for yourself an honored reputation.<sup>1</sup>

**63:15** Look down from heaven and take notice,

from your holy, majestic palace!  
Where are your zeal<sup>2</sup> and power?

Do not hold back your tender compassion!<sup>3</sup>

**63:16** For you are our father,  
though Abraham does not know us  
and Israel does not recognize us.

You, LORD, are our father;  
you have been called our protector from  
ancient times.<sup>4</sup>

**63:17** Why, LORD, do you make us stray<sup>5</sup>  
from your ways,<sup>6</sup>  
and make our minds stubborn so that we  
do not obey you?<sup>7</sup>

Return for the sake of your servants,  
the tribes of your inheritance!

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “making for yourself a majestic name.”

<sup>2</sup> **tn** This probably refers to his zeal for his people, which motivates him to angrily strike out against their enemies.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “the agitation of your intestines and your compassion to me they are held back.” The phrase “agitation of your intestines” is metonymic, referring to the way in which one’s nervous system reacts when one feels pity and compassion toward another. אֵלַי (*‘elay*, “to me”) is awkward in this context, where the speaker represents the nation and, following the introduction (see v. 7), utilizes first person plural forms. The translation assumes an emendation to the negative particle אַל (*‘al*). This also necessitates emending the following verb form (which is a plural perfect) to a singular jussive (תִּי־אַפְּאַק, *ti’appaq*). The Hitpa’el of אָפַק (*‘afaq*) also occurs in 42:14.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “our protector [or “redeemer”] from antiquity [is] your name.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** Some suggest a tolerative use of the Hiphil here, “[why do] you allow us to stray?” (cf. NLT). Though the Hiphil of הִצֵּחַ (*ta’ah*) appears to be tolerative in Jer 50:6, elsewhere it is preferable or necessary to take it as causative. See Isa 3:12; 9:15; and 30:28, as well as Gen 20:13; 2 Kgs 21:9; Job 12:24-25; Prov 12:26; Jer 23:13, 32; Hos 4:12; Amos 2:4; Mic 3:5.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** This probably refers to God’s commands.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[Why do] you harden our heart[s] so as not to fear you.” The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

**sn** How direct this hardening is, one cannot be sure. The speaker may envision direct involvement on the LORD’s part. The LORD has brought the exile as judgment for the nation’s sin and now he continues to keep them at arm’s length by blinding them spiritually. The second half of 64:7 might support this, though the precise reading of the final verb is uncertain. On the other hand, the idiom of lament is sometimes ironic and hyperbolically deterministic. For example, Naomi lamented that Shaddai was directly opposing her and bringing her calamity (Ruth 1:20-21), while the author of Ps 88 directly attributes his horrible suffering and loneliness to God (see especially vv. 6-8, 16-18). Both individuals make little, if any, room for intermediate causes or the principle of sin and death which ravages the human race. In the same way, the speaker in Isa 63:17 (who evidences great spiritual sensitivity and is anything but “hardened”) may be referring to the hardships of exile, which discouraged and even embittered the people, causing many of them to retreat from their Yahwistic faith. In this case, the “hardening” in view is more indirect and can be lifted by the LORD’s intervention. Whether the hardening here is indirect or direct, it is important to recognize that the speaker sees it as one of the effects of rebellion against the LORD (note especially 64:5-6).

**63:18** For a short time your special<sup>8</sup> nation  
possessed a land,<sup>9</sup>  
but then our adversaries knocked down<sup>10</sup>  
your holy sanctuary.

**63:19** We existed from ancient times,<sup>11</sup>  
but you did not rule over them,  
they were not your subjects.<sup>12</sup>

**64:1** (63:19b)<sup>13</sup> If only you would tear apart  
the sky<sup>14</sup> and come down!  
The mountains would tremble<sup>15</sup> before  
you!

**64:2** (64:1) As when fire ignites dry wood,  
or fire makes water boil,  
let your adversaries know who you are,<sup>16</sup>  
and may the nations shake at your pres-  
ence!

**64:3** When you performed awesome deeds  
that took us by surprise,<sup>17</sup>  
you came down, and the mountains trem-  
bled<sup>18</sup> before you.

**64:4** Since ancient times no one has heard  
or perceived,<sup>19</sup>

no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who intervenes for those who wait for  
him.

**64:5** You assist<sup>20</sup> those who delight in do-  
ing what is right,<sup>21</sup>  
who observe your commandments.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>8</sup> **tn** Or “holy” (ASV, NASB, NRSV, TEV, NLT).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for a short time they had a possession, the people of your holiness.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “your adversaries trampled on.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “we were from antiquity” (see v. 16). The collocation הַיָּהָּ + מִן + עוֹלָם (*hayah + min + ‘olam*) occurs only here.

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “you did not rule them, your name was not called over them.” The expression “the name is called over” indicates ownership; see the note at 4:1. As these two lines stand they are very difficult to interpret. They appear to be stating that the adversaries just mentioned in v. 18 have not been subject to the LORD’s rule in the past, perhaps explaining why they could commit the atrocity described in v. 18b.

<sup>13</sup> **sn** In *BHS* the chapter division occurs in a different place from the English Bible: 64:1 ET (63:19b HT) and 64:2-12 (64:1-11 HT). Beginning with 65:1 the verse numbers in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible are again the same.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** Or “quake.” נָזַלּוּ (*nazollu*) from the verbal root נָזַל (*zalat*, “quake”; see *HALOT* 272 s.v. II נָזַל). Perhaps there is a verbal allusion to Judg 5:5, the only other passage where this verb occurs. In that passage the poet tells how the LORD’s appearance to do battle caused the mountains to shake.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to make known your name to your adversaries.” Perhaps the infinitive construct with preposition לְ (*lamed*) should be construed with “come down” in v. 1a, or subordinated to the following line: “To make known your name to your adversaries, let the nations shake from before you.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “[for which] we were not waiting.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** See the note at v. 1.

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “from ancient times they have not heard, they have not listened.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “meet [with kindness].”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the one who rejoices and does righteousness.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in your ways they remember you.”

Look, you were angry because we violated them continually.

How then can we be saved?<sup>1</sup>

**64:6** We are all like one who is unclean, all our so-called righteous acts are like a menstrual rag in your sight.<sup>2</sup>

We all wither like a leaf; our sins carry us away like the wind.

**64:7** No one invokes<sup>3</sup> your name, or makes an effort<sup>4</sup> to take hold of you.

For you have rejected us<sup>5</sup> and handed us over to our own sins.<sup>6</sup>

**64:8** Yet,<sup>7</sup> LORD, you are our father. We are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the product of your labor.<sup>8</sup>

**64:9** LORD, do not be too angry! Do not hold our sins against us continually!<sup>9</sup>

Take a good look at your people, at all of us!<sup>10</sup>

**64:10** Your chosen<sup>11</sup> cities have become a desert;

Zion has become a desert, Jerusalem<sup>12</sup> is a desolate ruin.

**64:11** Our holy temple, our pride and joy,<sup>13</sup> the place where our ancestors praised you, has been burned with fire;

all our prized possessions have been destroyed.<sup>14</sup>

**64:12** In light of all this,<sup>15</sup> how can you still hold back, LORD?

How can you be silent and continue to humiliate us?

*The Lord Will Distinguish Between Sinners and the Godly*

**65:1** “I made myself available to those who did not ask for me;<sup>16</sup>

I appeared to those who did not look for me.<sup>17</sup>

I said, ‘Here I am! Here I am!’ to a nation that did not invoke<sup>18</sup> my name.

**65:2** I spread out my hands all day long to my rebellious people, who lived in a way that is morally unacceptable, and who did what they desired.<sup>19</sup>

**65:3** These people continually and blatantly offend me<sup>20</sup>

as they sacrifice in their sacred orchards<sup>21</sup> and burn incense on brick altars.<sup>22</sup>

**65:4** They sit among the tombs<sup>23</sup> and keep watch all night long.<sup>24</sup>

They eat pork,<sup>25</sup> and broth<sup>26</sup> from unclean sacrificial meat is in their pans.

**65:5** They say, ‘Keep to yourself! Don’t get near me, for I am holier than you!’

These people are like smoke in my nostrils, like a fire that keeps burning all day long.

**65:6** Look, I have decreed:<sup>27</sup>

I will not keep silent, but will pay them back;

I will pay them back exactly what they deserve,<sup>28</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “look, you were angry and we sinned against them continually [or perhaps, “in ancient times”] and we were delivered.” The statement makes little sense as it stands. The first *vav* [ו] consecutive (“and we sinned”) must introduce an explanatory clause here (see Num 1:48 and Isa 39:1 for other examples of this relatively rare use of the *vav* [ו] consecutive). The final verb (if rendered positively) makes no sense in this context – God’s anger at their sin resulted in judgment, not deliverance. One of the alternatives involves an emendation to וְנִירְשָׁה (vannirsha’, “and we were evil”; LXX, NRSV, TEV). The Vulgate and the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> support the MT reading. One can either accept an emendation or cast the statement as a question (as above).

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and like a garment of menstruation [are] all our righteous acts”; KJV, NIV “filthy rags”; ASV “a polluted garment.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** Or “calls out in”; NASB, NIV, NRSV “calls on.”

<sup>4</sup> **tn** Or “rouses himself”; NASB “arouses himself.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for you have hidden your face from us.”

<sup>6</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and you caused us to melt in the hand of our sin.” The verb וַתִּמְגַעֵנוּ (vatt<sup>m</sup>mugenu) is a Qal preterite 2nd person masculine singular with a 1st person common plural suffix from the root מגע (mug, “melt”). However, elsewhere the Qal of this verb is intransitive. If the verbal root מגע (mug) is retained here, the form should be emended to a Polel pattern וְתִמְגַעֵנוּ, vatt<sup>m</sup>mog<sup>g</sup>genenu). The translation assumes an emendation to וַתִּמְגַּעֵנוּ (vatt<sup>m</sup>magg<sup>g</sup>nenu, “and you handed us over”). This form is a Piel preterite 2nd person masculine singular with a 1st person common plural suffix from the verbal root מגע (migen, “hand over, surrender”; see HALOT 545 s.v. מגע and BDB 171 s.v. מגע). The point is that God has abandoned them to their sinful ways and no longer seeks reconciliation.

<sup>7</sup> **tn** On the force of וְעַתָּה (v<sup>e</sup>attah) here, see HALOT 902 s.v. עַתָּה.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the work of your hand.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “do not remember sin continually.”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Look, gaze at your people, all of us.” Another option is to translate, “Take a good look! We are all your people.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “holy” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV, NLT); NIV “sacred.”

<sup>12</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “our source of pride.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** Or “all that we valued has become a ruin.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “because of these”; KJV, ASV “for these things.”

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I allowed myself to be sought by those who did not ask.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I allowed myself to be found by those who did not seek.”

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “call out in”; NASB, NIV, NRSV “call on.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “who walked [in] the way that is not good, after their thoughts.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the people who provoke me to anger to my face continually.”

<sup>21</sup> **tn** Or “gardens” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, “on tiles.”

<sup>23</sup> **sn** Perhaps the worship of underworld deities or dead spirits is in view.

<sup>24</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and in the watches they spend the night.” Some understand וְצִוְרִים (v<sup>e</sup>tsurim) as referring to “secret places” or “caves,” while others emend the text to וְבֵין צִוְרִים (uven tsurim, “between the rocky cliffs”).

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the flesh of the pig”; KJV, NAB, NASB “swine’s flesh.”

<sup>26</sup> **tc** The marginal reading (Qere), supported by the Qumran scroll 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, reads בְּרִיקָה (m<sup>e</sup>raq, “broth”), while the consonantal text (Kethib) has בְּרִיקָה (feraq, “fragment”).

<sup>27</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Look, it is written before me.”

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* “I will pay back into their lap.”



65:7 for your sins and your ancestors' sins,"<sup>1</sup> says the LORD.

"Because they burned incense on the mountains and offended<sup>2</sup> me on the hills, I will punish them in full measure."<sup>3</sup>

65:8 This is what the LORD says:

"When<sup>4</sup> juice is discovered in a cluster of grapes, someone says, 'Don't destroy it, for it contains juice.'<sup>5</sup>

So I will do for the sake of my servants – I will not destroy everyone.<sup>6</sup>

65:9 I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah people to take possession of my mountains.

My chosen ones will take possession of the land;<sup>7</sup>

my servants will live there.

65:10 Sharon<sup>8</sup> will become a pasture for sheep, and the Valley of Achor<sup>9</sup> a place where cattle graze;<sup>10</sup> they will belong to my people, who seek me.<sup>11</sup>

65:11 But as for you who abandon the LORD and forget about worshiping at<sup>12</sup> my holy mountain, who prepare a feast for the god called 'Fortune,'<sup>13</sup> and fill up wine jugs for the god called 'Destiny,'<sup>14</sup> –

65:12 I predestine you to die by the sword,<sup>15</sup>

all of you will kneel down at the slaughtering block,<sup>16</sup> because I called to you, and you did not respond,

I spoke and you did not listen.

You did evil before me;<sup>17</sup> you chose to do what displeases me."<sup>18</sup>

65:13 So this is what the sovereign LORD says:

"Look, my servants will eat, but you will be hungry!

Look, my servants will drink, but you will be thirsty!

Look, my servants will rejoice, but you will be humiliated!

65:14 Look, my servants will shout for joy as happiness fills their hearts!<sup>18</sup>

But you will cry out as sorrow fills your hearts;<sup>19</sup>

you will wail because your spirits will be crushed.<sup>20</sup>

65:15 Your names will live on in the curse formulas of my chosen ones.<sup>21</sup>

The sovereign LORD will kill you, but he will give his servants another name.

65:16 Whoever pronounces a blessing in the earth<sup>22</sup>

will do so in the name of the faithful God;<sup>23</sup>

whoever makes an oath in the earth will do so in the name of the faithful God.<sup>24</sup>

For past problems will be forgotten; I will no longer think about them.<sup>25</sup>

65:17 For look, I am ready to create new heavens and a new earth!<sup>26</sup>

The former ones<sup>27</sup> will not be remembered;

no one will think about them anymore.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* "the iniquities of your fathers."

<sup>2</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "taunted"; KJV "blasphemed"; NAB "disgraced"; NASB "scorned"; NIV "defied"; NRSV "reviled."

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I will measure out their pay [from the] beginning into their lap," i.e., he will give them everything they have earned.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* "just as." In the Hebrew text the statement is one long sentence, "Just as..., so I will do...."

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for a blessing is in it."

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* "by not destroying everyone."

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* "it." The third feminine singular pronominal suffix probably refers to the land which contains the aforementioned mountains.

<sup>8</sup> **sn** Sharon was a plain located to the west, along the Mediterranean coast north of Joppa and south of Carmel.

<sup>9</sup> **sn** The Valley of Achor ("Achor" means "trouble" in Hebrew) was the site of Achan's execution. It was located to the east, near Jericho.

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* "a resting place for cattle"; NASB, NIV "for herds."

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for my people who seek me."

<sup>12</sup> **tn** The Hebrew text has simply, "forget." The words "about worshiping at" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The Hebrew has לַגַּד (laggad, "for Gad"), the name of a pagan deity. See HALOT 176 s.v. II גַּד 2.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The Hebrew has לַמְנִי (lamni, "for Meni"), the name of a pagan deity. See HALOT 602 s.v. מְנִי.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* "I assign you to the sword." Some emend the Qal verb form מְנִייתִי (maniti, "I assign") to the Piel מְנִייתִי (minniti, "I ordain"). The verb sounds like the name of the god Meni (מְנִי, m'ni, "Destiny, Fate"). The sound play draws attention to the irony of the statement. The sinners among God's people wor-

ship the god Meni, apparently in an effort to ensure a bright destiny for themselves. But the LORD is the one who really determines their destiny and he has decreed their demise.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** Or "at the slaughter"; NIV "for the slaughter"; NLT "before the executioner."

<sup>17</sup> **tn** *Heb* "that which is evil in my eyes."

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the good of the heart."

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the pain of the heart."

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* "from the breaking of the spirit."

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* "you will leave your name for an oath to my chosen ones."

**sn** For an example of such a curse formula see Jer 29:22.

<sup>22</sup> **tn** Or "in the land" (NIV, NCV, NRSV). The same phrase occurs again later in this verse, with the same options.

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will pronounce a blessing by the God of truth."

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* "will take an oath by the God of truth."

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* "for the former distresses will be forgotten, and they will be hidden from my eyes."

<sup>26</sup> **sn** This hyperbolic statement likens the coming transformation of Jerusalem (see vv. 18-19) to a new creation of the cosmos.

<sup>27</sup> **tn** Or perhaps, "the former things" (so ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV "The events of the past."

<sup>28</sup> **tn** *Heb* "and they will not come up on the mind."

**65:18** But be happy and rejoice forever—  
more  
over what I am about to create!  
For look, I am ready to create Jerusalem<sup>1</sup>  
to be a source of joy,<sup>2</sup>  
and her people to be a source of happiness.<sup>3</sup>  
**65:19** Jerusalem will bring me joy,  
and my people will bring me happiness.<sup>4</sup>  
The sound of weeping or cries of sorrow  
will never be heard in her again.  
**65:20** Never again will one of her infants  
live just a few days<sup>5</sup>  
or an old man die before his time.<sup>6</sup>  
Indeed, no one will die before the age of  
a hundred,<sup>7</sup>  
anyone who fails to reach<sup>8</sup> the age of a  
hundred will be considered cursed.  
**65:21** They will build houses and live in  
them;  
they will plant vineyards and eat their  
fruit.  
**65:22** No longer will they build a house  
only to have another live in it,<sup>9</sup>  
or plant a vineyard only to have another  
eat its fruit,<sup>10</sup>  
for my people will live as long as trees,<sup>11</sup>  
and my chosen ones will enjoy to the  
fullest what they have produced.<sup>12</sup>  
**65:23** They will not work in vain,  
or give birth to children that will experi-  
ence disaster.<sup>13</sup>  
For the LORD will bless their children  
and their descendants.<sup>14</sup>  
**65:24** Before they even call out,<sup>15</sup> I will  
respond;

while they are still speaking, I will hear.

**65:25** A wolf and a lamb will graze to-  
gether;<sup>16</sup>  
a lion, like an ox, will eat straw,<sup>17</sup>  
and a snake's food will be dirt.<sup>18</sup>  
They will no longer injure or destroy  
on my entire royal mountain,<sup>19</sup> says the  
LORD.

**66:1** This is what the LORD says:  
“The heavens are my throne  
and the earth is my footstool.  
Where then is the house you will build  
for me?

Where is the place where I will rest?  
**66:2** My hand made them,<sup>20</sup>  
that is how they came to be,<sup>21</sup> says the  
LORD.

I show special favor<sup>22</sup> to the humble and  
contrite,  
who respect what I have to say.<sup>23</sup>  
**66:3** The one who slaughters a bull also  
strikes down a man;<sup>24</sup>  
the one who sacrifices a lamb also breaks  
a dog's neck;<sup>25</sup>

<sup>16</sup> **sn** A similar statement appears in 11:6.

<sup>17</sup> **sn** These words also appear in 11:7.

<sup>18</sup> **sn** Some see an allusion to Gen 3:14 (note “you will eat dirt”). The point would be that even in this new era the snake (often taken as a symbol of Satan) remains under God's curse. However, it is unlikely that such an allusion exists. Even if there is an echo of Gen 3:14, the primary allusion is to 11:8, where snakes are pictured as no longer dangerous. They will no longer attack other living creatures, but will be content to crawl along the ground. (The statement “you will eat dirt” in Gen 3:14 means “you will crawl on the ground.” In the same way the statement “dirt will be its food” in Isa 65:25 means “it will crawl on the ground.”)

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “in all my holy mountain.” These same words appear in 11:9. See the note there.

**sn** As in 11:1-9 the prophet anticipates a time when the categories predator-prey no longer exist. See the note at the end of 11:8.

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all these.” The phrase refers to the heavens and earth, mentioned in the previous verse.

<sup>21</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and all these were.” Some prefer to emend וְהָיוּ (vayyihyu, “and they were”) to וְהָיוּ לִי (v'li hayu, “and to me they were”), i.e., “and they belong to me.”

<sup>22</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and to this one I look” (KJV and NASB both similar).

<sup>23</sup> **tn** *Heb* “to the humble and the lowly in spirit and the one who trembles at my words.”

<sup>24</sup> **tn** *Heb* “one who slaughters a bull, one who strikes down a man.” Some understand a comparison here and in the following lines. In God's sight the one who sacrifices is like (i.e., regarded as) a murderer or one whose worship is ritually defiled or idolatrous. The translation above assumes that the language is not metaphorical, but descriptive of the sinners' hypocritical behavior. (Note the last two lines of the verse, which suggests they are guilty of abominable practices.) On the one hand, they act pious and offer sacrifices, but at the same time they commit violent crimes against men, defile their sacrifices, and worship other gods.

<sup>25</sup> **tn** *Heb* “one who sacrifices a lamb, one who breaks a dog's neck.” Some understand a comparison, but see the previous note.

**sn** The significance of breaking a dog's neck is uncertain, though the structure of the statement when compared to the preceding and following lines suggests the action is viewed in a negative light. According to Exod 13:13 and 34:20, one was to “redeem” a firstborn donkey by offering a lamb; if one did not “redeem” the firstborn donkey in this way, then its neck must be broken. According to Deut 21:1-9 a heifer's neck was

<sup>1</sup> **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “Jerusalem, joy.” The next verse suggests the meaning: The LORD will create Jerusalem to be a source of joy to himself.

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “her people, happiness.” See the preceding note.

<sup>4</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and be happy in my people.”

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and there will not be from there again a nursing infant of days,” i.e., one that lives just a few days.

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “or an old [man] who does not fill out his days.”

<sup>7</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for the child as a son of one hundred years will die.” The point seems to be that those who die at the age of a hundred will be considered children, for the average life span will be much longer than that. The category “child” will be redefined in light of the expanded life spans that will characterize this new era.

<sup>8</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the one who misses.” חָטָא (*khata'*) is used here in its basic sense of “miss the mark.” See HALOT 305 s.v. חָטָא. Another option is to translate, “and the sinner who reaches the age of a hundred will be cursed.”

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they will not build, and another live [in it].”

<sup>10</sup> **tn** *Heb* “they will not plant, and another eat.”

<sup>11</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for like the days of the tree [will be] the days of my people.”

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the work of their hands” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “their hard-won gains.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and they will not give birth to horror.”

<sup>14</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for offspring blessed by the LORD they [will be], and their descendants along with them.”

<sup>15</sup> **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

the one who presents an offering includes pig's blood with it;<sup>1</sup>

the one who offers incense also praises an idol.<sup>2</sup>

They have decided to behave this way,<sup>3</sup> they enjoy these disgusting practices.<sup>4</sup>

**66:4** So I will choose severe punishment<sup>5</sup> for them;

I will bring on them what they dread, because I called, and no one responded, I spoke and they did not listen.

They did evil before me,<sup>6</sup> they chose to do what displeases me.”

**66:5** Hear the word of the LORD, you who respect what he has to say!<sup>7</sup>

Your countrymen,<sup>8</sup> who hate you and exclude you, supposedly for the sake of my name,

say, “May the LORD be glorified, then we will witness your joy.”<sup>9</sup>

But they will be put to shame.

**66:6** The sound of battle comes from the city;

the sound comes from the temple!

It is the sound of the LORD paying back his enemies.

**66:7** Before she goes into labor, she gives birth!

Before her contractions begin, she delivers a boy!

**66:8** Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen this?

Can a country<sup>10</sup> be brought forth in one day?

Can a nation be born in a single moment? Yet as soon as Zion goes into labor she gives birth to sons!

**66:9** “Do I bring a baby to the birth opening and then not deliver it?”

asks the LORD.

“Or do I bring a baby to the point of delivery and then hold it back?”

asks your God.<sup>11</sup>

**66:10** Be happy for Jerusalem and rejoice with her, all you who love her!

Share in her great joy,

all you who have mourned over her!

**66:11** For<sup>12</sup> you will nurse from her satisfying breasts and be nourished;<sup>13</sup>

you will feed with joy from her milk-filled breasts.<sup>14</sup>

**66:12** For this is what the LORD says:

“Look, I am ready to extend to her prosperity that will flow like a river, the riches of nations will flow into her like a stream that floods its banks.<sup>15</sup>

You will nurse from her breast<sup>16</sup> and be carried at her side;

you will play on her knees.

**66:13** As a mother consoles a child,<sup>17</sup>

so I will console you, and you will be consoled over Jerusalem.”

**66:14** When you see this, you will be happy,<sup>18</sup>

and you will be revived.<sup>19</sup>

The LORD will reveal his power to his servants

and his anger to his enemies.<sup>20</sup>

**66:15** For look, the LORD comes with fire, his chariots come like a windstorm,<sup>21</sup>

to reveal his raging anger,

his battle cry, and his flaming arrows.<sup>22</sup>

**66:16** For the LORD judges all humanity<sup>23</sup> with fire and his sword;

the LORD will kill many.<sup>24</sup>

to be broken as part of the atonement ritual to purify the land from the guilt of bloodshed. It is not certain if these passages relate in any way to the action described in Isa 66:3.

**1 tn** Heb “one who offers an offering, pig’s blood.” Some understand a comparison, but see the note at the end of the first line.

**2 tn** Heb “one who offers incense as a memorial offering, one who blesses something false.” Some understand a comparison, but see the note at the end of the first line. אָנִי (‘aven), which has a wide variety of attested nuances, here refers metonymically to an idol. See HALOT 22 s.v. and BDB 20 s.v. 2.

**3 tn** Heb “also they have chosen their ways.”

**4 tn** Heb “their being [or “soul”] takes delight in their disgusting [things].”

**5 tn** The precise meaning of the noun is uncertain. It occurs only here and in 3:4 (but see the note there). It appears to be derived from the verbal root אָלַל (‘alal), which can carry the nuance “deal severely.”

**6 tn** Heb “that which is evil in my eyes.”

**7 tn** Heb “who tremble at his word.”

**8 tn** Heb “brothers” (so NASB, NIV); NRSV “Your own people”; NLT “Your close relatives.”

**9 tn** Or “so that we might witness your joy.” The point of this statement is unclear.

**10 tn** Heb “land,” but here אֶרֶץ (‘eret) stands metonymically for an organized nation (see the following line).

**11 sn** The rhetorical questions expect the answer, “Of course not!”

**12 tn** Or “in order that”; ASV, NRSV “that.”

**13 tn** Heb “you will suck and be satisfied, from her comforting breast.”

**14 tn** Heb “you will slurp and refresh yourselves from her heavy breast.”

**sn** Zion’s residents will benefit from and enjoy her great material prosperity. See v. 12.

**15 tn** Heb “Look, I am ready to extend to her like a river prosperity [or “peace”], and like an overflowing stream, the riches of nations.”

**16 tn** The words “from her breast” are supplied in the translation for clarification (see v. 11).

**17 tn** Heb “like a man whose mother comforts him.”

**18 tn** “and you will see and your heart will be happy.”

**19 tn** Heb “and your bones like grass will sprout.”

**20 tn** Heb “and the hand of the LORD will be made known to his servants, and anger to his enemies.”

**21 sn** Chariots are like a windstorm in their swift movement and in the way that they kick up dust.

**22 tn** Heb “to cause to return with the rage of his anger, and his battle cry [or “rebuke”] with flames of fire.”

**23 tn** Heb “flesh” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV); NIV “upon all men”; TEV “all the people of the world.”

**24 tn** Heb “many are the slain of the LORD.”

**66:17** “As for those who consecrate and ritually purify themselves so they can follow their leader and worship in the sacred orchards,<sup>1</sup> those who eat the flesh of pigs and other disgusting creatures, like mice<sup>2</sup> – they will all be destroyed together,”<sup>3</sup> says the LORD. **66:18** “I hate their deeds and thoughts! So I am coming<sup>4</sup> to gather all the nations and ethnic groups;<sup>5</sup> they will come and witness my splendor. **66:19** I will perform a mighty act among them<sup>6</sup> and then send some of those who remain to the nations – to Tarshish, Pul,<sup>7</sup> Lud<sup>8</sup> (known for its archers<sup>9</sup>), Tubal, Javan,<sup>10</sup> and to the distant coastlands<sup>11</sup> that have not heard about me or seen my splendor. They will tell the nations of my splendor. **66:20** They will bring back all your countrymen<sup>12</sup> from all the nations as an offering to the LORD. They will bring them<sup>13</sup> on horses, in

chariots, in wagons, on mules, and on camels<sup>14</sup> to my holy hill Jerusalem,” says the LORD, “just as the Israelites bring offerings to the LORD’s temple in ritually pure containers. **66:21** And I will choose some of them as priests and Levites,” says the LORD. **66:22** “For just as the new heavens and the new earth I am about to make will remain standing before me,” says the LORD, “so your descendants and your name will remain. **66:23** From one month<sup>15</sup> to the next and from one Sabbath to the next, all people<sup>16</sup> will come to worship me,”<sup>17</sup> says the LORD. **66:24** “They will go out and observe the corpses of those who rebelled against me, for the maggots that eat them will not die,<sup>18</sup> and the fire that consumes them will not die out.<sup>19</sup> All people will find the sight abhorrent.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **tn** *Heb* “the ones who consecrate themselves and the ones who purify themselves toward the orchards [or “gardens”] after the one in the midst.” The precise meaning of the statement is unclear, though it is obvious that some form of idolatry is in view.

<sup>2</sup> **tn** *Heb* “ones who eat the flesh of the pig and the disgusting thing and the mouse.”

<sup>3</sup> **tn** *Heb* “together they will come to an end.”

<sup>4</sup> **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally “and I, their deeds and their thoughts, am coming.” The syntax here is very problematic, suggesting that the text may have suffered corruption. Some suggest that the words “their deeds and their thoughts” have been displaced from v. 17. This line presents two primary challenges. In the first place, the personal pronoun “I” has no verb after it. Most translations insert “know” for the sake of clarity (NASB, NRSV, NLT, ESV). The NIV has “I, because of their actions and their imaginations...” Since God’s “knowledge” of Israel’s sin occasions judgment, the verb “hate” is an option as well (see above translation). The feminine form of the next verb (בָּאֵהָ, *ba’ah*) could be understood in one of two ways. One could provide an implied noun “time” (עֵת, *et*) and render the next line “the time is coming/has come” (NASB, ESV). One could also emend the feminine verb to the masculine בָּא (ba’) and have the “I” at the beginning of the line govern this verb as well (for the LORD is speaking here): “I am coming” (cf. NIV, NCV, NRSV, TEV, NLT).

<sup>5</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and the tongues”; KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV “and tongues.”

<sup>6</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and I will set a sign among them.” The precise meaning of this statement is unclear. Elsewhere “to set a sign” means “perform a mighty act” (Ps 78:43; Jer 32:20), “make [someone] an object lesson” (Ezek 14:8), and “erect a [literal] standard” (Ps 74:4).

<sup>7</sup> **tn** Some prefer to read “Put” (i.e., Libya).

<sup>8</sup> **sn** That is, Lydia (in Asia Minor).

<sup>9</sup> **tn** *Heb* “drawers of the bow” (KJV and ASV both similar).

<sup>10</sup> **sn** *Javan* is generally identified today as Greece (so NIV, NCV, NLT).

<sup>11</sup> **tn** Or “islands” (NIV).

<sup>12</sup> **tn** *Heb* “brothers” (so NIV); NCV “fellow Israelites.”

<sup>13</sup> **tn** The words “they will bring them” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

<sup>14</sup> **tn** The precise meaning of this word is uncertain. Some suggest it refers to “chariots.” See HALOT 498 s.v. \*בְּרִיכָהּ.

<sup>15</sup> **tn** *Heb* “new moon.” The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

<sup>16</sup> **tn** *Heb* “all flesh” (so KJV, ASV, NRSV); NAB, NASB, NIV “all mankind”; NLT “All humanity.”

<sup>17</sup> **tn** Or “bow down before” (NASB).

<sup>18</sup> **tn** *Heb* “for their worm will not die.”

<sup>19</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and their fire will not be extinguished.”

<sup>20</sup> **tn** *Heb* “and they will be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

**sn** This verse depicts a huge mass burial site where the seemingly endless pile of maggot-infested corpses are being burned.