

## LESSON FIVE

[This lesson covers chapters nine, ten, eleven, and twelve]

### CHAPTERS NINE and TEN

Transition Thought: Isaiah had to honestly foretell the gloom and anguish ahead. Now in these four chapters he can tell the good news.

#### 9, vv. 1-7 THE PROMISE OF LIGHT FROM GALILEE

v. 1

Question: What is the name given here for the land beyond the Jordan? \_\_\_\_\_.

Another name for this area was the land of Zebulun and Naphtali. They were two of the northern Hebrew tribes. Zebulun's territory included the town of Nazareth, while Naphtali's territory was along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Therefore their land was also called Galilee.

Zebulun and Naphtali symbolize the suffering that took place when the Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser invaded in 733 B. C. and took many citizens into captivity. He then resettled other non-Hebrew people in their place, so the area was also called Galilee of the Gentiles ("gentiles" means non-Jews).

The Hebrews of Judea tended to despise the Galileans because of their different ways and their dialects. Yet the Prophet announces that Galilee will soon become a symbol of hope. Its people enjoyed prosperity because many caravan routes passed through their territory, and they had contact with Greek and Roman cultures. Yet the main reason for being a place of hope was the fact that here is where Jesus the Light would live and work. And his first disciples came from there! He found a spiritual openness and readiness among the people of Galilee that he did not always meet in Jerusalem.

[Read the Appendix, Note A]

vv. 2-7

Question: There are two reasons for this great outburst of joy. What are they?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (see vv. 4-5)

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ (see vv. 6-7)

Note: The "day of Midian" refers to the time when a Hebrew judge named Gideon defeated the Medianites, a Bedouin people who lived near the Gulf of Aqaba. The

Prophet foresees that now an even greater event like that will take place, an event with great spiritual implications.

vv. 6-7: In these famous verses the Prophet speaks of a wonderful child who will grow up and establish God's kingdom of love.

Question: What are the five names he will have? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 7: "Throne of David" refers to the fact that the Child would be a descendant of David and a royal king. For this reason the name "Messiah" or "anointed one" was given to him in later times.

Question: What two special qualities would this royal Saviour have? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

[Please read the Appendix, Note B.]

Ch. 9, v. 8 to Ch. 10, v. 19 HUMAN ARROGANCE AND OPPRESSION WILL BE JUDGED  
and Ch. 10, vv. 28-34 NO MATTER WHO IT IS

vv. 8-21: AGAINST THE HEBREWS

Despite the fact that they were God's chosen people and had received many blessings, they had become proud and had started to oppress others. God was not pleased, for to whom much is given much is required.

vv. 8-9

Question: What are the four names in these verses that refer to the Hebrews? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 9

Question: What sin is attacked? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 18-21

Question: What is the usual word for anger? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the strongest possible word? \_\_\_\_\_.

God really hates wickedness, and his wrath is very powerful.

v. 21: Manasseh and Ephraim were the names of two northern Hebrew tribes. They were named after two members of Jacob's family.

Question: Do you agree that family disputes are the worst \_\_\_\_\_.

Ch. 10, vv. 1-4: When corruption becomes common in a society, it frequently finds a home in the legal system.

Question: What are four charges that are laid against the unjust lawmakers who have taken control? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 5-19 and 28-34:           AGAINST THE ASSYRIANS

There is no difference for non-Hebrews. When they become proud and oppressive, they will be punished. It is true that they have not received God's revelations in the same way as the Hebrews, but they are under God and should be ruled by their God-given conscience.

Even in war there must be restraint. The Geneva Conventions regarding military behaviour saved many lives in World Wars I and II. But Assyria is like a terrorist, practicing mindless violence and destruction. Carchemish and Calno were centres on the Euphrates River; Hamath was on the Orontes River; and Arpad was in northwest Syria. The Assyrians had captured them. They now thought that they could do anything and were often very brutal in their approach.

Question: Can you name two modern war machines that were known for their great cruelty and were overcome? \_\_\_\_\_ and, \_\_\_\_\_.

There is a saying: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked."

vv. 5-6: If Assyria had come in to take over Judea in the normal way of most conquerors who want power, territory and wealth, God could have used that evil to teach a lesson.

v. 7

Question: But what is the Assyrian intention? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 8-14: Not only is the Assyrian intention totally destructive, he has also become very proud and thinks he is all powerful like God. He has gone too far.

vv. 15-16

Question: What two evils will God let fall upon the Assyrian warriors? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

That is exactly what happened 32 years later. We will read about it in chapter 35.

Next read verses 28-34 which continue the Assyrian saga:

vv. 28-32: These villages are on the northern side of Jerusalem. Assyria captures them and advances on the walls of Jerusalem.

vv. 20-27      A REMNANT, THOSE FAITHFUL TO GOD, WILL BE SAVED

This promise is coming again and again to the loyal and obedient members of the children of Israel. The name-sign of Shearyashub will be fulfilled.

v. 21: What is the meaning of that name? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 20-23

Question: God is described in three ways in these verses. Name these attributes:

(1) see v. 20 \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) see v. 21 \_\_\_\_\_.

(3) see v. 23 \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 27

Question: What will the Lord do with the burden of His people? \_\_\_\_\_.

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Chapters eleven and twelve tell us how God will lift our burdens. Chapter eleven informs us that the Saviour is coming. Chapter twelve tells us about the salvation he brings. That is much greater than dealing with the problem of an invader. To prepare for these two chapters read again The Introduction, Section J, on the three types of salvation that Isaiah proclaims.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

Many Hebrews believed that the promised Saviour would be a great political hero who would deliver the people from oppression. That idea later became one of the meanings of the word Messiah. Isaiah does not use that term. The only prophet in the Old Testament who does so is Daniel, who uses it twice. The Prophet Isaiah prefers the word Saviour and uses it in its highest, deepest and widest dimension. God Himself, he announces (43:3), is the Saviour. At the same time God sends a Saviour (19:20). The bridge between these two ideas is the word Immanuel -- God Himself is with us, and He will personally save the whole world.

### vv. 1-9: THE SAVIOUR AND HIS PEACEFUL KINGDOM IS COMING

David, a shepherd boy, was chosen to be the second king of the Hebrews about 300 years before the time of Isaiah. According to God's promise it was from his descendants that the royal Saviour would be born.

v. 1

Question: What was the name of David's father, the "stump"? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 2

Question: The Saviour-King will be filled with the divine Spirit and will have a wonderful character. What are the six qualities he will possess? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 3-5

Question: With what virtues will he judge his people? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Question: What will be the key factor that inspires this non-violent kingdom? \_\_\_\_\_.

Question: Neither hurting nor destroying belong to the character of God. What is the most important thing we must know about God? \_\_\_\_\_.

### vv. 10-16: ALL NATIONS AND PEOPLES ARE INVOLVED IN THIS GLORIOUS FUTURE

v. 10

Question: Who will be the person referred to as "the root of Jesse"? \_\_\_\_\_.  
The flag of God's Saviour-King will attract supporters from all nations who seek God's way (bhakti marg) and true religion (din). This is a universal spiritual vision, not a political idea. People from all ethnic groups, non-Hebrews and Hebrews, will be drawn together from the ends of the earth, from Malabar to Iceland, in God's kingdom of peace.

[Please read the Appendix, Note C]

vv. 11-12

Question: Along with His plan for the world's salvation what will God do for the dispersed Hebrews? \_\_\_\_\_.

Pathros is in upper Egypt; Cush is in Ethiopia; Elam is in southwestern Iran; Shinar is southern Iraq; Hamath is northwestern Syria; the islands are in the Mediterranean Sea.

v. 13

Question: What will God do for the broken relations between the two southern Hebrew tribes in Judea and the ten northern Hebrew tribes in Ephraim? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 14-16: As their forefathers were saved when they passed safely through the Red Sea, so some of the faithful people will safely cross the Euphrates River.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### vv. 1-6 THE BLESSINGS THAT THE SAVIOUR BRINGS

v. 1 Question: What is the blessing? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 2 Question: What is the blessing? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 3 Question: What is the blessing? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 4 Question: Those who have been saved by the Lord have two duties. What are they?  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 5-6: It is only fully possible to fully glorify God when a person can say "God has saved me!"

Question: Do these two verses show us that anyone who has faith can say those words?  
\_\_\_\_\_.

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## APPENDIX

### **Isaiah in the New Testament**

#### Note A

Isaiah 9, 1: The New Testament reference is Matthew 4, 12-16. It regards the prophecy of Isaiah as fulfilled in the life of Jesus. St. Matthew reports that when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. "He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what has been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled." Then Isaiah 9, 1 is quoted in full.

#### Note B

Isaiah 9, 6-7: The New Testament reference is Luke 1, 26-33. The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he said to her, "... You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David ... and of his kingdom there will be no end." After Jesus grew up he counseled people, did mighty works, revealed God's love, and gave peace to the troubled.

#### Note C

Isaiah 11, 10: The New Testament reference is Romans 15, 12-13, and 33. One of Jesus' most famous disciples was St. Paul. In his letter to the Romans in the New Testament St. Paul writes: "Isaiah says: 'The root of Jesse shall come, he who rises to rule the Gentiles: in him shall the Gentiles hope.' May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. ... The God of peace be with you all."

## LESSON SIX

[This lesson includes Chapters 13-23, plus 34, as one unit, and Chapters 24-25 as a second unit, and Chapters 26-27 as the third unit.]

### CHAPTERS 13-23, plus 34

#### PROPHECIES RELATED TO VARIOUS NATIONS

These prophecies are mainly words of judgment, interspersed by some words of hope. Eleven nations are involved, in addition to Judea itself. They include Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Syria, Northern Israel, Ethiopia, Arabia, Tyre and Sidon, and Edom. We will not take them up in detail, although you may read them if you wish. They are very serious predictions of doom.

The section begins with some simple statements that should cause any sinner to tremble (13, vv. 6, 9, 11):

"The day of the Lord is near ..."

"To make the earth a desolation and to destroy sinners from it;"

"I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity."

Question: What should our attitude be when we consider these verses? \_\_\_\_\_.

#### A. JUDGMENTS ON SPECIFIC NATIONS

-- "And Babylon ... will be like Sodom and Gomorrah" (13:19):

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon" (21:9).

-- "I will break the Assyrian in my land" (14:25).

-- "Wail, O gate, cry O city, melt in fear, O Philistia, all of you!" (14:31).

-- "Moab is undone ..." (15:11); "Joy and gladness are taken away" (16:10).

-- "Damascus will cease to be a city" (17:1).

-- "The fortress will disappear from Ephraim ... For you have forgotten the God of your salvation" (17:3, 10).

-- "Ethiopia ... he will cut off with pruning hooks" (18:1, 5).

-- "The idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence, and the hearts of the Egyptians will melt within them." (19:1)

- "All the glory of Kedar [Arabia] will come to an end" (21:16).
- [Of Jerusalem] "In that day the Lord God of hosts called to weeping and mourning" (22:12).
- [Of Tyre and Sidon] "... Wail, O inhabitants of the coast! ... this is a harbor no more" (23:6, 11).
- "The streams of Edom shall be turned into pitch ... They shall name it: No Kingdom There!" (34:9, 12).

Question: What can we learn from these words about the problem of evil? \_\_\_\_\_.

### B. WORDS OF CONSOLATION

There is light in the darkness. The Prophet proclaims some words of hope to both Judea and to the other nations whose sins have been condemned.

(1) To Judea: "But the Lord will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land; and aliens will join them .... " (14:1).

"Look away from Me and let me weep bitter tears; do not try to comfort me for the destruction of my beloved people" (22:4).

"When the oppressor is no more, and destruction has ceased ... then a throne shall be established in steadfast love in the tent of David ..." (16:5).

Question: What does the second verse above (22:4) reveal to us about the Lord's basic attitude toward His suffering people? \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) To Egypt and Assyria:

"On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptian will worship with the Assyrians. On that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage" (19:23-24).

Question: What great lesson can we learn from this remarkable passage? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: Surprisingly these judgments chapters tell us something about Isaiah himself:

- First, even though he had none of our modern technology, yet Isaiah had excellent knowledge about various countries and their cultures.
- Second, Isaiah understood how broad a prophet's duties are: to foretell the future, to warn people, to predict punishment, and to offer hope.

- Third, Isaiah was ready to try anything to get his message across. He had prophesied that the Assyrians would defeat the Egyptian and Ethiopian armies, and compel their captives to march naked and barefoot. So Isaiah acted out the prophesy himself; he walked barefoot and without clothing through the streets of Jerusalem to make clear what would happen! (20:3).

## CHAPTERS 24 and 25

### CHAPTER 24: UNIVERSAL JUDGEMENT

The judgment of specific nations is now extended to the whole world. Since no one is sinless, no individuals or societies anywhere are exempt from the Almighty's judgment. The punishments will include a confusion in society, famine, and general destruction.

vv. 1 and 3

Question: What natural forces could make the earth desolate? Give two examples.  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 2

Question: Will anyone be able to evade these disasters? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 4

Question: Have you ever experienced a failure of the monsoon? \_\_\_\_\_.  
What effect does it have on people? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 5-6

Question: Why will this earth-scorching take place? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 7-9

Question: What is its effect? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 10-13: Not only is rural life affected, but also urban life. If the rice crops fails in Kuttanad, Kottayam suffers.

Question: What name will the cities receive? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 14-16: This cry echoes the memory of good days when people from the ends of the earth were singing praise to God the Righteous One. But the Prophet does not have the heart to join in. He looks ahead and sees terrible things.

Question: What does the prophet say? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 17-23: The Prophet uses great descriptive power to bring home the terrors of the Universal Judgment that will end in a Day of Wrath. Words cannot describe it adequately. In modern times we have one illustration from the two atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in 1945. The cities were destroyed and 120,000 people were killed. The Prophet in effect says that even the sun and moon will cover their eyes!

#### CHAPTER 25: WORLD-WIDE SALVATION

Yet there is hope!! It is a miracle! God steps in to overcome the world's evil! As a symbol of that world-wide salvation He first delivers Judea.

vv. 1-5: The spirit of ruthlessness in the world will be overcome. That is great good news for our world today.

Question: What does God have in His mind that should give us hope? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 6-8: God's salvation is pictured as a feast to celebrate the deliverance of mankind. It will take place on the mountain of Jerusalem.

Question: What will God take away, in verse seven? \_\_\_\_\_.

We must understand that the veil over humanity is death. God will take away humanity's greatest enemy.

[Please read the Appendix, Note A.]

v. 8

Question: God will take away two more things. What are they? \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 9: The people who are at the banquet of salvation will say some beautiful words in thanksgiving. What are those words? Write them out \_\_\_\_\_.

#### CHAPTERS 26 and 27

#### CHAPTER 26, 1-19 THE RESCUE OF JUDEA

God's salvation plan begins with the rescue of Judea (=Judah). From there it will go out to encompass everyone. The rescue calls forth a song of victory.

vv. 1-6 **The Song of Victory**

v. 2

Question: Who is eligible to walk through salvation's open gates? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: Faith in God 's salvation is the power of righteousness. Faith is not simply saying that God exists. Faith is trusting God the Saviour who forgives our sins, and then doing His will.

v. 3

Question: What does trusting God bring us? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Many people memorize this verse because it is so beautiful and comforting.

v. 4: God is an everlasting Rock. We can depend on Him.

### vv. 7-15 THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

v. 7: God's salvation puts us on the path of the righteous. There are four characteristics of this path.

vv. 7-15

Question: What are the four characteristics?

- (1) see v. 8 \_\_\_\_\_.
- (2) see v. 9 \_\_\_\_\_.
- (3) see v. 12 \_\_\_\_\_.
- (4) see v. 15 \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 16-19: These verses sum up the rescue and the song of victory. It is what is called a flashback, that is, a recall of memory. It remembers how the people prayed for rescue (v. 15), how they suffered like a woman in childbirth (vv. 15-18); but God brought light, and now they can sing for joy (v. 19).

### 26:20 to CHAPTER 27:13 THE CULMINATION OF SALVATION AT THE WORLD'S END

v. 19: Look at verse 19 again. It introduces the theme of resurrection. The story of God's rescue comes to a conclusion in a final redemption.

vv. 20-21

Question: The Prophet warns the faithful people to hide. Why? \_\_\_\_\_.

Ch. 27, v. 1: Leviathan was the name of an ancient monster that looked like a dragon. It symbolized Evil. God will slay the dragon. While Evil and its leader Satan terrorize humanity, God is stronger than the Evil One.

This is picture language to illustrate the cosmic struggle that ends in God's victory.

## CHAPTER 27, 2-13 THE ROAD HOME FOR GOD'S REDEEMED PEOPLE

Judea and the chosen people were included among the nations whom the Prophet condemned (see Ch. 22). They too had sinned grievously. Now Isaiah shows them the road back to God's house. As they travel this road there are five things the faithful Hebrews must do.

Judea and the children of Israel represent all of God's faithful children in the world who have been sinners, who have been rescued by God's salvation, and who now are returning home. They too are called to do five things.

vv. 2-3: The first thing is to remember with thanks that God is a gracious God Who receives us back.

Question: Who restores the vineyard, keeps it, waters it and guards it? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 5: The second thing is to make peace with God.

Question: How does a sinner do that? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 5: The third thing is to lay hold of God's protection.

Question: In your opinion what is one method for doing that? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 6: The fourth thing is to produce good fruits.

Question: What are three examples of good fruits? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 9: The fifth thing that God requests is to put away false gods. Anything that we venerate more than the Almighty is a false god.

Note: Asherah was a Canaanite goddess associated with sex and war. She was sometimes regarded as the wife of a male god named Baal. Asherah was worshipped in groves of trees with forms of ritual prostitution.

vv. 12-13: The road back leads to God's holy mountain in Jerusalem. That is a symbol of heaven. This picture of the worship of God by His faithful people brings these chapters to a dramatic conclusion.

APPENDIX**Isaiah in the New Testament**Note A

Isaiah 25, 8: The New Testament reference is 1 Corinthians 15, 54-56. St. Paul writes: "When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Note B

Isaiah 27, 13: The New Testament reference is Matthew 24, 29-31. There it is written: "Immediately after the suffering of those days ... they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

## LESSON SEVEN

[This lesson includes chapters 28, 29, 30, 31.]

### THE LACK OF MORAL STEADINESS

Transition Thought: The last chapter showed that God's promises are unwavering as well as gracious. Mankind's behavior, on the other hand, is very unsteady.

Moral unsteadiness affects whole nations, religious communities and individual persons.

(1) Whole nations: No matter how much education a modern country has, there is still corruption and moral instability.

Question: Why is that? \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) Religious communities. God gave the Hebrews many revelations and great blessings but they were very unsteady. As we shall see again in these chapters Ephraim and Judea rebelled against God again and again.

Question: Why do you think this happened? \_\_\_\_\_.

(3) Individual persons. There was a great thinker (St. Paul) who once said, "I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do."

Question: Why are we like that? \_\_\_\_\_.

We have to squarely face the problem of evil and its power. We are fortunate that the Prophet Isaiah does this, and also gives answers as to how this fundamental problem may be overcome. In these four chapters he prophesies about several moral issues.

### CHAPTER 28

#### vv. 1-13      WOE TO EPHRAIM AND JUDEA

The behaviour of the people in Northern Israel has become unbelievably gross (vv. 1-6).

v. 1

Question: What is the chief sin that is criticized? \_\_\_\_\_.

Question: What harm does drunkenness do? \_\_\_\_\_.

Question: Is this a problem in our society also? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 2-3: The people do not seem to realize that Assyria, their punishment, is on the way, like

a hurricane.

v. 5

Question: Who will be like a beautiful garland for those who remain faithful? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 6

Question: What great virtue will God give as a blessing to those who are faithful?  
\_\_\_\_\_.

The same set of problems seem to be affecting society in Judea (vv. 7-13).

vv. 7-8

Question: People whom you would never expect to be involved are becoming subject to the evil of intoxication. Who are they? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 9: No one is left to receive God's direction except little children.

v. 11: For that reason God will speak through foreigners; that is, He will bring judgment through the Assyrians.

v. 12

Question: This is very distressing to God who had given His people a great promise. What is the promise? \_\_\_\_\_.

Please read the Appendix, Note A.

vv. 10 and 13: These two verses are somewhat mysterious. They may be a colloquial expression that the local people understood. It may mean that the Prophet has to give them abcs about moral behaviour once again, so that they can understand.

#### vv. 14-22                    GOD ANNOUNCES JUDGMENT AND HOPE

The corruption will be judged, but God regularly gives people another chance. God will replace the immoral scoffers who control Hebrew society.

v. 15

Question: With whom had the leaders made a covenant? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: There was a Canaanite deity named Mot, which means Death. Sheol means hell.

v.16: God 's decision was revolutionary! He decided to replace the whole religious establishment. He would rebuild it, starting with a new cornerstone. This prophecy pointed to the Saviour who was coming to bring salvation and new life.

Question: What words would be carved on the new foundation stone? \_\_\_\_\_.

Please read the Appendix, Note B.

v.17

Question: Like a carpenter with a plumb and line He will measure humanity with two principles. What are they? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 18-20: Those who do not build their lives on these cornerstone principles will experience the winds of God ' s wrath.

Note: Perazim and Gibeon are sites very near to Jerusalem.

v. 21

Question: What is the reason why punishment is God's strange or alien or surprising work?  
\_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 23-29: This passage compares God's work to that of a wise farmer. The farmer works on the basis of practical experience. So also God understands how to deal with human beings.

## CHAPTER 29

This chapter probes into the special sins of religious people. These are the problems of rote religion and hypocrisy. The Hebrews in Judea were especially subject to these sins. They wear a mask. They are not so obvious as immorality. However, they provoke God very much because they turn true religion into a sham.

vv. 1-3: The word "Ariel" means a burning altar. It is another name for Jerusalem. The whole city burns with difficulties because enemies have come to besiege it. But why have they been allowed to come? Two of the reasons are formalistic and insincere religion.

v. 4

Question: What is the spiritual symbolism of ashes and dust? \_\_\_\_\_.

In penitential grief humble people will whisper to God, "Oh, we are sorry."

vv. 9-16 THE SIN OF MAKING RELIGION MEANINGLESS

vv. 9-12: Although the prophesies have been written down, God's Word has become like a closed book. No one was reading it to understand its moral purpose. Instead sacred verses were repeated in a parrot-like way, only to hear the sound.

Question: Have you seen any samples of rote religion like this? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: In western Europe in the 1400s the Bible was treated this way. It was in a language that the people could not understand. Sometimes it was even locked with a chain. A famous man named Martin Luther declared courageously that the divine word must be freed and read with understanding because it is intended for that and because it is mankind's only hope. Although he suffered greatly he was successful, and the Word of God brought new life to society and restored hope to sinners.

v. 13

Question: According to this verse what do the people do? \_\_\_\_\_.

We can say that the brother of rote religion is hypocrisy. In Judea religious rituals were being done for their name's sake. Religion was a lip service, while in private people did what they wished. Publicly they pretended to be pious, but in their hearts they were far from God.

Question: Have you seen similar examples of religious hypocrisy around you? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 16

Question: Do you think that the clay can fool the Potter? \_\_\_\_\_. Who is the clay and Who is the Potter? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: Perhaps we can say that the dangers of rote behavior and hypocrisy threaten every religious person; we must all pray for God's Spirit to give us a true disposition of genuine piety.

vv. 17-24: GOD WILL BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO HIS PEOPLE

vv. 17-21

Question: What are five characteristics that will mark the people of God, like a fruitful field? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 23: When God's restoration comes, Abraham's descendants will receive the divine blessing as he did. God's Spirit will give them the attitude of true religion.

Question: What are the two essential factors in that attitude? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 24

Question: What essential blessing will they receive from the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_.

### CHAPTERS 30 AND 31

Note to student: First read Chapter 30, 1-7; then Chapter 31; then return to Chapter 30 and read the verses 8-23.

#### 30:1-7 DO NOT PUT POLITICS AHEAD OF GOD

The people in our state are very interested in politics. That is natural in a democratic society, and it is good. But because politics are so common, people sometimes think that they are the answer to all problems.

Question: Do you think politics provide the answers to all problems? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 1

Question: Why does the Prophet criticize the people of Judea for seeking an alliance with Egypt? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 3-5: The word Pharaoh means king. Zoan and Hanes were cities in Egypt. Egypt was actually far less powerful than Assyria at this time. Even politically this was a foolish thing for the Hebrews to do.

vv. 6-7: To avoid Philistia on the coast the Hebrew emissaries travelled inland through the Negev wilderness to get to Egypt. It was full of wild animals. Rahab was a legendary monster.

Question: Even though they carried bribes with them, why was this hazardous journey useless? \_\_\_\_\_.

NOW TURN TO CHAPTER 31

#### Ch. 31, 1-9 THE FOLLY OF TRUSTING HUMANS INSTEAD OF GOD

vv. 1-3

Question: Whom should people trust most of all? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 6

Question: What should the people of Judea do? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 5, and 8-9

Question: What will God do for Jerusalem and Judea? \_\_\_\_\_.

NOW TURN BACK TO CH. 30; CONTINUE FROM VERSE EIGHT.

v.8

Question: What did God command the Prophet Isaiah? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: In 1947 a shepherd found some ancient scrolls in a small cave at Qumran, on a hillside above the Dead Sea. When they were examined scholars were surprised to see that they included the Book of the Prophet Isaiah! The date of the scrolls was at least 100 B. C. So Isaiah did keep God's command to write the prophecies. In this way God's Word was protected. The scrolls are now kept in a Museum in Jerusalem and may be seen there.

v. 9

Question: What is the charge laid against the people? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 10-11

Question: What do the people want Isaiah to prophesy? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 12-14: That terrible request showed the condition of their hearts. These verses may be summed up in one word: Crash! Everything is breaking because the people despised their Creator.

Question: What attitude does God want the people to have? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 18

Question: What is God's attitude toward us? Your answer requires three different words: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 19-26: The verse tells us that if we serve God, God will also shower blessings on us, as in a Golden Age.

Question: What will be three marks of this wonderful time? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 29

Question: There is a very special gift that God will give you. What is it? \_\_\_\_\_.

We often experience heavy problems in our life. They seem to be insoluble. Many days seem like a deep darkness. However, when we hold on to the assurance that God is with us, it enables us to sing songs in the night.

vv. 30-33: Great empires rise and fall. For example in China the Ming Dynasty lasted 265 years and the Manchu Dynasty 275 years. In India the Portuguese Empire collapsed after a century, the Mughul Empire declined after 200 years, and the British Empire concluded after 200 years. Assyria's power had a similar life span. It also declined after 200 years and was replaced by Babylon, which captured Nineveh in 614 B.C. The prophecy of Isaiah declared that God's will was involved in the Assyrian downfall, as was demonstrated at the walls of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, God's mercy reached out even to the Assyrian people. The Old Testament reports that God sent another prophet named Jonah (Yunus nabi) to Nineveh to tell them about God the Saviour, and many there believed.

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## APPENDIX

### **Isaiah in the New Testament**

#### Note A

Isaiah 28, 12: The New Testament reference is Matthew 11, 22-30. Early in his ministry Jesus the Saviour gave this invitation to the suffering: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

#### Note B

Isaiah 28, 16: The New Testament reference is 1 Peter 2, 4, where it is written: "Come to him to that living stone, rejected by men, but in God's sight chosen and precious, and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house."

#### Note C

Isaiah 29, 18-19: The New Testament reference is Matthew 11, 5. At Jesus' time it was accepted that such miracles as Isaiah foretells would be the mark of the expected Messiah. When John the Baptist (Yahya nabi) inquired whether He was the Expected One, Jesus replied: "Go tell John what you hear and see. The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have good news preached to them."

## LESSON EIGHT

[This Lesson includes Chapters 36-39, plus Chapters 32, 33 and 35, in that order.]

### CHAPTERS 36, 37, 38, AND 39

#### Introduction:

We are studying these chapters next because they complete the story of Assyria and its siege of Jerusalem. They should be read like a story. They tell of the good king Hezekiah, who faces the mighty conqueror, like David meeting Goliath. We can learn from history, and that is why this saga is included in Isaiah's prophecy. Isaiah lived through it all. The time is 701 B.C. The place is Jerusalem and the surrounding area. The Assyrian army has come near to the walls of the city.

Question: Read the last two verses of Chapter 31 once again. What do they tell you?

\_\_\_\_\_.  
Sennacherib's army will be defeated without a battle. This is truly a story with a surprise ending!

### CHAPTERS 36 AND 37

#### The Siege of Jerusalem and Assyria's Withdrawal

Ch. 36, vv. 1-3: Sennacherib negotiates with Hezekiah. He sends his chief officer (=rabshakeh) from Lachish, 40 km. from Jerusalem.

Question: Who are the three negotiators for Hezekiah? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 4-10

Question: What does the Assyrian officer say to the Hebrews? Summarize.

\_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 11-12: The Assyrian Officer had been speaking in Hebrew, the language of the people. Hezekiah's delegates asked him to speak in Aramaic, the diplomatic language. This is almost like the difference between Malayalam and English.

Question: Why did the Assyrian Officer speak in Hebrew? \_\_\_\_\_.

Question: Why did Hezekiah's representatives want him to speak in Aramaic? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 13-20

Question: The Assyrian Officer keeps talking. What does he say? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 19: Hamath and Arpad are in northwestern Syria; Sennacherib had defeated them. Sepharvaim is near Hamath. Settlers from there were brought into Northern Israel when the Assyrians took the people of Samaria into captivity.

Question: The Assyrian Officer makes a fatal mistake. What is it? \_\_\_\_\_.

Ch. 37, vv. 1-4

Question: In the face of this attack what does King Hezekiah do? Two very important things \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

The king's repentance and turning to God is a good example for us.

vv. 5-7

Question: What answer does the Prophet Isaiah send back to the king? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 8-13: While this was going on, the Assyrian general Sennacherib had gone from Lachish to Libnah, about 16 km. away. The reason was to prepare against a possible southern attack from Ethiopia (Cush). The Ethiopian, Tirhakah, had become the king of Egypt. Jerusalem was caught between two great powers. Sennacherib now sent another communication to King Hezekiah, demanding that he surrender quickly. Hezekiah decided to pray directly to God and appeal for rescue.

vv. 14-20: Carefully read the king's prayer.

Question: When you are in trouble, which of the words of Hezekiah can you use in your prayer for help? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 21-35: The Lord answered the prayer through His prophet, Isaiah.

Question: Summarize the answer given in each of the following verses:

(1) vv. 31-32 \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) vv. 33-34 \_\_\_\_\_.

God's prophets repeatedly remind us that He has promised to answer prayer. Sometimes we are busy and forget to do so. Hence, "The Lord's Prayer" was given to us in the New Testament as a simple prayer that we can use regularly.

Please read the Appendix, Note A.

v. 36: A mysterious plague then fell on the camp of the Assyrians and the army fled. Twenty years later the Emperor Sennacherib was killed by his own sons. Sixty years later the Chaldeans and Medes, who were nomads from southern Iraq, captured Nineveh and the great Assyrian Empire fell. "How are the mighty fallen!"

## CHAPTER 38

### HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY

#### vv. 1-8      GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

God answered the King's prayer when his city was under attack. But God does not only help in times of national crisis; He also helps individuals.

v. 1: King Hezekiah became seriously sick. He had some kind of advanced ulcer. Isaiah, as a doctor must sometimes do, had to tell his patient that he could not survive.

Question: What should a person do when told that he or she has an incurable disease?

\_\_\_\_\_.

v. 2: With tears Hezekiah prayed to God for healing. He believed that the Lord would listen to his prayer and respond.

vv. 4-5

Question: What was the answer that God gave through the Prophet? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 6

Question: God graciously added another promise. What was it? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 7-8

Question: Finally the Almighty even gave the king a physical sign to prove that the things He promised would happen. What was the sign? \_\_\_\_\_.

Question: In your opinion, does God still perform miracles? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: In the New Testament of the Bible Jesus the Saviour and Healer performed many such miracles. Today God works through doctors and medicines, but like Hezekiah we too must ask God for His help.

Someone has said: "Life is walking through a sea of miracles."

#### vv. 9-20      HEZEKIAH'S SONG OF THANKSGIVING

vv. 10, 13

Question: Do you think that this is a good description of how a very sick person feels?

\_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 14-16: Even though he is in total despair, Hezekiah still does the right thing -- he appeals to God.

v. 14

Question: Write the words that come after "O Lord" [ ཨོ ལོ ལོ ལྷ ] \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 16

Question: Also write the words that come after "Oh" [ ཨོ ཨྲ རྩྱ ] \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 17

Question: Hezekiah says that he learned something from his near-death experience. What was it? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 19

Question: What truth will Hezekiah make known to his children? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 20: This beautiful conclusion to the king's song of gratitude would make a nice wall hanging, reminding us of the power of prayer.

## CHAPTER 39

### vv. 1-8 HEZEKIAH AND BABYLON

Hezekiah had one weakness. He thought he could make clever alliances with great powers. He tried with Egypt and failed. Now Babylon comes into the picture. The ruler of Babylon is pretending to be sympathetic to King Hezekiah after his sickness. The story of Hezekiah ends with this supplement.

The rise of Babylon was led by two tribes in the area of central and southern Iraq, the Chaldeans and the Medes. They came together and gradually increased their power. The great city of Babylon was established on a strip of land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, not far from where Baghdad is situated today. As Assyria fell back, Babylon came forward. It played a great role in the history of the children of Israel.

v. 1

Question: What did the envoys of the Babylonian ruler bring to Hezekiah? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 2

Question: Hezekiah shows the Babylonian representatives everything in his armoury and treasury. Why does he do such a foolish thing? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 5-7: The Prophet Isaiah is aghast. Don't you know what is going to happen? he asks. In a few years the Babylonians are going to come on the attack, as others have. They will carry off not only your treasures and your weapons, but your sons and daughters!

v. 8

Question: Hezekiah gives a somewhat strange reply. What is it? \_\_\_\_\_.

When the king says "good" [ טוֹב טוֹב ], it might be his royal way of saying, "I'm sorry," but it sounds as though he has not wisely considered the future. Less than a hundred years after he died the Babylonians took the Hebrews into captivity.

NOW TURN TO CHAPTER 32, 33, and 35 IN THAT ORDER

### CHAPTERS 32 AND 33

#### BUILDING AN ETHICAL SOCIETY

The goodness of God that the Book of the Prophet Isaiah has revealed will move people to help build a decent and ethical human community. Isaiah's prophesy reveals some principles for such a goal. The dream of a fully righteous society will be realized only in heaven, but we can start now in demonstrating its meaning.

#### Ch. 32, vv. 1-8 PRINCIPLES FOR AN ETHICAL SOCIETY

v. 1

Question: What two principles for a good society are revealed in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 2

Question: What important factor is highlighted in this verse? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: The key word in the verse is "each one." Each person will be a helper in some way to others.

v. 5

Question: What basic quality is applicable in a good society? \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 8

Question: What is the beautiful ideal that this verse sets forth? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 9-15 THE PROBLEM OF COMPLACENCY

In relation to this problem the Prophet focuses on women. He may regard them as especially subject to this attitude since, in Isaiah's time, they were generally in the home and not so aware of the social problems in public life. Or he may have wanted more attention to the principle of righteousness in the home, and women would be the key to that activity. So Isaiah points to another principle -- social awareness. He calls on women also to be alert and to help build the righteous society.

vv. 11-12: In the cultural practice of that period women led the mourning.

v. 15: The "spirit from on high" refers to the Power of God. Just as we pray to the Almighty to revive nature, so we need to pray for His guidance and strength in building the human community.

Question: Can you name one woman who was a significant pioneer in social service in our society? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 16-18 THE PEACE OF AN UPRIGHT SOCIETY

v. 16: A society that is truly humane, that is based on God's universal principle of righteousness, will experience well-being, shalom. The spirit of justice will prevail in both good times and bad times, when there are fruitful fields and when there is a wilderness. There will be moral steadiness in the land.

vv. 17-18

Question: What are three lovely effects of righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

CHAPTER 33

vv. 1-16 PARTICIPATING IN AND CONTRIBUTING TO A JUST SOCIETY

We have learned that it is God who makes people good through the forgiveness of sins. It is also surely true that it takes good people to build good and stable societies. Those who have received the grace of the Holy God are obligated to be active in that building task. In this chapter the Prophet states two things that they need for that effort -- a dependence on God's help and a determination to overcome evil with good.

v. 2: We access God's help through prayer. We need to pray for a good society and for what it needs, as well as for ourselves.

Question: According to this verse what should we ask for in prayer? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 5-6: Preventive methods against evil-doers are needed, but the real way of overcoming evil is by doing good.

Question (v. 5): What is the method by which God makes society just? \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: It must be remembered how God works in this world - He works through people committed to righteousness.

v. 6

Question: The Prophet reminds us of the basis for moral stability. What are its three elements? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 7-9

Question: Since without righteousness society falls and since God works through people, what must we do in our families and schools? \_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 10-15

Question: What is God's message to the world, to those both far and near? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Actions that help build a moral world also help sinners to dwell with God, to live on the heights where He is.

#### vv. 17-24 BLESSINGS FOR THE BUILDERS

Those who contribute to the formation of a just society will be personally blessed in a variety of ways.

v. 17

Question: That person will live to see two things: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 18

Question: That person will have no more \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 20

Question: That person will have a life of \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 22

Question: That person will experience \_\_\_\_\_.

v. 24

Question: That person will receive \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## CHAPTER 35

### A HYMN OF CELEBRATION

#### vv. 1-10 CELEBRATING THE FINAL RESTORATION

Isaiah's vision of the final deliverance is a grand one. Creation is reborn and God's faithful people are fully restored. This chapter is a poem of appreciation for the love of the Almighty. It gloriously concludes the first part of our study of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

vv. 1-2

Question: In your opinion what are Kerala's most beautiful flowers? \_\_\_\_\_.

If Isaiah had been a Keralite he might have chosen one of these flowers to describe the beauty of God's life.

v. 2: Lebanon at this time was a region rather than a separate country. It was known for its great cedar trees and wonderful natural beauty. Carmel, which means "garden," was a fertile place near the present city of Haifa and the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Sharon was a well-watered coastal plain south of Carmel; it was famous for its flowers. For the Hebrews these were all symbols of beauty. In fact, when the kingdom of heaven comes, it is said that even the desert will be beautiful.

v. 3: The verse declares that those who know and believe in God should live with confidence.

vv. 4-6: Life is transformed by God the Saviour. He will heal all our diseases. He will refresh the dry places in our lives.

v. 6

Question: The phrase "streams in the desert" is famous. What do you think it means?

\_\_\_\_\_.

vv. 8-9: God's faithful people will travel a safe road through this life and the road will end in final blessing.

v. 9

Question: Who are the people who will travel that road? \_\_\_\_\_.

This is an important verse. It tells us that we need to be redeemed, ransomed from the power of sin and Satan, cleansed, and made holy. Who will do that for us? The

royal Saviour who is coming. After redeeming us he will take us safely home.

v. 10

Question: Write out the half sentence extending from "everlasting joy" (നീത്യ ാനം) to ... "flee away" (ഓടിപ്പോ):

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The words may thrill your heart! They invite you to walk on this road.

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Congratulations! You have completed Part One of this Bible Correspondence Course. Part Two, Chapters 40-66, comes next. It will inform you exactly how God saves us. When you complete those lessons, you will truly be able to sing songs in the night.