

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH

Judah arraigned

1¹THE VISION RECEIVED BY ISAIAH son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

²Hark you heavens, and earth give ear,
for the LORD has spoken:
I have sons whom I reared and brought up,
but they have rebelled against me.

³The ox knows its owner
and the ass its master's stall;
but Israel, my own people,
has no knowledge, no discernment.

⁴O sinful nation, people loaded with iniquity,
race of evildoers, wanton destructive children
who have deserted the LORD,
spurned the Holy One of Israel
and turned your backs on him.

⁵Where can you still be struck
if you will be disloyal still?
Your head is covered with sores,
your body diseased;

⁶from head to foot there is not a sound spot in you –
nothing but bruises and weals and raw wounds
which have not felt compress or bandage
or soothing oil.

⁷Your country is desolate, your cities lie in ashes.
Strangers devour your land before your eyes;
it is desolate as Sodom [*Sodom: prob. rdg, Heb strangers*] in its overthrow.

⁸Only Zion is left,
like a watchman's shelter in a vineyard,
a shed in a field of cucumbers,
a city well guarded.

⁹If the LORD of Hosts had not left us a remnant,
we should soon have been like Sodom,
no better than Gomorrah.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom;
attend, you people of Gomorrah, to the instruction of our God:

¹¹Your countless sacrifices, what are they to me?
says the LORD.

I am sated with whole-offerings of rams
and the fat of buffaloes;
I have no desire for the blood of bulls,
of sheep and of he-goats.

12-13 Whenever you come to enter my presence –
who asked you for this?

No more shall you trample my courts.

The offer of your gifts is useless,
the reek of sacrifice is abhorrent to me.

New moons and sabbaths and assemblies,
sacred seasons and ceremonies, I cannot endure.

14 I cannot tolerate your new moons and your festivals;
they have become a burden to me,
and I can put up with them no longer.

15 When you lift your hands outspread in prayer,
I will hide my eyes from you.

Though you offer countless prayers,
I will not listen.

There is blood on your hands;

16 wash yourselves and be clean.

Put away the evil of your deeds,
away out of my sight.

17 Cease to do evil and learn to do right,
pursue justice and champion the oppressed;
give the orphan his rights, plead the widow's cause.

18 Come now, let us argue it out,
says the LORD.

Though your sins are scarlet,
they may become white as snow;
though they are dyed crimson,
they may yet be like wool.

19 Obey with a will,
and you shall eat the best that earth yields;

20 but, if you refuse and rebel,
locust-beans shall be your only food [*locust-beans ... food: or, with Scroll,*
you shall be eaten by the sword].

The LORD himself has spoken.

21 How the faithful city has played the whore,
once the home of justice where righteousness dwelt –
but now murderers!

22 Your silver has turned into base metal
and your liquor is diluted with water.

23 Your very rulers are rebels, confederate with thieves;
every man of them loves a bribe
and itches for a gift;
they do not give the orphan his rights,
and the widow's cause never comes before them.

24 This therefore is the word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel:
Enough! I will secure a respite from my foes
and take vengeance on my enemies.

²⁵Once again I will act against you
to refine away your base metal as with potash
and purge all your impurities;
²⁶I will again make your judges what once they were
and your counsellors like those of old.
Then at length you shall be called
the home of righteousness, the faithful city.
²⁷Justice shall redeem Zion
and righteousness her repentant people.
²⁸Rebels and sinners shall be broken together,
and those who forsake the LORD shall cease to be.
²⁹For the sacred oaks in which you delighted shall fail you,
the garden-shrines of your fancy shall disappoint you.
³⁰You shall be like a terebinth whose leaves have withered,
like a garden without water;
³¹the strongest tree [*Or* the strong man] shall become like tow,
and what is made of it [*Or* what he makes] shall go up in sparks,
and the two shall burst into flames together
with no one to quench them.

2¹This is the word which Isaiah son of Amoz received in a vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²[*vv2-4: cp Mic. 4.1-3*]In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be set over all other mountains,
lifted high above the hills.
All the nations shall come streaming to it,
³and many peoples shall come and say,
'Come, let us climb up on to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and we may walk in his paths.'
For instruction issues from Zion,
and out of Jerusalem comes the word of the LORD;
⁴he will be judge between nations,
arbiter among many peoples.
They shall beat their swords into mattocks
and their spears into pruning-knives [*They shall beat ... pruning-knives: cp Joel 3.9-12*];
nation shall not lift sword against nation
nor ever again be trained for war.

⁵O people of Jacob, come,
let us walk in the light of the LORD.
⁶Thou hast abandoned thy people the house of Jacob;
for they are crowded with traders [*Or* hawkers]
and barbarians like the Philistines,
and with the children of foreigners everywhere.
⁷Their land is filled with silver and gold,

and there is no end to their treasure;
their land is filled with horses,
and there is no end to their chariots;
⁸their land is filled with idols,
and they bow down to the work of their own hands,
to what their fingers have made.
⁹Mankind shall be brought low,
all men shall be humbled;
and how can they raise themselves [*prob. rdg, Heb* and do not forgive
them]?

¹⁰Get you into the rocks and hide yourselves, in the ground
from the dread of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty.

¹¹Man's proud eyes shall be humbled,
the loftiness of men brought low,
and the LORD alone shall be exalted
on that day.

¹²For the LORD of Hosts has a day of doom waiting
for all that is proud and lofty,
for all that is high and lifted up,

¹³for all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and high,
and for all the oaks of Bashan,

¹⁴for all lofty mountains and for all high hills,

¹⁵for every high tower and for every sheer wall,

¹⁶for all ships of Tarshish and all the dhows of Arabia.

¹⁷Then man's pride shall be brought low,
and the loftiness of man shall be humbled,
and the LORD alone shall be exalted
on that day,

¹⁸while the idols shall pass away utterly.

¹⁹Get you into caves in the rocks
and crevices in the ground
from the dread of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty,
when he rises to inspire the earth with fear.

²⁰On that day a man shall fling away
his idols of silver and his idols of gold
which he has made for himself to worship;
he shall fling them to the dung-beetles and the bats,

²¹and creep into clefts in the rocks and crannies in the cliffs
from the dread of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty,
when he rises to inspire the earth with fear.

²²Have no more to do with man, for what is he worth?
He is no more than the breath in his nostrils.

3¹Be warned: the Lord, the LORD of Hosts,
is stripping Jerusalem and Judah
of every prop and stay [*prob. rdg, Heb adds* all stay of bread and all stay of
water],

²warrior and soldier,
judge and prophet, diviner and elder,
³captains of companies and men of rank,
counsellor, magician, and cunning enchanter.
⁴Then I will appoint mere boys to be their captains,
who shall govern as the fancy takes them;
⁵the people shall deal harshly
each man with his fellow and with his neighbour;
children shall break out against their elders,
and nobodies against men of substance.
⁶If a man takes hold of his brother in his father's house,
saying, 'You have a cloak, you shall be our chief;
our stricken family shall be under you',
⁷he will cry out that day and say,
'I will not be your master;
there is neither bread nor cloak in my house,
and you shall not make me head of the clan.'

⁸Jerusalem is stricken and Judah fallen
because they have spoken and acted against the LORD,
rebelling against the glance of his glorious eye.
⁹The look on their faces testifies against them;
like Sodom they proclaim their sins
and do not conceal them [like ... them: *or* and their sins, like those of
Sodom, denounce them; they do not deny them].
Woe upon them! they have earned their own disaster.
¹⁰Happy [*prob. rdg, Heb Say*] the righteous man! all goes well with him,
for such men enjoy the fruit of their actions.
¹¹Woe betide the wicked! with him all goes ill,
for he reaps the reward that he has earned.
¹²Money-lenders strip my people bare,
and usurers lord it over them.
O my people! your guides lead you astray
and confuse the path that you should take.
¹³The LORD comes forward to argue his case
and stands to judge his people.
¹⁴The LORD opens the indictment
against the elders of his people and their officers:
You have ravaged the vineyard,
and the spoils of the poor are in your houses.
¹⁵Is it nothing to you that you crush my people
and grind the faces of the poor?
This is the very word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁶Then the LORD said:
Because the women of Zion hold themselves high
and walk with necks outstretched and wanton glances,
moving with mincing gait

and jingling feet,

¹⁷the Lord will give the women of Zion bald heads,
the LORD will strip the hair from their foreheads.

¹⁸In that day the Lord will take away all finery: anklets, discs, crescents, ¹⁹pendants, bangles, coronets, ²⁰head-bands, armlets, necklaces, lockets, charms, ²¹signets, nose-rings, ²²fine dresses, mantles, cloaks, flounced skirts, ²³scarves of gauze, kerchiefs of linen, turbans, and flowing veils.

²⁴So instead of perfume you shall have the stench of decay,
and a rope in place of a girdle,
baldness instead of hair elegantly coiled,
a loin-cloth of sacking instead of a mantle,
and branding instead of beauty.

²⁵Your men shall fall by the sword,
and your warriors in battle;

²⁶then Zion's gates shall mourn and lament,
and she shall sit on the ground stripped bare.

4¹Then on that day
seven women shall take hold of one man and say,
'We will eat our own bread and wear our own clothes
if only we may be called by your name,
take away our disgrace.'

²On that day the plant that the LORD has grown
shall become glorious in its beauty,
and the fruit of the land shall be
the pride and splendour
of the survivors of Israel.

³Then those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, every one enrolled in the book of life, shall be called holy. ⁴If the Lord washes away the filth of the women of Zion and cleanses Jerusalem from the blood that is in it by a spirit of judgement, a consuming spirit, ⁵then over every building on Mount Zion and on all her places of assembly the LORD will create a cloud of smoke by day and a bright flame of fire by night; for glory shall be spread over all as a covering ⁶and a canopy, a shade from the heat by day, a refuge and a shelter from rain and tempest.

5¹I will sing for my beloved
my love-song about his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
high up on a fertile hill-side.

²He trenched it and cleared it of stones
and planted it with red vines;
he built a watch-tower in the middle
and then hewed out a winepress in it.
He looked for it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

³Now, you who live in Jerusalem,

and you men of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴What more could have been done for my vineyard
that I did not do in it?

Why, when I looked for it to yield grapes,
did it yield wild grapes?

⁵Now listen while I tell you
what I will do to my vineyard:

I will take away its fences and let it be burnt,
I will break down its walls and let it be trampled underfoot,

⁶and so I will leave it derelict;
it shall be neither pruned nor hoed,
but shall grow thorns and briars.

Then I will command the clouds
to send no more rain upon it.

⁷The vineyard of the LORD of Hosts is Israel,
and the men of Judah are the plant he cherished.
He looked for justice and found it denied,
for righteousness but heard cries of distress.

⁸Shame on you! you who add house to house
and join field to field,
until not an acre remains,
and you are left to dwell alone in the land.

⁹The LORD of Hosts has sworn [*has sworn: prob. rdg, Heb omitted*] in my
hearing:

Many houses shall go to ruin,
fine large houses shall be uninhabited.

¹⁰Five acres of vineyard shall yield only a gallon,
and ten bushels of seed return only a peck.

¹¹Shame on you! you who rise early in the morning
to go in pursuit of liquor
and draw out the evening inflamed with wine,

¹²at whose feasts there are harp and lute,
tabor and pipe and wine,
who have no eyes for the work of the LORD,
and never see the things that he has done.

¹³Therefore my people are dwindling away
all unawares;

the nobles are starving to death,
and the common folk die of thirst.

¹⁴Therefore Sheol gapes with straining throat
and has opened her measureless jaws:

down go nobility and common people,
their noisy bustling mob [*nobility ... mob: or nobility, common people and
noisy mob, and are restless there*].

¹⁵Mankind is brought low, men are humbled,
humbled are haughty looks.

¹⁶But the LORD of Hosts sits high in judgement,

and by righteousness the holy God shows himself holy.

¹⁷Young rams shall feed where fat bullocks once pastured,
and kids shall graze broad acres where cattle grew fat [Young ... grew fat:
prob. rdg, Heb unintelligible].

¹⁸Shame on you! you who drag wickedness along like a tethered sheep
and sin like a heifer on a rope,

¹⁹who say, 'Let the LORD make haste,
let him speed up his work for us to see it,
let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel
be soon fulfilled, so that we may know it.'

²⁰Shame on you! you who call evil good and good evil,
who turn darkness into light and light into darkness,
who make bitter sweet and sweet bitter.

²¹Shame on you! you who are wise in your own eyes
and prudent in your own esteem.

²²Shame on you! you mighty toppers, valiant mixers of drink,

²³who for a bribe acquit the guilty
and deny justice to those in the right.

²⁶[*vv24-25 transposed to follow 10.4*] So he will hoist a signal to a nation far away,
he will whistle to call them from the end of the earth;
and see, they come, speedy and swift;

²⁷none is weary, not one of them stumbles,
not one slumbers or sleeps.

None has his belt loose about his waist
or a broken thong to his sandals.

²⁸Their arrows are sharpened and their bows all strung,
their horses' hooves flash like shooting stars,
their chariot-wheels are like the whirlwind.

²⁹Their growling is the growling of a lioness,
they growl like young lions,
which roar as they seize the prey
and carry it beyond reach of rescue.

³⁰They shall roar over it on that day
like the roaring of the sea.

If a man looks over the earth, behold, darkness closing in,
and the light darkened on the hill-tops [*hill-tops: or clouds*]!

The call of Isaiah

6¹IN THE YEAR OF KING UZZIAH'S DEATH I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the skirt of his robe filled the temple. ²About him were attendant seraphim, and each had six wings; one pair covered his face and one pair his feet, and one pair was spread in flight. ³They were calling ceaselessly to one another,

Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts:
the whole earth is full of his glory.

⁴And, as each one called, the threshold shook to its foundations, while the house was

filled with smoke. ⁵Then I cried,
 Woe is me! I am lost,
 for I am a man of unclean lips
 and I dwell among a people of unclean lips;
 yet with these eyes I have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts.

⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me carrying in his hand a glowing coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷He touched my mouth with it and said,
 See, this has touched your lips;
 your iniquity is removed,
 and your sin is wiped away.

⁸Then I heard the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for me? And I answered,
 Here am I; send me. ⁹He said, Go and tell this people:
 You may listen and listen, but you will not understand. [*Or but how will you understand?*]
 You may look and look again, but you will never know. [*Or but how will you know?*]

¹⁰This people's wits are dulled,
 their ears are deafened and their eyes blinded,
 so that they cannot see with their eyes
 nor listen with their ears
 nor understand with their wits,
 so that they may turn and be healed.

¹¹Then I asked, How long, O Lord? And he answered,
 Until cities fall in ruins and are deserted,
 houses are left without people,
 and the land goes to ruin and lies waste,
¹²until the LORD has sent all mankind far away,
 and the whole country is one vast desolation.
¹³Even if a tenth part of its people remain there,
 they too will be exterminated
 {like an oak or a terebinth,
 a sacred pole thrown out from its place in a hill-shrine [a sacred pole ... hill-shrine: *prob. rdg, Heb obscure*]}.
 }

Prophecies during the Syro-Ephraimite war

7¹WHILE AHAZ SON OF JOTHAM and grandson of Uzziah was king of Judah, Rezin king of Aram with Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, marched on Jerusalem, but could not force a battle. ²When the house of David heard that the Aramaeans had come to terms with the Ephraimites, king and people were shaken like forest trees in the wind. ³Then the LORD said to Isaiah, Go out with your son Shear-jashub [*That is A remnant shall return*] to meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the Upper Pool by the causeway leading to the Fuller's Field, ⁴and say to him, Be on your guard, keep calm; do not be frightened or unmanned by these two smouldering stumps of firewood, because Rezin and his Aramaeans with Remaliah's son are burning with rage. ⁵The Aramaeans with Ephraim and Remaliah's son have laid their plans against you, saying, ⁶Let us invade Judah and break her spirit [*Or and parley with her*], let us make her join with us, and

set the son of Tabeal on the throne. ⁷Therefore the Lord GOD has said:

This shall not happen now, and never shall,

⁸for all that the chief city of Aram is Damascus,
and Rezin is the chief of Damascus;
within sixty-five years

Ephraim shall cease to be a nation,

⁹for all that Samaria is the chief city of Ephraim,
and Remaliah's son the chief of Samaria.

Have firm faith, or you will not stand firm.

¹⁰Once again the LORD spoke to Ahaz and said, ¹¹Ask the LORD your God for a sign, from lowest Sheol or from highest heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, No, I will not put the LORD to the test by asking for a sign. ¹³Then the answer came: Listen, house of David. Are you not content to wear out men's patience? Must you also wear out the patience of my God? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: A young woman is with child, and she will bear a son, and will [*Or you will*] call him Immanuel [*That is God is with us*]. ¹⁵By the time that he has learnt to reject evil and choose good, he will be eating curds and honey [*he will ... honey: or curds and honey will be eaten*]; ¹⁶before that child has learnt to reject evil and choose good, desolation will come upon the land before whose two kings you cower now. ¹⁷The LORD will bring on you, your people, and your house, a time the like of which has not been seen since Ephraim broke away from Judah [*prob. rdg, Heb adds the king of Assyria*].

¹⁸On that day the LORD will whistle for the fly from the distant streams of Egypt and for the bee from Assyria. ¹⁹They shall all come and settle in the precipitous ravines and in the clefts of the rock; camel-thorn and stink-wood shall be black with them. ²⁰On that day the Lord shall shave the head and body with a razor hired on the banks of the Euphrates [*prob. rdg, Heb adds with the king of Assyria*], and it shall remove the beard as well. ²¹On that day a man shall save alive a young cow and two ewes; ²²and he shall get so much milk that he eats curds; for all who are left in the land shall eat curds and honey. ²³On that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines worth a thousand pieces of silver shall be given over to thorns and briars. ²⁴A man shall go there only to hunt with bow and arrows, for thorns and briars cover the whole land; ²⁵and no one who fears thorns and briars shall set foot on any of those hills once worked with the hoe. Oxen shall be turned loose on them, and sheep shall trample them.

8¹The LORD said to me, Take a large tablet and write on it in common writing [*in common writing: or with an ordinary stylus*], Maher-shalal-hash-baz [*That is Speed-spoil-hasten-plunder*]; ²and fetch Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah for me as trustworthy witnesses. ³Then I lay with the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son; and the LORD said to me, Call him Maher-shalal-hash-baz. ⁴Before the boy can say Father or Mother, the wealth of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria shall be carried off and presented to the king of Assyria.

⁵Once again the LORD said to me:

⁶Because this nation has rejected

the waters of Shiloah, which run so softly and gently [*prob. rdg, Heb adds Rezin and the son of Remaliah*],

⁷therefore the Lord will bring up against it
the strong, flooding waters of the Euphrates,
the king of Assyria and all his glory;
it shall run up all its channels
and overflow all its banks;

⁸it shall sweep through Judah in a flood,
pouring over it and rising shoulder-high.
The whole expanse of the land shall be filled,
so wide he spreads his wings; for God is with us [*God is with us: Heb Immanuel*].

⁹Take note, you nations, and be dismayed.
Listen, all you distant parts of the earth:
you may arm yourselves but will be dismayed;
you may arm yourselves but will be dismayed.

¹⁰Make your plans, but they will be foiled,
propose what you please, but it shall not stand;
for God is with us?

¹¹These were the words of the LORD to me, for his hand was strong upon me; and he warned me not to follow [*Or and he turned me from following*] the ways of this people:

¹²You shall not say 'too hard' of everything that this people calls hard; you shall neither dread nor fear that which they fear. ¹³It is the LORD of Hosts whom you must count 'hard' [*'hard': prob. rdg, Heb unintelligible in this context*]; he it is whom you must fear and dread. ¹⁴He shall become your 'hardship' [*'hardship': prob. rdg, Heb unintelligible in this context*], a boulder and a rock which the two houses of Israel shall run against and over which they shall stumble, a trap and a snare to those who live in Jerusalem; ¹⁵and many shall stumble over them, many shall fall and be broken, many shall be snared and caught.

¹⁶Fasten up the message,
seal the oracle with my teaching [*Or among my disciples*];

¹⁷and I will wait for the LORD
who hides his face from the house of Jacob;
I will watch for him.

¹⁸See, I and the sons whom the LORD has given me
are to be signs and portents in Israel,
sent by the LORD of Hosts who dwells on Mount Zion.

¹⁹But men will say to you,
'Seek guidance of ghosts and familiar spirits
who squeak and gibber;
a nation may surely seek guidance of its gods,
of the dead on behalf of the living,

²⁰for an oracle or a message?'
They will surely say some such thing as this;
but what they say is futile.

²¹So despondency and fear will come over them,
and then, when they are afraid and fearful,

they will turn against their king and their gods.

Then, whether they turn their gaze upwards ²²or look down,
everywhere is distress and darkness inescapable,
constraint and gloom that cannot be avoided;

9¹for there is no escape for an oppressed people.

For, while the first invader has dealt lightly with the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the second has dealt heavily with Galilee of the Nations on the road beyond Jordan to the sea.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light:
light has dawned upon them,
dwellers in a land as dark as death.

³Thou hast increased their joy and [their joy and: *prob. rdg, Heb* the nation,
not] given them great gladness;

they rejoice in thy presence as men rejoice at harvest,
or as they are glad when they share out the spoil;

⁴for thou hast shattered the yoke that burdened them,
the collar that lay heavy on their shoulders,
the driver's goad, as on the day of Midian's defeat.

⁵All the boots of trampling soldiers
and the garments fouled with blood
shall become a burning mass, fuel for fire.

⁶For a boy has been born for us, a son given to us
to bear the symbol of dominion on his shoulder;
and he shall be called
in purpose wonderful, in battle God-like,
Father for all time [*Or of a wide realm*], Prince of peace.

⁷Great shall the dominion be,
and boundless the peace
bestowed on David's throne and on his kingdom,
to establish it and sustain it
with justice and righteousness
from now and for evermore.

The zeal of the LORD of Hosts shall do this.

Prophecies addressed to Israel

⁸The Lord has sent forth his word against Jacob
and it shall fall on Israel;

⁹all the people shall be humbled,
Ephraim and the dwellers in Samaria,
though in their pride and arrogance they say,

¹⁰The bricks are fallen, but we will build in hewn stone;
the sycomores are hacked down,
but we will use cedars instead.

¹¹The LORD has raised their foes [their foes: *prob. rdg, Heb* the foes of
Rezin] high against them

and spurred on their enemies,

¹²Aramaeans from the east and Philistines from the west
and they have swallowed Israel in one mouthful.

For all this his anger has not turned back,
and his hand is stretched out still.

¹³Yet the people did not come back to him who struck them,
or seek guidance of the LORD of Hosts;

¹⁴therefore on one day the LORD cut off from Israel
head and tail, palm and reed. [*prob. rdg, Heb adds* ¹⁵The aged and
honoured are the head, and the prophet who gives false instruction is the
tail.]

¹⁶This people's guides have led them astray;
those who should have been guided are in confusion.

¹⁷Therefore the Lord showed no mercy to their young men,
no tenderness to their orphans and widows;

all were godless and evildoers,
every one speaking profanity.

For all this his anger has not turned back,
and his hand is stretched out still.

¹⁸Wicked men have been set ablaze like a fire
fed with briars and thorns,

kindled in the forest thickets;
they are wrapped in a murky pall of smoke.

¹⁹The land is scorched by the fury of the LORD of Hosts,
and the people have become fuel for the fire. [*See note on v20*]

²⁰On the right, one man eats his fill but yet is hungry;
on the left, another devours but is not satisfied;

each feeds on his own children's flesh,
and neither spares his own brother [*and neither ... brother: transposed from
end of v19*].

^{21`} For all this his anger has not turned back,
and his hand is stretched out still.

10¹Shame on you! you who make unjust laws
and publish burdensome decrees,

²depriving the poor of justice,
robbing the weakest of my people of their rights,
despoiling the widow and plundering the orphan.

³What will you do when called to account,
when ruin from afar confronts you?

To whom will you flee for help
and where will you leave your children,

⁴so that they do not cower before the gaoler
or fall by the executioner's hand?

For all this his anger has not turned back,
and his hand is stretched out still.

24[These are vv5.24-25 transposed to this point] So, as tongues of fire lick up the stubble
and the heat of the flame dies down,
their root shall moulder away,
and their shoots vanish like dust;
for they have spurned the instruction of the LORD of Hosts
and have rejected the word of the Holy One of Israel.
25 So the anger of the LORD is roused against his people,
he has stretched out his hand against them and struck them down;
the mountains trembled,
and their corpses lay like offal in the streets.
For all this his anger has not turned back,
and his hand is stretched out still.

5 The Assyrian! He is the rod that I wield in my anger,
and the staff of my wrath is in his hand [and ... hand: *prob. rdg, Heb obscure*].

6 I send him against a godless nation,
I bid him march against a people who rouse my wrath,
to spoil and plunder at will
and trample them down like mud in the streets.

7 But this man's purpose is lawless,
lawless are the plans in his mind;
for his thought is only to destroy
and to wipe out nation after nation.

8 'Are not my officers all kings?' he says;

9 'see how Calno has suffered the fate of Carchemish.
Is not Hamath like Arpad, and Samaria like Damascus?

10 Before now I have found kingdoms full of idols,
with more images than Jerusalem and Samaria,

11 and now, what I have done to Samaria and her worthless gods,
I will do also to Jerusalem and her idols.'

12 When the Lord has finished all that he means to do on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
he will punish the king of Assyria for this fruit of his pride and for his arrogance and
vainglory, 13 because he said:

By my own might I have acted
and in my own wisdom I have laid my schemes;
I have removed the frontiers of nations
and plundered their treasures,
like a bull I have trampled on their inhabitants.

14 My hand has found its way to the wealth of nations,
and, as a man takes the eggs from a deserted nest,
so have I taken every land;
not a wing fluttered,
not a beak gaped, no chirp was heard.

15 Shall the axe set itself up against the hewer,
or the saw claim mastery over the sawyer,

as if a stick were to brandish him who wields it,
or a staff of wood to wield one who is not wood?

¹⁶Therefore the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, will send disease
on his sturdy frame, from head to toe [from ... toe: *transposed from v18*],
and within his flesh [within his flesh: *or in his strong body*] a fever like fire
shall burn.

¹⁷The light of Israel shall become a fire
and his Holy One a flame,
which in one day shall burn up and consume
his thorns and his briars;

¹⁸the glory of forest and meadow shall be destroyed
as when a man falls in a fit;

¹⁹and the remnant of trees in the forest shall be so few
that a child may count them one by one.

²⁰On that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, shall cease to lean on him
that proved their destroyer, but shall loyally lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

²¹A remnant shall turn again, a remnant of Jacob,
to God their champion.

²²Your people, Israel, may be many as the sands of the sea,
but only a remnant shall turn again,
the instrument of final destruction,
justice in full flood [the instrument ... flood: *or wasting with sickness, yet
overflowing with righteousness*];

²³for the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, will bring final destruction
upon all the earth.

²⁴Therefore these are the words of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts: My people who live in
Zion, you must not be afraid of the Assyrians, though they beat you with their rod and
lift their staff against you as the Egyptians did; ²⁵for soon, very soon, my anger will
come to an end, and my wrath will all be spent [will ... spent: *prob. rdg, Heb obscure*].

²⁶Then the LORD of Hosts will brandish his whip over them as he did when he struck
Midian at the Rock of Oreb, and will lift his staff against the River as he did against
Egypt.

²⁷On that day
the burden they laid on your shoulder shall be removed
and their yoke shall be broken from your neck.
An invader from Rimmon [and their yoke ... Rimmon: *prob. rdg, Heb* and
their yoke from upon your neck, and a yoke shall be broken because of oil.

He] ²⁸has come to Aiath,
has passed by Migron,
and left his baggage-train at Michmash;

²⁹he has passed by Maabarah
and camped for the night at Geba.
Ramah is anxious, Gibeah of Saul is in panic.

³⁰Raise a shrill cry, Bath-gallim;
hear it, Laish, and answer her, Anathoth:

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

³²Today he is due to pitch his camp in Nob;
he gives the signal to advance
against the mount of the daughter of Zion,
the hill of Jerusalem.

³³Look, the Lord, the LORD of Hosts,
cleaves the trees with a flash of lightning,
the tallest are hewn down, the lofty laid low,
³⁴the heart of the forest is felled with the axe,
and Lebanon with its noble trees has fallen.

11¹Then a shoot shall grow from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall spring from his roots.

²The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a spirit of counsel [*Or force*] and power,
a spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD [*prob. rdg, Heb adds* ³and his
delight shall be in the fear of the LORD].

He shall not judge by what he sees
nor decide by what he hears;

⁴he shall judge the poor with justice
and defend the humble in the land with equity;
his mouth shall be a rod to strike down the ruthless [*prob. rdg, Heb land*],
and with a word he shall slay the wicked.

⁵Round his waist he shall wear the belt of justice,
and good faith shall be the girdle round his body.

⁶Then the wolf shall live with the sheep,
and the leopard lie down with the kid;
the calf and the young lion shall grow up together,
and a little child shall lead them;

⁷the cow and the bear shall be friends,
and their young shall lie down together.
The lion shall eat straw like cattle;

⁸the infant shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the young child dance over the viper's nest.

⁹They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain;
for as the waters fill the sea,
so shall the land be filled with the knowledge of the LORD.

¹⁰On that day a scion from the root of Jesse
shall be set up as a signal to the peoples;
the nations shall rally to it,
and its resting-place shall be glorious.

¹¹On that day the Lord will make his power more glorious by recovering the remnant of
his people, those who are still left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush and
Elam, from Shinar, Hamath and the islands of the sea.

¹²Then he will raise a signal to the nations

and gather together those driven out of Israel;
he will assemble Judah's scattered people
from the four corners of the earth.

¹³Ephraim's jealousy shall vanish,
and Judah's enmity shall be done away.
Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah,
nor Judah the enemy of Ephraim.

¹⁴They shall swoop down on the Philistine flank in the west
and together they shall plunder the tribes of the east;
Edom and Moab shall be within their grasp,
and Ammon shall obey them.

¹⁵The LORD will divide the tongue of the Egyptian sea
and wave his hand over the River
to bring a scorching wind;
he shall split it into seven channels
and let men go across. dry-shod.

¹⁶So there shall be a causeway for the remnant of his people,
for the remnant rescued from Assyria,
as there was for Israel when they came up out of Egypt.

12¹You shall say on that day:
I will praise thee, O LORD,
though thou hast been angry with me;
thy anger has turned back,
and thou hast comforted me.

²God is indeed my deliverer.
I am confident and unafraid;
for the LORD is my refuge and defence
and has shown himself my deliverer.

³And so you shall draw water with joy
from the springs of deliverance.

⁴You shall all say on that day:
Give thanks to the LORD and invoke him by name,
make his deeds known in the world around;
declare that his name is supreme.

⁵Sing psalms to the LORD, for he has triumphed,
and this must be made known in all the world.

⁶Cry out, shout aloud, you that dwell in Zion,
for the Holy One of Israel is among you in majesty.

Prophecies relating to foreign nations

13¹BABYLON: AN ORACLE which Isaiah son of Amoz received in a vision.

²Raise the standard on a windy height,
roar out your summons,
beckon with arm upraised to the advance,
draw your swords, you nobles.

³I have given my warriors their orders

and summoned my fighting men to launch my anger;
they are eager for my triumph.

⁴Hark, a tumult in the mountains, the sound of a vast multitude;
hark, the roar of kingdoms, of nations gathering!

The LORD of Hosts is mustering a host for war,
⁵men from a far country, from beyond the horizon.

It is the LORD with the weapons of his wrath
coming to lay the whole land waste.

⁶Howl, for the Day of the LORD is at hand,
it comes, a mighty blow from Almighty God.

⁷Thereat shall every hand hang limp,
every man's courage shall melt away,

⁸his stomach hollow with fear;
anguish shall grip them, like a woman in labour.

One man shall look aghast at another,
and their faces shall burn with shame.

⁹The Day of the LORD is coming indeed,
that cruel day of wrath and fury,
to make the land a desolation
and exterminate its wicked people.

¹⁰The stars of heaven in their constellations shall give no light,
the sun shall be darkened at its rising,
and the moon refuse to shine.

¹¹I will bring disaster upon the world
and their due punishment upon the wicked.
I will check the pride of the haughty
and bring low the arrogance of ruthless men.

¹²I will make men scarcer than fine gold,
rarer than gold of Ophir.

¹³Then the heavens shall shudder [*prob. rdg, Heb* Then I will make the
heavens shudder],
and the earth shall be shaken from its place
at the fury of the LORD of Hosts, on the day of his anger.

¹⁴Then, like a gazelle before the hunter
or a flock with no man to round it up,
each man will go back to his own people,
every one will flee to his own land.

¹⁵All who are found will be stabbed,
all who are taken will fall by the sword;

¹⁶their infants will be dashed to the ground before their eyes,
their houses rifled and their wives ravished.

¹⁷I will stir up against them the Medes,
who care nothing for silver and are not tempted by gold [*prob. rdg, Heb*
adds bows shall dash young men to the ground],

¹⁸who have no pity on little children
and spare no mother's son;

¹⁹and Babylon, fairest of kingdoms,
proud beauty of the Chaldaeans,

shall be like Sodom and Gomorrah
when God overthrew them.

²⁰Never again shall she be inhabited,
no man shall dwell in her through all the ages;
there no Arab shall pitch his tent,
no shepherds fold their flocks.

²¹There marmots shall have their lairs,
and porcupines shall overrun her houses;
there desert owls shall dwell,
and there he-goats shall gambol;

²²jackals shall occupy her mansions [*prob. rdg, Heb her widows*],
and wolves her gorgeous palaces.
Her time draws very near,
and her days have not long to run.

14¹The LORD will show compassion for Jacob and will once again make Israel his choice. He will settle them on their own soil, and strangers will come to join them and attach themselves to Jacob. ²Many nations shall escort Israel to her place, and she shall employ them as slaves and slave-girls on the land of the LORD; she shall take her captors captive and rule over her task-masters.

³When the LORD gives you relief from your pain and your fears and from the cruel slavery laid upon you, ⁴you will take up this song of derision over the king of Babylon:

See how the oppressor has met his end and his frenzy ceased!

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

⁶who struck down peoples in his rage
with unerring blows,
who crushed nations in anger
and persecuted them unceasingly.

⁷The whole world has rest and is at peace;
it breaks into cries of joy.

⁸The pines themselves and the cedars of Lebanon exult over you:
Since you have been laid low, they say,
no man comes up to fell us.

⁹Sheol below was all astir
to meet you at your coming;
she roused the ancient dead to meet you,
all who had been leaders on earth;
she made all who had been kings of the nations
rise from their thrones.

¹⁰One and all they greet you with these words:
So you too are weak as we are,
and have become one of us!

¹¹Your pride and all the music of your lutes
have been brought down to Sheol [*Or Your pride has been brought down to
Sheol to the crowding throng of your dead*];
maggots are the pallet beneath you,

and worms your coverlet.

¹²How you have fallen from heaven, bright morning star,
felled to the earth, sprawling helpless across the nations!

¹³You thought in your own mind,
I will scale the heavens;
I will set my throne high above the stars of God,
I will sit on the mountain where the gods meet
in the far recesses of the north.

¹⁴I will rise high above the cloud-banks
and make myself like the Most High.

¹⁵Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,
to the depths of the abyss.

¹⁶Those who see you will stare at you,
they will look at you and ponder:
Is this, they will say, the man who shook the earth,
who made kingdoms quake,

¹⁷who turned the world into a desert
and laid its cities in ruins,
who never let his prisoners go free to their homes,

¹⁸the kings of every land?

Now they lie all of them in honour,
each in his last home.

¹⁹But you have been flung out unburied,
mere loathsome carrion,
a companion to the slain pierced by the sword
who have gone down to the stony abyss.

And you, a corpse trampled underfoot,

²⁰shall not share burial with them,
for you have ruined your land and slaughtered your people.
Such a brood of evildoers shall never be seen again.

²¹Make the shambles ready for his sons
butchered for their fathers' sin;
they shall not rise up and possess the world
not cover the face of the earth with cities.

²²I will rise against them, says the LORD of Hosts; I will destroy the name of Babylon
and what remains of her, her offspring and posterity, says the LORD; ²³I will make her a
haunt of the bustard, a waste of fen, and sweep her with the besom of destruction. This
is the very word of the LORD of Hosts.

²⁴The LORD of Hosts has sworn:
In very truth, as I planned, so shall it be;
as I designed, so shall it fall out:

²⁵I will break the Assyrian in my own land
and trample him underfoot upon my mountains;
his yoke shall be lifted from you,
his burden taken from your shoulders.

²⁶This is the plan prepared for the whole earth,

this the hand stretched out over all the nations.

²⁷For the LORD of Hosts has prepared his plan:
who shall frustrate it?

His is the hand stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

²⁸In the year that King Ahaz died this oracle came from God:

²⁹Let none of you rejoice, you Philistines,
because the rod that chastised you is broken;
for a viper shall be born of a snake as a plant from the root,
and its fruit shall be a flying serpent.

³⁰But the poor shall graze their flocks in my meadows,
and the destitute shall lie down in peace;
but the offspring of your roots I will kill by starvation,
and put the remnant of you to death.

³¹Howl in the gate, cry for help in the city
let all Philistia be in turmoil;
for a great enemy is coming from the north,
not a man straying from his ranks.

³²What answer is there for the envoys of the nation?
This, that the LORD has fixed Zion in her place,
and the afflicted among his people shall take refuge there.

15¹Moab: an oracle.

On the night when Ar is sacked, Moab meets her doom;
on the night when Kir is sacked, Moab meets her doom.

²The people of Dibon go up [The people ... go up: *prob. rdg, Heb* He has
gone up to the house and Dibon] to the hill-shrines to weep;
Moab howls over Nebo and over Medeba.

The hair is torn from every head, and every beard shaved off.

³In the streets men go clothed with sackcloth,
they cry out on the roofs;
in the public squares every man howls,
weeping as he goes through them.

⁴Heshbon and Elealeh cry for help,
their voices are heard as far as Jahaz.
Thus Moab's stoutest warriors become cowards,
and her courage ebbs away.

⁵My heart cries out for Moab,
whose nobles have fled [*have fled: prob. rdg, Heb omitted*] as far as Zoar
[*prob. rdg, Heb adds Eglath Shelishiya*].

On the ascent to Luhith men go up weeping;
on the road to Horonaim there are cries of 'Disaster!'

⁶The waters of Nimrim are desolate indeed;
the grass is parched, the herbage dead,
not a green thing is left;

⁷and so the people carry off across the gorge of the Arabim
their hard-earned wealth and all their savings.

⁸The cry for help echoes round the frontiers of Moab,

their howling reaches Eglaim and Beer-elim.

⁹The waters of Dimon already run with blood;
yet I have more troubles in store for Dimon,
for I have a vision [I have a vision: *prob. rdg, Heb a lion*] of the survivors of
Moab,
of the remnant of Admah.

16¹The rulers of the country send a present of lambs
from Sela in the wilderness
to the hill of the daughter of Zion;

²the daughters of Moab at the fords of the Arnon
shall be like fluttering birds, like scattered nestlings.

³Take up our cause with all your might;
let your shadow shield us at high noon, dark as night.
Shelter the homeless, do not betray the fugitive;

⁴let the homeless people of Moab find refuge with you;
hide them from the despoiler.'

When extortion has done its work and the looting is over,
when the heel of the oppressor has vanished from the land,
⁵a throne shall be set up in mutual trust in David's tent,
and on it there shall sit a true judge,
one who seeks justice and is swift to do right.

⁶We have heard tell of Moab's pride, how great it is,
we have heard of his pride, his overweening pride;
his talk is full of lies.

⁷For this all Moab shall howl;
Moab shall howl indeed;
he [*prob. rdg, Heb you*] shall mourn for the prosperous farmers of Kir-
hareseth,
utterly ruined;

⁸the orchards of Heshbon,
the vines of Sibmah languish,
though their red grapes once laid low the lords of the nations,
though they reached as far as Jazer
and trailed out to the wilderness,
though their branches spread abroad and crossed the sea.

⁹Therefore I will weep for Sibmah's vines as I weep for Jazer.
I will drench you with my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh;
for over your summer-fruits and your harvest
the shouts of the harvesters are ended.

¹⁰Joy and gladness shall be banished from the meadows,
no more shall men shout and sing in the vineyards,
no more shall they tread wine in the winepresses;
I have silenced the shouting of the harvesters.

¹¹Therefore my heart throbs
like a harp for Moab,
and my very soul for Kir-hareseth [*prob. rdg, Heb Kir-hares*].

¹²When Moab comes to worship

and wearies himself at the hill-shrines,
when he enters his sanctuary to pray,
he will gain nothing.

¹³These are the words which the LORD spoke long ago about Moab; ¹⁴and now he says,
In three years, as a hired labourer counts them off, the glory of Moab shall become
contemptible for all his vast numbers; a handful shall be left and those of no account.

17¹Damascus: an oracle.

Damascus shall be a city no longer,
she shall be but a heap of ruins.

²For ever desolate, flocks shall have her for their own,
and lie there undisturbed.

³No longer shall Ephraim boast a fortified city,
or Damascus a kingdom;
the remnant of Aram and the glory of Israel, their fate is one.
This is the very word of the LORD of Hosts.

⁴On that day Jacob's weight shall dwindle
and the fat on his limbs waste away,
⁵as when the harvester gathers up the standing corn
and reaps the ears in armfuls,
or as when a man gleanes the ears in the Vale of Rephaim,
⁶or as when one beats an olive-tree
and only gleanings are left on it,
two or three berries on the top of a branch,
four or five on the boughs of the fruiting tree.
This is the very word of the LORD the God of Israel.

⁷On that day men shall look to their Maker and turn their eyes to the Holy One of Israel;
⁸they shall not look to the altars made by their own hands nor to anything that their
fingers have made, sacred poles or incense-altars.

⁹On that day their strong cities shall be deserted like the cities of the Hivites and the
Amorites, which they abandoned when Israel came in; all shall be desolate.

¹⁰For you forgot the God who delivered you,
and did not remember the rock, your stronghold.
Plant then, if you will, your gardens in honour of Adonis,
strike your cuttings for a foreign god;

¹¹protect your gardens on the day you plant them,
and next day make the seed sprout.
But the crop will be scorched when wasting disease comes
in the day of incurable pain.

¹²Listen! it is the thunder of many peoples,
they thunder with the thunder of the sea.
Listen! it is the roar of nations
roaring with the roar of mighty waters.

¹³When he rebukes them, away they fly,
driven like chaff on the hills before the wind,
like thistledown before the storm.

¹⁴At evening all is confusion,
and before morning they are gone.
Such is the fate of our plunderers,
the lot of those who despoil us.

18¹There is a land of sailing ships,
a land beyond the rivers of Cush
²which sends its envoys by the Nile,
journeying on the waters in vessels of reed.
Go, swift messengers,
go to a people tall and smooth-skinned,
to a people dreaded near and far,
a nation strong and proud,
whose land is scoured by rivers.

³All you who dwell in the world, inhabitants of earth,
shall see when the signal is hoisted on the mountains
and shall hear when the trumpet sounds.

⁴These were the words of the LORD to me:

From my dwelling-place I will look quietly down
when the heat shimmers in the summer sun,
when the dew is heavy at harvest time.

⁵Before the vintage, when the budding is over
and the flower ripens into a berry,
the shoots shall be cut down with knives,
the branches struck off and cleared away.

⁶All shall be left to birds of prey on the hills
and to beasts of the earth;
in summer the birds shall make their home there,
in winter every beast of the earth.

⁷At that time tribute shall be brought to the LORD of Hosts from a people tall and smooth-skinned, dreaded near and far, a nation strong and proud, whose land is scoured by rivers. They shall bring it to Mount Zion, the place where men invoke the name of the LORD of Hosts.

19¹Egypt: an oracle.

See how the LORD comes riding swiftly upon a cloud,
he shall descend upon Egypt;
the idols of Egypt quail before him,
Egypt's courage melts within her.

²I will set Egyptian against Egyptian,
and they shall fight one against another,
neighbour against neighbour,
city against city and kingdom against kingdom.

³Egypt's spirit shall sink within her,
and I will throw her counsels into confusion.
They may resort to idols and oracle-mongers,
to ghosts and spirits,
⁴but I will hand Egypt over to a hard master,
and a cruel king shall rule over them.
This is the very word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts.

⁵The waters of the Nile shall drain away,
the river shall be parched and run dry;
⁶its channels shall stink,
the streams of Egypt shall be parched and dry up;
reeds and rushes shall wither away;
⁷the lotus too beside the Nile [*prob. rdg, Heb adds on the mouth of the Nile*]
and all that is sown along the Nile shall dry up,
shall be blown away and vanish.
⁸The fishermen shall groan and lament,
all who cast their hooks into the Nile
and those who spread nets on the water shall lose heart.
⁹The flax-dressers shall hang their heads,
the women carding and the weavers shall grow pale,
¹⁰Egypt's spinners shall be downcast,
and all her artisans sick at heart.

¹¹Fools that you are, you princes of Zoan!
Wisest of Pharaoh's counsellors you may be,
but stupid counsellors you are.
How can you say to Pharaoh,
'I am the heir of wise men and spring from ancient kings'?

¹²Where are your wise men, Pharaoh,
to teach you and make known to you
what the LORD of Hosts has planned for Egypt?

¹³Zoan's princes are fools, the princes of Noph are dupes;
the chieftains of her clans have led Egypt astray.

¹⁴The LORD has infused into them
a spirit that warps their judgement;
they make Egypt miss her way in all she does,
as a drunkard will miss his footing as he vomits.

¹⁵There shall be nothing in Egypt that any man can do,
head or tail, palm or rush.

¹⁶When that day comes the Egyptians shall become weak as women; they shall fear and tremble when they see the LORD of Hosts raise his hand against them, as raise it he will. ¹⁷The land of Judah shall strike terror into Egypt; its very name shall cause dismay, because of the plans that the LORD of Hosts has laid against them.

¹⁸When that day comes there shall be five cities in Egypt speaking the language of

Canaan and swearing allegiance to the LORD of Hosts, and one of them shall be called the City of the Sun [the City of the Sun: *or* Heliopolis].

¹⁹When that day comes there shall be an altar to the LORD in the heart of Egypt, and a sacred pillar set up for the LORD upon her frontier. ²⁰It shall stand as a token and a reminder to the LORD of Hosts in Egypt, so that when they appeal to him against their oppressors, he may send a deliverer to champion their cause, and he shall rescue them. ²¹The LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians; on that day they shall acknowledge the LORD and do him service with sacrifice and grain-offering, make vows to him and pay them. ²²The LORD will strike down Egypt, healing as he strikes; then they will turn back to him and he will hear their prayers and heal them.

²³When that day comes there shall be a highway between Egypt and Assyria; Assyrians shall come to Egypt and Egyptians to Assyria; then Egyptians shall worship with [Or shall be slaves to] Assyrians.

²⁴When that day comes Israel shall rank with Egypt and Assyria, those three, and shall be a blessing in the centre of the world. ²⁵So the LORD of Hosts will bless them: A blessing be upon Egypt my people, upon Assyria the work of my hands, and upon Israel my possession.

20¹SARGON KING OF ASSYRIA SENT his commander-in-chief [*Or* sent Tartan] to Ashdod, and he took it by storm. ²At that time the LORD said to Isaiah son of Amoz, Come, strip the sackcloth from your waist and take your sandals off. He did so, and went about naked and barefoot. ³The LORD said, My servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a warning to Egypt and Cush; ⁴just so shall the king of Assyria lead the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush naked and barefoot, their buttocks shamefully exposed, young and old alike. ⁵All men shall be dismayed, their hopes in Cush and their pride in Egypt humbled. ⁶On that day those who dwell along this coast will say, So much for all our hopes on which we relied for help and deliverance from the king of Assyria; what escape have we now?

21¹A wilderness: an oracle.

Rough weather, advancing like a storm in the south,
coming from the wilderness, from a land of terror!

²Grim is the vision shown to me:
the traitor betrayed, the spoiler himself despoiled.
Up, Elam; up, Medes, to the siege,
no time for weariness!

³At this my limbs writhe in anguish,
I am gripped by pangs like a woman in labour.
I am distraught past hearing, dazed past seeing,
⁴my mind reels, sudden convulsions seize me.

The cool twilight I longed for has become a terror:
⁵the banquet is set out, the rugs are spread;
they are eating and drinking –
rise, princes, burnish your shields.

⁶For these were the words of the Lord to me:
Go, post a watchman to report what he sees.

⁷He sees chariots, two-horsed chariots,
riders on asses, riders on camels.
He is alert, alert, always on the alert.

⁸Then the look-out cried:
All day long I stand on the Lord's watch-tower
and night after night I keep my station.

⁹See, there come men in a chariot, a two-horsed chariot.
And a voice calls back:
Fallen, fallen is Babylon,
and all the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground.

¹⁰O my people,
once trodden out and winnowed on the threshing-floor,
what I have heard from the LORD of Hosts,
from the God of Israel, I have told you.

¹¹Dumah: an oracle.

One calls to me from Seir:
Watchman, what is left of the night?
Watchman, what is left?

¹²The watchman answered:
Morning comes, and also night [and also night: *or* and the night is full
spent].
Ask if you must; then come back again.

¹³With the Arabs: an oracle.

You caravans of Dedan, that camp in the scrub with the Arabs,
¹⁴bring water to meet the thirsty.
You dwellers in Tema, meet the fugitives with food,
¹⁵for they flee from the sword, the sharp edge of the sword,
from the bent bow, and from the press of battle.

¹⁶For these are the words of the Lord to me: Within a year, as a hired labourer counts
off the years, all the glory of Kedar shall come to an end; ¹⁷few shall be the bows left to
the warriors of Kedar.

The LORD the God of Israel has spoken.

22¹The Valley of Vision [*Or of Calamity*]: an oracle.

Tell me, what is amiss
that you have all climbed on to the roofs,
²O city full of tumult, town in ferment
and filled with uproar,
whose slain were not slain with the sword
and did not die in battle?

³Your commanders are all in flight,
huddled together out of bowshot;

all your stoutest warriors are huddled together,
they have taken to their heels.

⁴Then I said, Turn your eyes away from me;
leave me to weep in misery.
Do not thrust consolation on me
for the ruin of my own people.

⁵For the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, has ordained a day of tumult, a day of trampling and turmoil in the Valley of Vision [*Or of Calamity*], rousing cries for help that echo among the mountains.

⁶Elam took up his quiver,
horses were harnessed to the chariots of Aram [*prob. rdg, Heb man*],
Kir took the cover from his shield.

⁷Your fairest valleys were overrun by chariots and horsemen,
the gates were hard beset,

⁸the heart of Judah's defence was laid open.

On that day you looked to the weapons stored in the House of the Forest; ⁹you filled all the many pools in the City of David, collecting water from the Lower Pool [you filled ... Lower Pool: *or you took note of the cracks, many as they were, in the wall of the City of David, and you collected water from the Lower Pool*]. ¹⁰Then you surveyed the houses in Jerusalem, tearing some down to make the wall inaccessible, ¹¹and between the two walls you made a cistern for the Waters of the Old Pool;

but you did not look to the Maker of it all
or consider him who fashioned it long ago.

¹²On that day the Lord, the LORD of Hosts,
called for weeping and beating the breast,
for shaving the head and putting on sackcloth;

¹³but instead there was joy and merry-making,
slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep,
eating of meat and drinking of wine, as you thought,
Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.

¹⁴The LORD of Hosts has revealed himself to me; in my hearing he swore:
Your wickedness shall never be purged
until you die.
This is the word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁵These were the words of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts:

Go to this steward,
to Shebna, comptroller of the household, and say:

¹⁶What right, what business, have you here,
that you have dug yourself a grave here,
cutting out your grave on a height
and carving yourself a resting-place in the rock?

¹⁷The LORD will shake you out,
shake you as a garment [*prob. rdg, Heb man*] is shaken out
to rid it of lice;

then he will bundle you tightly ¹⁸and throw you
like a ball into a great wide land.
There you shall die,
and there shall lie your chariot of honour,
an object of contempt to your master's household.

¹⁹I will remove you from office and drive you from your post.

²⁰On that day I will send for my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah; ²¹I will invest him with your robe, gird him with your sash; and hand over your authority to him. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the people of Judah. ²²I will lay the key of the house of David on his shoulder; what he opens no man shall shut, and what he shuts no man shall open. He shall be a seat of honour for his father's family; ²³I will fasten him firmly in place like a peg. ²⁴On him shall hang all the weight of the family, down to the lowest dregs – all the little vessels, both bowls and pots. ²⁵On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, the peg which was firmly fastened in its place shall be removed; it shall be hacked out and shall fall, and the load of things hanging on it shall be destroyed. The LORD has spoken.

23¹Tyre: an oracle.

The ships of Tarshish howl, for the harbour is sacked;
the port of entry from Kittim is swept away.

²⁻³The people of the sea-coast, the merchants of Sidon, wail,
people whose agents cross the great waters,
whose harvest [*whose harvest: prob. rdg, Heb the harvest of the Nile*] is the
grain of the Shihor
and their revenue the trade of nations.

⁴Sidon, the sea-fortress [*the sea-fortress: prob. rdg, Heb the sea, sea-fortress, saying*], cries in her disappointment [*in her disappointment: prob. rdg, Heb be disappointed*],

I no longer feel the anguish of labour or bear children;
I have no young sons to rear, no daughters to bring up.

⁵When the news is confirmed in Egypt
her people sway in anguish at the fate of Tyre.

⁶Make your way to Tarshish, they say,
howl, you who dwell by the sea-coast.

⁷Is this your busy city, ancient in story,
on whose voyages you were carried to settle far away?

⁸Whose plan was this against Tyre, the city of battlements,
whose merchants were princes
and her traders the most honoured men on earth?

⁹The LORD of Hosts planned it to prick every noble's pride
and bring all the most honoured men on earth into contempt.

¹⁰Take to the tillage of your fields, you people of Tarshish;
for your market [*prob. rdg, Heb girdle*] is lost.

¹¹The LORD has stretched out his hand over the sea
and shaken kingdoms,

he has given his command to destroy the marts of Canaan;
¹²and he has said, You shall busy yourselves no more,
you, the sorely oppressed virgin city of Sidon.
Though you arise and cross over to Kittim,
even there you shall find no rest.

¹³Look at this land, the destined home of ships [*Or marmots*]! The Chaldaeans [*prob. rdg, Heb adds this was the people; it was not Assyria*] erected their [*prob. rdg, Heb his*] siege-towers, dismantled its palaces and laid it in ruins.

¹⁴Howl, you ships of Tarshish;
for your haven is sacked.

¹⁵From that day Tyre shall be forgotten for seventy years, the span of one king's life. At the end of the seventy years her plight shall be that of the harlot in the song:

¹⁶Take your harp, go round the city,
poor forgotten harlot;
touch the strings sweetly, sing all your songs,
make men remember you again.

¹⁷At the end of seventy years, the LORD will turn again to Tyre; she shall go back to her old trade and hire herself out to every kingdom on earth. ¹⁸The profits of her trading will be dedicated to the LORD; they shall not be hoarded or stored up, but shall be given to those who worship the LORD, to purchase food in plenty and fine attire.

The LORD's judgement on the earth

24¹Beware, the LORD will empty the earth,
split it open and turn it upside down,
and scatter its inhabitants.

²Then it will be the same for priest and people,
the same for master and slave, mistress and slave-girl,
seller and buyer,
borrower and lender, debtor and creditor.

³The earth is emptied clean away
and stripped clean bare.
For this is the word that the LORD has spoken.

⁴The earth dries up and withers,
the whole world withers and grows sick;
the earth's high places sicken,

⁵and earth itself is desecrated by the feet of those who live in it,
because they have broken the laws, disobeyed the statutes
and violated the eternal covenant.

⁶For this a curse has devoured the earth
and its inhabitants stand aghast.
For this those who inhabit the earth dwindle
and only a few men are left.

⁷The new wine dries up, the vines sicken,
and all the revellers turn to sorrow.

⁸Silent the merry beat of tambourines,
hushed the shouts of revelry,
the merry harp is silent.

⁹No one shall drink wine to the sound of song;
the liquor will be bitter to the man who drinks it.

¹⁰The city of chaos is a broken city,
every house barred, that no one may enter.

¹¹Men call for wine in the streets;
all revelry is darkened,
and mirth is banished from the land.

¹²Desolation alone is left in the city
and the gate is broken into pieces.

¹³So shall it be in all the world, in every nation,
as when an olive-tree is beaten and stripped,
as when the vintage is ended.

¹⁴Men raise their voices and cry aloud,
they shout in the west [in the west: *or* more loudly than the sea], so great is
the LORD's majesty.

¹⁵Therefore let the LORD be glorified in the regions of the east,
and the name of the LORD the God of Israel
in the coasts and islands of the west.

¹⁶From the ends of the earth we have heard them sing,
How lovely is righteousness!
But I thought, Villainy, villainy!
Woe to the traitors and their treachery!
Traitors double-dyed they are indeed!

¹⁷The hunter's scare, the pit, and the trap
threaten all who dwell in the land;

¹⁸if a man runs from the rattle of the scare
he will fall into the pit;
if he climbs out of the pit
he will be caught in the trap.

When the windows of heaven above are opened
and earth's foundations shake,

¹⁹the earth is utterly shattered,
it is convulsed and reels wildly.

²⁰The earth reels to and fro like a drunken man
and sways like a watchman's shelter;
the sins of men weigh heavy upon it,
and it falls to rise no more.

²¹On that day the LORD will punish
the host of heaven in heaven, and on earth the kings of the earth,

²²herded together, close packed like prisoners in a dungeon;

shut up in gaol, after a long time they shall be punished.
²³The moon shall grow pale and the sun hide its face in shame;
for the LORD of Hosts has become king
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and shows his glory before their elders.

The deliverance and ingathering of Judah

25¹O LORD, thou art my God;
I will exalt thee and praise thy name;
for thou hast accomplished a wonderful purpose,
certain and sure, from of old.
²For thou hast turned cities into heaps of ruin,
and fortified towns into rubble;
every mansion in the cities is swept away,
never to be rebuilt.
³For this a cruel nation holds thee in honour,
the cities of ruthless nations fear thee.
⁴Truly thou hast been a refuge to the poor,
a refuge to the needy in his trouble,
shelter from the tempest and shade from the heat.
For the blast of the ruthless is like an icy storm
⁵or a scorching drought;
thou subduest the roar of the foe [*prob. rdg, Heb adds heat in the shadow of
a cloud*],
and the song of the ruthless dies away.

⁶On this mountain the LORD of Hosts will prepare
a banquet of rich fare for all the peoples,
a banquet of wines well matured and richest fare,
well-matured wines strained clear.
⁷On this mountain the LORD will swallow up
that veil that shrouds all the peoples,
the pall thrown over all the nations;
⁸he will swallow up death for ever.
Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears
from every face.
and remove the reproach of his people from the whole earth.
The LORD has spoken.

⁹On that day men will say,
See, this is our God
for whom we have waited to deliver us;
this is the LORD for whom we have waited;
let us rejoice and exult in his deliverance.
¹⁰For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain,
but Moab shall be trampled under his feet
as straw is trampled into a midden.

¹¹In it Moab shall spread out his hands
as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim,
but he shall sink his pride with every stroke of his hands.

¹²The LORD has thrown down the high defences of your walls,
has levelled them to the earth
and brought them down to the dust.

26¹On that day this song shall be sung in Judah:

We have a strong city
whose walls and ramparts are our deliverance.

²Open the gates to let a righteous nation in,
a nation that keeps faith.

³Thou dost keep in peace men of constant mind,
in peace because they trust in thee.

⁴Trust in the LORD for ever;
for the LORD himself is an everlasting rock.

⁵He has brought low all who dwell high in a towering city;
he levels it to the ground and lays it in the dust,

⁶that the oppressed and the poor may tread it underfoot.

⁷The path of the righteous is level,
and thou markest out the right way for the upright.

⁸We too look to the path prescribed in thy laws, O LORD;
thy name and thy memory are our heart's desire.

⁹With all my heart I long for thee in the night,
I seek thee eagerly when dawn breaks;
for, when thy laws prevail in the land,
the inhabitants of the world learn justice.

¹⁰The wicked are destroyed, they have never learnt justice;
corrupt in a land of honest ways,
they do not regard the majesty of the LORD.

¹¹O LORD, thy hand is lifted high,
but the bitter enemies of thy people do not see it [*prob. rdg, Heb adds let them see and be ashamed*];
let the fire of thy enmity destroy them.

¹²O LORD, thou wilt bestow prosperity on us;
for in truth all our works are thy doing.

¹³O LORD our God,
other lords than thou have been our masters,
but thee alone do we invoke by name.

¹⁴The dead will not live again,
those long in their graves will not rise;
to this end thou hast punished them and destroyed them,
and made all memory of them perish.

¹⁵Thou hast enlarged the nation, O LORD,
enlarged it and won thyself honour,
thou hast extended all the frontiers of the land.

¹⁶In our distress, O LORD, we [*prob. rdg, Heb they*] sought thee out,

chastened by the mere whisper of thy rebuke.

¹⁷As a woman with child, when her time is near,
is in labour and cries out in her pains,
so were we in thy presence, O LORD.

¹⁸We have been with child, we have been in labour,
but have brought forth wind.

We have won no success for the land,
and no one will be born to inhabit the world.

¹⁹But thy dead live, their bodies will rise again.
They that sleep in the earth will awake and shout for joy;
for thy dew is a dew of sparkling light,
and the earth will bring those long dead to birth again.

²⁰Go, my people, enter your rooms
and shut your doors behind you;
withdraw for a brief while, until wrath has gone by.

²¹For see, the LORD is coming from his place
to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their sins;
then the earth shall uncover her blood-stains
and hide her slain no more.

27¹On that day the Lord will punish
with his cruel sword, his mighty and powerful sword,
Leviathan that twisting [*Or primeval*] sea-serpent,
that writhing serpent Leviathan,
and slay the monster of the deep.

²On that day sing to the pleasant vineyard,

³I the LORD am its keeper,
moment by moment I water it for fear its green leaves fail.
Night and day I tend it,

⁴but I get no wine;

I would as soon have briars and thorns,
then I would wage war upon it and burn it all up,

⁵unless it grasps me as its refuge and makes peace with me –
unless it makes peace with me.

⁶In time to come Jacob's offspring shall take root
and Israel shall bud and blossom,
and they shall fill the whole earth with fruit.

⁷Has God struck him down as he struck others down?
Has the slayer been slain as he slew others?

⁸⁻¹⁰[*vv8-10 rearranged thus: 9, 10a, 8, 10b*] This then purges Jacob's iniquity,
this [*prob. rdg, Heb adds all fruit*] has removed his sin:
that he grinds all altar stones to powder like chalk;
no sacred poles and incense-altars are left standing.

The fortified city is left solitary,
and his quarrel with her ends in brushing her away [*prob. rdg, Heb adds by*]

dismissing her],
removing her by a cruel blast when the east wind blows;
it is a homestead stripped bare, deserted like a wilderness;
there the calf grazes and there lies down,
and crops every twig.

¹¹Its boughs snap off when they grow dry,
and women come and light their fires with them.
For they are a people without sense;
therefore their maker will show them no mercy,
he who formed them will show them no favour.

¹²On that day the LORD will beat out the grain,
from the streams of the Euphrates to the Torrent of Egypt;
but you Israelites will be gleaned
one by one.

¹³On that day
a blast shall be blown on a great trumpet,
and those who are lost in Assyria
and those dispersed in Egypt will come in
and worship the LORD on the holy mountain, in Jerusalem.

Assyria and Judah

28¹Oh, the proud garlands of the drunkards of Ephraim
and the flowering sprays, so lovely in their beauty,
on the heads of revellers dripping with perfumes,
overcome with wine!

²See, the Lord has one at his bidding, mighty and strong,
whom he sets to work with violence against the land,
like a sweeping storm of hail, like a destroying tempest,
like a torrent of water in overwhelming flood.

³The proud garlands of Ephraim's drunkards
shall be trampled underfoot,

⁴and the flowering sprays, so lovely in their beauty
on the heads dripping with perfumes,
shall be like early figs ripe before summer;
he who sees them plucks them,
and their bloom is gone while they lie in his hand.

⁵On that day the LORD of Hosts shall be a lovely garland,
a beautiful diadem for the remnant of his people,

⁶a spirit of justice for one who presides in a court of justice,
and of valour for [for: *prob. rdg, Heb omitted*] those who repel the enemy at
the gate.

⁷These too are addicted to wine,
clamouring in their cups:
priest and prophet are addicted to strong drink

and bemused with wine;
clamouring in their cups, confirmed toppers [These too ... toppers: *or* These too lose their way through wine and are set wandering by strong drink: priest and prophet lose their way through strong drink and are fuddled with wine; are set wandering by strong drink, lose their way through tippling], hiccuping in drunken stupor;

⁸every table is covered with vomit,
filth that leaves no clean spot.

⁹Who is it that the prophet hopes to teach,
to whom will what they hear make sense?
Are they babes newly weaned, just taken from the breast?

¹⁰It is all harsh cries and raucous shouts,
'A little more here, a little there!'

¹¹So it will be with barbarous speech and strange tongue
that this people will hear God speaking,

¹²this people to whom he once said,
'This is true rest; let the exhausted have rest.
This is repose, and they refused to listen.

¹³Now to them the word of the LORD will be
harsh cries and raucous shouts,
'A little more here, a little there! –
and so, as they walk, they will stumble backwards,
they will be injured, trapped and caught.

¹⁴Listen then to the word of the LORD, you arrogant men
who rule this people in Jerusalem.

¹⁵You say, 'We have made a treaty with Death
and signed a pact with Sheol:
so that, when the raging flood sweeps by, it shall not touch us;
for we have taken refuge in lies
and sheltered behind falsehood.'

¹⁶These then are the words of the Lord GOD:
Look, I am laying a stone in Zion, a block of granite,
a precious corner-stone for a firm foundation;
he who has faith shall not waver.

¹⁷I will use justice as a plumb-line
and righteousness as a plummet;
hail shall sweep away your refuge of lies,
and flood-waters carry away your shelter.

¹⁸Then your treaty with Death shall be annulled
and your pact with Sheol shall not stand;
the raging waters will sweep by,
and you will be like land swept by the flood.

¹⁹As often as it sweeps by, it will take you;
morning after morning it will sweep by,
day and night.

The very thought of such tidings
will bring nothing but dismay;

²⁰for 'The bed is too short for a man to stretch,
and the blanket too narrow to cover him.'

²¹But the LORD shall arise as he rose on Mount Perazim
and storm with rage as he did in the Vale of Gibeon
to do what he must do – how strange a deed!
to perform his work – how outlandish a work!

²²But now have done with your arrogance,
lest your bonds grow tighter;
for I have heard destruction decreed
by the Lord GOD of Hosts for the whole land.

²³Listen and hear what I say,
attend and hear my words.

²⁴Will the ploughman continually plough for the sowing,
breaking his ground and harrowing it?

²⁵Does he not, once he has levelled it,
broadcast the dill and scatter the cumin?
Does he not plant the wheat in rows
with barley [*prob. rdg, Heb adds an unintelligible word*] and spelt along the
edge?

²⁶Does not his God instruct him and train him aright?

²⁷Dill is not threshed with a sledge,
and the cartwheel is not rolled over cumin;
dill is beaten with a rod,
and cumin with a flail.

²⁸Corn is crushed, but not to the uttermost,
not with a final crushing;
his cartwheels rumble over it and break it up,
but they do not grind it fine.

²⁹This message, too, comes from the LORD of Hosts,
whose purposes are wonderful
and his power great.

29¹Alas for Ariel! Ariel,
the city where David encamped.

Add year to year,
let the pilgrim-feasts run their round,

²and I will bring Ariel to sore straits,
when there shall be moaning and lamentation.
I will make her my Ariel indeed, my fiery altar.

³I will throw my army round you like a wall;
I will set a ring of outposts all round you
and erect siege-works against you.

⁴You shall be brought low, you will speak out of the ground
and your words will issue from the earth;
your voice will come like a ghost's from the ground,
and your words will squeak out of the earth.

⁵Yet the horde of your enemies shall crumble into dust,
the horde of ruthless foes shall fly like chaff.
Then suddenly, all in an instant,

⁶punishment shall come from the LORD of Hosts

with thunder and earthquake and a great noise,
with storm and tempest and a flame of devouring fire;
⁷and the horde of all the nations warring against Ariel,
all their baggage-trains and siege-works,
and all her oppressors themselves,
shall fade as a dream, a vision of the night.

⁸Like a starving man who dreams
and thinks that he is eating,
but wakes up to find himself empty,
or a thirsty man who dreams
and thinks that he is drinking,
but wakes up to find himself thirsty and dry,
so shall the horde of all the nations be
that war against Mount Zion.

⁹Loiter and be dazed, enjoy yourselves and be blinded,
be drunk but not with wine, reel but not with strong drink;
¹⁰for the LORD has poured upon you a spirit of deep stupor;
he has closed your eyes, the prophets,
and muffled your heads, the seers.

¹¹All prophetic vision has become for you like a sealed book. Give such a book to one
who can read and say, 'Come, read this'; he will answer, 'I cannot', because it is sealed.
¹²Give it to one who cannot read and say, 'Come, read this'; he will answer, 'I cannot
read.'

¹³Then the Lord said:
Because this people approach me with their mouths
and honour me with their lips
while their hearts are far from me,
and their religion is but a precept of men, learnt by rote,
¹⁴therefore I will yet again shock this people,
adding shock to shock:
the wisdom of their wise men shall vanish
and the discernment of the discerning shall be lost.

¹⁵Shame upon those who seek to hide their purpose
too deep for the LORD to see,
and who, when their deeds are done in the dark,
say, 'Who sees us? Who knows of us?'
¹⁶How you turn things upside down,
as if the potter ranked no higher than the clay!
Shall the thing made say of its maker, 'He did not make me?'
Shall the pot say of the potter, 'He has no skill'?

¹⁷The time is but short
before Lebanon goes back to grassland
and the grassland is no better than scrub.

¹⁸On that day deaf men shall hear

when a book is read,
and the eyes of the blind shall see
out of impenetrable darkness.

¹⁹The lowly shall once again rejoice in the LORD,
and the poorest of men exult in the Holy One of Israel.

²⁰The ruthless shall be no more, the arrogant shall cease to be;
those who are quick to see mischief,

²¹those who charge others with a sin
or lay traps for him who brings the wrongdoer into court
or by falsehood deny justice to the righteous –
all these shall be exterminated.

²²Therefore these are the words of the LORD the God of the house of Jacob, the God
who ransomed Abraham:

This is no time for Jacob to be shamed,
no time for his face to grow pale;

²³for his descendants will hallow my name
when they see what I have done in their nation.

They will hallow the Holy One of Jacob
and hold the God of Israel in awe;

²⁴those whose minds are confused will gain understanding,
and the obstinate will receive instruction.

30¹Oh, rebel sons! says the LORD,
you make plans, but not of my devising,
you weave schemes, but not inspired by me,
piling sin upon sin

²you hurry down to Egypt without consulting me,
to seek protection under Pharaoh's shelter
and take refuge under Egypt's wing.

³Pharaoh's protection will bring you disappointment
and refuge under Egypt's wing humiliation;

⁴for, though his officers are at Zoan
and his envoys reach as far as Hanes,

⁵all are left in sorry plight by that unprofitable nation,
no help they find, no profit, only disappointment and disgrace.

⁶The Beasts of the South: an oracle.

Through a land of hardship and distress
the tribes of lioness and roaring lion,
sand-viper and venomous flying serpent,
carry their wealth on the backs of asses
and their treasures on camels' humps
to an unprofitable people.

⁷Vain and worthless is the help of Egypt;
therefore have I given her this name,
Rahab Quelled.

⁸Now come and write it on a tablet,

engrave it as an inscription before their eyes,
that it may be there in future days,
a testimony for all time.

⁹For they are a race of rebels, disloyal sons,
sons who will not listen to the LORD's instruction;

¹⁰they say to the seers, 'You shall not see',
and to the visionaries, 'You shall have no true visions;
give us smooth words and seductive visions.

¹¹Turn aside, leave the straight path,
and rid us for ever of the Holy One of Israel.'

¹²These are the words of the Holy One of Israel:

Because you have rejected this warning
and trust in devious and dishonest practices,
resting on them for support,

¹³therefore you shall find this iniquity will be
like a crack running down
a high wall, which bulges
and suddenly, all in an instant, comes crashing down,

¹⁴as an earthen jar is broken with a crash,
mercilessly shattered,
so that not a shard is found among the fragments
to take fire from the glowing embers,
or to scoop up water from a pool.

¹⁵These are the words of the Lord GOD the Holy One of Israel:

Come back, keep peace, and you will be safe;
in stillness and in staying quiet, there lies your strength.

But you would have none of it; ¹⁶you said, No,
we will take horse and flee;
therefore you shall be put to flight:

We will ride apace;
therefore swift shall be the pace of your pursuers,

¹⁷When a thousand flee at the challenge of one,
you shall all flee at the challenge of five, until you are left
like a pole on a mountain-top, a signal post on a hill.

¹⁸Yet the LORD is waiting to show you his favour,
yet he yearns to have pity on you;
for the LORD is a God of justice.
Happy are all who wait for him!

¹⁹O people of Zion who dwell in Jerusalem, you shall weep no more. The LORD will show you favour and answer you when he hears your cry for help. ²⁰The Lord may give you bread of adversity and water of affliction, but he who teaches you shall no longer be hidden out of sight, but with your own eyes you shall see him always. ²¹If you stray from the road to right or left you shall hear with your own ears a voice behind you saying, This is the way; follow it. ²²You will reject, as things unclean, your silvered images and your idols sheathed in gold; you will loathe them like a foul discharge and

call them ordure [call them ordure: *or* say to them, Be off]. ²³The Lord will give you rain for the seed you sow, and as the produce of your soil he will give you heavy crops of corn in plenty. When that day comes the cattle shall graze in broad pastures; ²⁴the oxen and asses that work your land shall be fed with well-seasoned fodder, winnowed with shovel and fork. ²⁵On each high mountain and each lofty hill shall be streams of running water, on the day of massacre when the highest in the land fall. ²⁶The moon shall shine with a brightness like the sun's, and the sun with seven times his wonted brightness, seven days' light in one, on the day when the LORD binds up the broken limbs of his people and heals their wounds.

²⁷See, the name of the LORD comes from afar,
his anger blazing and his doom heavy.
His lips are charged with wrath
and his tongue is a devouring fire.

²⁸His breath is like a torrent in spate,
rising neck-high,
a yoke to force the nations to their ruin,
a bit in the mouth to guide the peoples astray.

²⁹But for you there shall be songs,
as on a night of sacred pilgrimage,
your hearts glad, as the hearts of men who walk to the sound of the pipe
on their way to the LORD's hill, to the rock of Israel.

³⁰Then the LORD shall make his voice heard in majesty
and show his arm sweeping down in fierce anger
with devouring flames of fire,
with cloudburst and tempests of rain and hailstones;

³¹for at the voice of the LORD Assyria's heart fails her,
as she feels the stroke of his rod.

³²Tambourines and harps and shaking sistrums
shall keep time
with every stroke of his rod,
of the chastisement which the LORD inflicts on her.

³³Long ago was Topheth made ready [*prob. rdg, Heb adds is that prepared also for the king?*],
made deep and broad,
its fire-pit a blazing mass of logs,
and the breath of the LORD like a stream of brimstone
blazing in it.

31¹Shame upon those who go down to Egypt for help
and rely on horses,
putting their trust in chariots many in number
and in horsemen in their thousands,
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel
or seek guidance of the LORD!

²Yet the LORD too in his wisdom can bring about trouble
and he does not take back his words;
he will rise up against the league of evildoers,
against all who help those who do wrong.

³The Egyptians are men, not God [*Or gods*],

their horses are flesh, not spirit;
and, when the LORD stretches out his hand,
the helper will stumble and he who is helped will fall,
and they will all vanish together.

⁴This is what the LORD has said to me:

As a lion or a young lion growls over its prey
when the muster of shepherds is called out against it,
and is not scared at their noise
or cowed by their clamour,
so shall the LORD of Hosts come down to do battle
for Mount Zion and her high summit.

⁵Thus the LORD of Hosts, like a bird hovering over its young,
will be a shield over Jerusalem;
he will shield her and deliver her,
standing over her and delivering her.

⁶O Israel, come back to him whom you have so deeply offended,

⁷for on that day when you spurn, one and all,
the idols of silver and the idols of gold
which your own sinful hands have made,

⁸Assyria shall fall by the sword, but by no sword of man;
a sword that no man wields shall devour him.

He shall flee before the sword,
and his young warriors shall be put to forced labour,

⁹his officers shall be helpless from terror
and his captains too dismayed to flee.

This is the very word of the LORD
whose fire blazes in Zion,
and whose furnace is set up in Jerusalem.

32¹Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness
and his rulers rule with justice,

²and a man shall be a refuge from the wind
and a shelter from the tempest,
or like runnels of water in dry ground,
like the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land.

³The eyes that can see will not be clouded,
and the ears that can hear will listen;

⁴the anxious heart will understand and know,
and the man who stammers will at once speak plain.

⁵The scoundrel will no longer be thought noble,
nor the villain called a prince;

⁶for the scoundrel will speak like a scoundrel
and will hatch evil in his heart;
he is an impostor in all his actions,
and in his words a liar even to the LORD;
he starves the hungry of their food
and refuses drink to the thirsty.

⁷The villain's ways are villainous

and he devises infamous plans
to ruin the poor with his lies
and deny justice to the needy.

⁸But the man of noble mind forms noble designs
and stands firm in his nobility.

⁹You women that live at ease, stand up
and hear what I have to say.
You young women without a care, mark my words.

¹⁰You have no cares now, but when the year is out, you will tremble,
for the vintage will be over and no produce gathered in.

¹¹You who are now at ease, be anxious;
tremble, you who have no cares.

Strip yourselves bare;
put a cloth round your waists

¹²and beat your breasts
for the pleasant fields and fruitful vines.

¹³On the soil of my people shall spring up thorns and briars,
in every happy home and in the busy town,

¹⁴for the palace is forsaken and the crowded streets deserted;
citadel [*Or hill; Heb Ophel*] and watch-tower are turned into open heath,
the joy of wild asses ever after and pasture for the flocks,

¹⁵until a spirit from on high is lavished upon us.

Then the wilderness will become grassland
and grassland will be cheap as scrub;

¹⁶then justice shall make its home in the wilderness,
and righteousness dwell in the grassland;

¹⁷when righteousness shall yield peace
and its fruit be quietness and confidence for ever.

¹⁸Then my people shall live in a tranquil country,
dwelling in peace, in houses full of ease;

¹⁹it will be cool on the slopes of the forest then,
and cities shall lie peaceful in the plain.

²⁰Happy shall you be, sowing every man by the water-side,
and letting ox and ass run free.

33¹Ah! you destroyer, yourself undestroyed,
betrayed still unbetrayed,
when you cease to destroy you will be destroyed,
after all your betrayals, you will be betrayed yourself.

²O LORD, show us thy favour; we hope in thee.
Uphold us every morning,
save us when troubles come.

³At the roar of the thunder the peoples flee,
at thy rumbling nations are scattered;

⁴their spoil is swept up as if young locusts had swept it,
like a swarm of locusts men swarm upon it.

⁵The LORD is supreme, for he dwells on high;
if you fill Zion with justice and with righteousness,
⁶then he will be the mainstay of the age [*the age: prob. rdg, Heb your times*]:
wisdom and knowledge are the assurance of salvation;
the fear of the LORD is her [*prob. rdg, Heb his*] treasure.

⁷Hark, how the valiant cry aloud for help,
and those sent to sue for peace weep bitterly!

⁸The highways are deserted, no travellers tread the roads.
Covenants are broken, treaties are flouted;
man is of no account.

⁹The land is parched and wilting,
Lebanon is eaten away and crumbling;
Sharon has become a desert,
Bashan and Carmel are stripped bare.

¹⁰Now, says the LORD, I will rise up.
Now I will exalt myself, now lift myself up.

¹¹What you conceive and bring to birth is chaff and stubble;
a wind like fire shall devour you.

¹²Whole nations shall be heaps of white ash,
or like thorns cut down and set on fire.

¹³You who dwell far away, hear what I have done;
acknowledge my might, you who are near.

¹⁴In Zion sinners quake with terror,
the godless are seized with trembling and ask,
Can any of us live with a devouring fire?
Can any live in endless burning?

¹⁵The man who lives an upright life and speaks the truth,
who scorns to enrich himself by extortion,
who snaps his fingers at a bribe,
who stops his ears to hear nothing of bloodshed,
who closes his eyes to the sight of evil –

¹⁶that is the man who shall dwell on the heights,
his refuge a fastness in the cliffs,
his bread secure and his water never failing.

¹⁷Your eyes shall see a king in his splendour
and will look upon a land of far distances.

¹⁸You will call to mind what once you feared:
'Where then is he that counted, where is he that weighed,
where is he that counted the treasures?'

¹⁹You will no longer see that barbarous people,
that people whose speech was so hard to catch,
whose stuttering speech you could not understand.

²⁰Look upon Zion, city of our solemn feasts,

let your eyes rest on Jerusalem,
a land of comfort, a tent that shall never be shifted,
whose pegs shall never be pulled up,
not one of its ropes cast loose.

²¹There we have the LORD's majesty [*Or* threshing-floor],
it will be a place [it ... place: *or* instead] of rivers and broad streams;
but [*Or* and] no galleys shall be rowed there,
no stately ship sail by.

²²For the LORD our judge, the LORD our law-giver,
the LORD our king – he himself will save us.

²³{Men may say, Your rigging is slack;
it will not hold the mast firm in its socket,
nor can the sails be spread.}

Then the blind man shall have a full share of the spoil
and the lame shall take part in the pillage;

²⁴no man who dwells there shall say, 'I am sick';
and the sins of the people who live there shall be pardoned.

Edom and Israel

34¹Approach, you nations, to listen,
and attend, you peoples;
let the earth listen and everything in it,
the world and all that it yields;

²for the LORD's anger is turned against all the nations
and his wrath against all the host of them:
he gives them over to slaughter and destruction.

³Their slain shall be flung out,
the stench shall rise from their corpses,
and the mountains shall stream with their blood.

⁴All the host of heaven shall crumble into nothing,
the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll,
and the starry host fade away,
as the leaf withers from the vine
and the ripening fruit from the fig-tree;

⁵for the sword of the LORD [the sword of the LORD: *prob. rdg, Heb* my sword] appears in heaven.

See how it descends in judgement on Edom,
on the people whom he dooms [*prob. rdg, Heb* I doom] to destruction.

⁶The LORD has a sword steeped in blood,
it is gorged with fat,
the fat of rams' kidneys, and the blood of lambs and goats;
for he has a sacrifice in Bozrah,
a great slaughter in Edom.

⁷Wild oxen shall come down and buffaloes [and buffaloes: *prob. rdg, Heb* omitted] with them,
bull and bison together,
and the land shall drink deep of blood

and the soil be sated with fat.

⁸For the LORD has a day of vengeance,
the champion of Zion has a year when he will requite.

⁹Edom's torrents shall be turned into pitch
and its soil into brimstone,
and the land shall become blazing pitch,

¹⁰which night and day shall never be quenched,
and its smoke shall go up for ever.

From generation to generation it shall lie waste,
and no man shall pass through it ever again.

¹¹Horned owl and bustard shall make their home in it,
screech-owl and raven shall haunt it.

He has stretched across it a measuring-line of chaos,

¹²and its frontiers shall be a jumble of stones.

No king shall be acclaimed there,
and all its princes shall come to nought.

¹³Thorns shall sprout in its palaces;
nettles and briars shall cover its walled towns.

It shall be rough land fit for wolves, a haunt of desert-owls.

¹⁴Marmots shall consort with jackals,
and he-goat shall encounter he-goat.

There too the nightjar shall rest
and find herself a place for repose.

¹⁵There the sand-partridge shall make her nest,
lay her eggs and hatch them
and gather her brood under her wings;
there shall the kites gather,
one after another.

¹⁶Consult the book of the LORD and read it:
not one of these shall be lacking,
not one miss its fellow,
for with his own mouth he has ordered it
and with his own breath he has brought them together.

¹⁷He it is who has allotted each its place,
and his hand has measured out their portions;
they shall occupy it for ever
and dwell there from generation to generation.

35¹Let the wilderness and the thirsty land be glad,
let the desert rejoice and burst into flower.

²Let it flower with fields of asphodel,
let it rejoice and shout for joy.

The glory of Lebanon is given to it,
the splendour too of Carmel and Sharon;
these shall see the glory of the LORD, the splendour of our God.

³Strengthen the feeble arms,
steady the tottering knees;

⁴say to the anxious, Be strong and fear not.
See, your God comes with vengeance,

with dread retribution he comes to save you.

⁵Then shall blind men's eyes be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

⁶Then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the dumb shout aloud;
for water springs up in the wilderness,
and torrents flow in dry land.

⁷The mirage becomes a pool,
the thirsty land bubbling springs;
instead of reeds and rushes, grass shall grow
in the rough land where wolves now lurk.

⁸And there shall be a causeway there
which shall be called the Way of Holiness,
and the unclean shall not pass along it;
it shall become a pilgrim's way [*a pilgrim's way: prob. rdg, Heb
unintelligible*],
no fool shall trespass on it.

⁹No lion shall come there,
no savage beast climb on to it;
not one shall be found there.

By it those he has ransomed shall return

¹⁰and the LORD's redeemed come home
they shall enter Zion with shouts of triumph,
crowned with everlasting gladness.

Gladness and joy shall be their escort,
and suffering and weariness shall flee away.

Jerusalem delivered from Sennacherib

36¹[*vv1-22. cp 2Kgs.18.13-37; 2Chr. 32.1-19*]IN THE FOURTEENTH YEAR of the reign of Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked and took all the fortified cities of Judah.

²From Lachish he sent the chief officer [*Or sent Rab-shakeh*] with a strong force to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem; and he halted by the conduit of the Upper Pool on the causeway which leads to the Fuller's Field. ³There Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the comptroller of the household, came out to him, with Shebna the adjutant-general and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary of state. ⁴The chief officer said to them, 'Tell Hezekiah that this is the message of the Great King, the king of Assyria: "What ground have you for this confidence of yours? ⁵Do you think fine words can take the place of skill and numbers? On whom then do you rely for support in your rebellion against me? ⁶On Egypt? Egypt is a splintered cane that will run into a man's hand and pierce it if he leans on it. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt proves to all who rely on him. ⁷And if you tell me that you are relying on the LORD your God, is he not the god whose hill-shrines and altars Hezekiah has suppressed, telling Judah and Jerusalem that they must prostrate themselves before this altar alone?"

⁸Now, make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses if you can find riders for them. ⁹Will you reject the authority of even the least of

my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ¹⁰Do you think that I have come to attack this land and destroy it without the consent of the LORD? No; the LORD himself said to me, "Attack this land and destroy it." '

¹¹Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the chief officer, 'Please speak to us in Aramaic, for we understand it, do not speak Hebrew to us within earshot of the people on the city wall.' ¹²The chief officer answered, 'Is it to your master and to you that my master has sent me to say this? Is it not to the people sitting on the wall who, like you, will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?' ¹³Then he stood and shouted in Hebrew, 'Hear the message of the Great King, the king of Assyria. ¹⁴These are the king's words: "Do not be taken in by Hezekiah. He cannot save you. ¹⁵Do not let him persuade you to rely on the LORD, and tell you that the LORD will save you and that this city will never be surrendered to the king of Assyria." ¹⁶Do not listen to Hezekiah; these are the words of the king of Assyria: "Make peace with me. Come out to me, and then you shall each eat the fruit of his own vine and his own fig-tree, and drink the water of his own cistern, ¹⁷until I come and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and new wine, of corn and vineyards. ¹⁸Beware lest Hezekiah mislead you by telling you that the LORD will save you. Did the god of any of these nations save his land from the king of Assyria? ¹⁹Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Where are the gods of Samaria? Did they save Samaria from me? ²⁰Among all the gods of these nations is there one who saved his land from me? And how is the LORD to save Jerusalem?" '

²¹The people were silent and answered not a word, for the king had given orders that no one was to answer him. ²²Eliakim son of Hilkiah, comptroller of the household, Shebna the adjutant-general, and Joah son of Asaph, secretary of state, came to Hezekiah with their clothes rent and reported what the chief officer had said.

37¹*[vv1-38. cp 2Kgs. 19.1-37; 2Chr. 32.20-22]* When King Hezekiah heard their report, he rent his clothes and wrapped himself in sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. ²He sent Eliakim comptroller of the household, Shebna the adjutant-general, and the senior priests, all covered in sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz, ³to give him this message from the king: 'This day is a day of trouble for us, a day of reproof and contempt. We are like a woman who has no strength to bear the child that is coming to the birth. ⁴It may be that the LORD your God heard the words of the chief officer whom his master the king of Assyria sent to taunt the living God, and will confute what he, the LORD your God, heard. Offer a prayer for those who still survive.' ⁵King Hezekiah's servants came to Isaiah, ⁶and he told them to say this to their master: 'This is the word of the LORD: "Do not be alarmed at what you heard when the lackeys of the king of Assyria blasphemed me. ⁷I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour and withdraw to his own country; and there I will make him fall by the sword." '

⁸So the chief officer withdrew. He heard that the king of Assyria had left Lachish, and he found him attacking Libnah. ⁹But when the king learnt that Tirhakah king of Cush was on the way to make war on him, he sent messengers again [*again: prob. rdg, cp 2Kgs. 19.9; Heb and he heard*] to Hezekiah king of Judah, ¹⁰to say to him, 'How can you be deluded by your god on whom you rely when he promises that Jerusalem shall not fall

into the hands of the king of Assyria? ¹¹Surely you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all countries, exterminating their people; can you then hope to escape? ¹²Did their gods save the nations which my forefathers destroyed, Gozan, Harran, Rezep, and the people of Beth-eden living in Telassar? ¹³Where are the kings of Hamath, of Arpad, and of Lahir, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?’

¹⁴Hezekiah took the letter from the messengers and read it; then he went up into the house of the LORD, spread it out before the LORD ¹⁵and offered this prayer: ¹⁶‘O LORD of Hosts, God of Israel, enthroned on the cherubim, thou alone art God of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. ¹⁷Turn thy ear to me, O LORD, and listen; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see; hear the message that Sennacherib has sent to taunt the living God. ¹⁸It is true, O LORD, that the kings of Assyria have laid waste every country, ¹⁹that they have consigned their gods to the fire and destroyed them; for they were no gods but the work of men’s hands, mere wood and stone. ²⁰But now, O LORD our God, save us from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou, O LORD, alone art God.’

²¹Isaiah son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah and said, ‘This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: I have heard your prayer to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria. ²²This is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him:

The virgin daughter of Zion disdains you,
she laughs you to scorn;
the daughter of Jerusalem tosses her head
as you retreat.

²³Whom have you taunted and blasphemed?
Against whom have you clamoured,
casting haughty glances at the Holy One of Israel?

²⁴You have sent your servants to taunt the Lord,
and said:

With my countless chariots I have gone up
high in the mountains, into the recesses of Lebanon.

I have cut down its tallest cedars,
the best of its pines,
I have reached its highest limit of forest and meadow [and meadow: *prob. rdg, Heb its meadow*].

²⁵I have dug wells
and drunk the waters of a foreign land,
and with the soles of my feet I have dried up
all the streams of Egypt.

²⁶Have you not heard long ago?
I did it all.

In days gone by I planned it
and now I have brought it about,
making fortified cities tumble down
into heaps of rubble.

²⁷Their citizens, shorn of strength,
disheartened and ashamed,

were but as plants in the field, as green herbs,
as grass on the roof-tops blasted before the east wind.

²⁸I know your rising up and your sitting down,
your going out and your coming in.

²⁹The frenzy of your rage against me and your arrogance
have come to my ears.

I will put a ring in your nose
and a hook in your lips,
and I will take you back by the road
on which you have come.

³⁰This shall be the sign for you: this year you shall eat shed grain and in the second year what is self-sown; but in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ³¹The survivors left in Judah shall strike fresh root under ground and yield fruit above ground, ³²for a remnant shall come out of Jerusalem and survivors from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this.

³³Therefore, this is the word of the LORD concerning the king of Assyria:

He shall not enter this city
nor shoot an arrow there,
he shall not advance against it with shield
nor cast up a siege-ramp against it.

³⁴By the way on which he came he shall go back;
this city he shall not enter.

This is the very word of the LORD.

³⁵I will shield this city to deliver it,
for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.'

³⁶The angel of the LORD went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp; when morning dawned, they all lay dead. ³⁷So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp, went back to Nineveh and stayed there. ³⁸One day, while he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons murdered him and escaped to the land of Ararat. He was succeeded by his son Esarhaddon.

38¹[vv1-8, 21, 22: cp 2Kgs. 20.1-11]At this time Hezekiah fell dangerously ill and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him and said, 'This is the word of the LORD: Give your last instructions to your household, for you are a dying man and will not recover.' ²Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and offered this prayer to the LORD: ³'O LORD, remember how I have lived before thee, faithful and loyal in thy service, always doing what was good in thine eyes.' And he wept bitterly. ⁴Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: ⁵'Go and say to Hezekiah: "This is the word of the LORD the God of your father David: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. ⁶I will deliver you and this city from the king of Assyria and will protect this city." ' ²¹[vv21, 22 transposed]Then Isaiah told them to apply a fig-plaster; so they made one and applied it to the boil, and he recovered. ²²Then Hezekiah said, 'By what sign shall I know that I shall go up into the house of the LORD?' ⁷And Isaiah said [And Isaiah said: prob. rdg, cp

2Kgs. 20.9; Heb omitted], 'This shall be your sign from the LORD that he will do what he has promised. ⁸Watch the shadow cast by the sun on the stairway of Ahaz: I will bring backwards ten steps the shadow which has gone down on the stairway.' And the sun went back ten steps on the stairway down which it had gone.

⁹A poem of Hezekiah king of Judah after his recovery from his illness, as it was written down:

¹⁰I thought: In the prime of life I must pass away;
for the rest of my years I am consigned to the gates of Sheol.

¹¹I said: I shall no longer see the LORD
in the land of the living;
never again, like those who live in the world,
shall I look on a man.

¹²My dwelling is taken from me,
pulled up like a shepherd's tent;
thou hast cut short my life like a weaver
who severs the web from the thrum.
From morning to night thou tormentest me,

¹³then I am racked with pain till the morning.
All my bones are broken, as a lion would break them;
from morning to night thou tormentest me.

¹⁴I twitter as if I were a swallow,
I moan like a dove.
My eyes falter as I look up to the heights;
O Lord, pay heed, stand surety for me.

¹⁵How can I complain, what can I say to the LORD
when he himself has done this?
I wander to and fro all my life long
in the bitterness of my soul.

¹⁶Yet, O Lord, my soul shall live with thee;
do thou give my spirit rest [*Yet ... rest: prob. rdg, Heb unintelligible*].
Restore me and give me life.

¹⁷Bitterness had indeed been my lot in place of prosperity;
but thou by thy love hast brought me back
from the pit of destruction;
for thou hast cast all my sins behind thee.

¹⁸Sheol cannot confess thee,
Death cannot praise thee,
nor can they who go down to the abyss
hope for thy truth.

¹⁹The living, the living alone can confess thee
as I do this day,
as a father makes thy truth known, O God, to his sons.

²⁰The LORD is at hand to save me;
so let us sound the music of our praises
all our life long in the house of the LORD. [*vv21, 22 transposed to follow v6*]

39¹[*vv1-8: cp 2Kgs. 20.12-19*]At this time Merodach-baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon

sent envoys with a gift to Hezekiah; for he had heard that he had been ill and was well again. ²Hezekiah welcomed them and showed them all his treasury, silver and gold, spices and fragrant oil, his entire armoury and everything to be found among his treasures; there was nothing in his house and in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. ³Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked him, 'What did these men say and where have they come from?' 'They have come from a far-off country,' Hezekiah answered, 'from Babylon.' ⁴Then Isaiah asked, 'What did they see in your house?' 'They saw everything,' Hezekiah replied; 'there was nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.' ⁵Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, 'Hear the word of the LORD of Hosts: ⁶The time is coming, says the LORD, when everything in your house, and all that your forefathers have amassed till the present day, will be carried away to Babylon; not a thing shall be left. ⁷And some of the sons who will be born to you, sons of your own begetting, shall be taken and shall be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.' ⁸Hezekiah answered, 'The word of the LORD which you have spoken is good'; thinking to himself that peace and security would last out his lifetime.

News of the returning exiles

40¹Comfort, comfort my people [Comfort ... people: *or* Comfort, O my people, comfort];
– it is the voice of your God;
²speak tenderly to Jerusalem [speak ... Jerusalem: *or* bid Jerusalem be of good heart]
and tell her this,
that she has fulfilled her term of bondage,
that her penalty is paid;
she has received at the LORD's hand
double [double: *or* full] measure for all her sins.

³There is a voice that cries:
Prepare a road for the LORD through the wilderness,
clear a highway across the desert for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
every mountain and hill brought down;
rugged places shall be made smooth
and mountain-ranges become a plain.

⁵Thus shall the glory of the LORD be revealed,
and all mankind together. shall see it;
for the LORD himself has spoken.

⁶A voice says, 'Cry',
and another asks, 'What shall I cry?'
'That all mankind is grass,
they last no longer than a flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of [the breath of: *or* a wind from] the LORD blows upon them [*prob. rdg, Heb adds* surely the people are grass];

⁸the grass withers, the flowers fade,
but the word of our God endures for evermore.'

⁹You who bring Zion good news [You ... news: *or* O Zion, bringer of good news], up with you to the mountain-top;
lift up your voice and shout,
you who bring good news to Jerusalem [you ... Jerusalem: *or* O Jerusalem, bringer of good news],
lift it up fearlessly;
cry to the cities of Judah, 'Your God is here.'

¹⁰Here is the Lord GOD coming in might,
coming to rule with his right arm.
His recompense comes with him,
he carries his reward before him.

¹¹He will tend his flock like a shepherd
and gather them together with his arm;
he will carry the lambs in his bosom
and lead the ewes to water.

Israel delivered and redeemed

¹²Who has gauged the waters in the palm of his hand,
or with its span set limits to the heavens?
Who has held all the soil of earth in a bushel,
or weighed the mountains on a balance
and the hills on a pair of scales?

¹³Who has set limits to the spirit of the LORD?
What counsellor stood at his side to instruct him?

¹⁴With whom did he confer to gain discernment?
Who taught him how to do justice
or gave him lessons in wisdom?

¹⁵Why, to him nations are but drops from a bucket,
no more than moisture on the scales;
coasts and islands weigh as light as specks of dust.

¹⁶All Lebanon does not yield wood enough for fuel
or beasts enough for a sacrifice.

¹⁷All nations dwindle to nothing before him,
he reckons them mere nothings, less than nought.

¹⁸What likeness will you find for God
or what form to resemble his?

¹⁹Is it an image which a craftsman sets up,
and a goldsmith covers with plate
and fits with studs of silver as a costly gift?

²⁰Or is it mulberry-wood that will not rot which a man chooses,
seeking out a skilful craftsman for it,
to mount an image that will not fall?

6[v41.6, transposed to this point] Each workman helps the others,
each man encourages his fellow.

7[v41.7, transposed to this point] The craftsman urges on the goldsmith,
the gilder urges the man who beats the anvil,
he declares the soldering to be sound;
he fastens the image with nails
so that it will not fall down.

21 Do you not know, have you not heard,
were you not told long ago,
have you not perceived ever since the world began,
22 that God sits throned on the vaulted roof of earth,
whose inhabitants are like grasshoppers [*Or locusts*]?
He stretches out the skies like a curtain,
he spreads them out like a tent to live in;
23 he reduces the great to nothing
and makes all earth's princes less than nothing.

24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely have they taken root in the earth,
before he blows upon them and they wither away,
and a whirlwind carries them off like chaff.

25 To whom then will you liken me,
whom set up as my equal?
asks the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes to the heavens;
consider who created it all,
led out their host one by one
and called them all by their names;
through his great might, his might and power,
not one is missing.

27 Why do you complain, O Jacob,
and you, Israel, why do you say,
'My plight is hidden from the LORD
and my cause has passed out of God's notice'?

28 Do you not know, have you not heard?
The LORD, the everlasting God, creator of the wide world,
grows neither weary nor faint;
no man can fathom his understanding.

29 He gives vigour to the weary,
new strength to the exhausted.

30 Young men may grow weary and faint,
even in their prime they may stumble and fall;

31 but those who look to the LORD will win new strength,
they will grow wings like, eagles;
they will run and not be weary,
they will march on and never grow faint.

41¹ Keep silence before me, all you coasts and islands;

let the peoples come to meet me [come to meet me: *prob. rdg, transposing, with slight change, from end of v5; Heb win new strength (repeated from 40.31)*].

Let them come near, then let them speak;
we will meet at the place of judgement, I and they.

²Tell me, who raised up that one from the east,
one greeted by victory wherever he goes?

Who is it that puts nations into his power
and makes kings go down before him [*before him: prob. rdg, Heb omitted*],
he scatters them with his sword like dust
and with his bow like chaff before the wind,

³he puts them to flight and passes on unscathed,
swifter than any traveller on foot?

⁴Whose work is this, I ask, who has brought it to pass?
Who has summoned the generations from the beginning?
It is I, the LORD, I am the first,
and to the last of them I am He.

⁵Coasts and islands saw it and were afraid,
the world trembled from end to end. [*See note on v1*]

⁸[*vv6-7 transposed to follow 40.20*] But you, Israel my servant,
you, Jacob whom I have chosen,
race of Abraham my friend,

⁹I have taken you up,
have fetched you from the ends of the earth,
and summoned you from its farthest corners,
I have called you my servant,
have chosen you and not cast you off:

¹⁰fear nothing, for I am with you;
be not afraid, for I am your God.
I strengthen you, I help you,
I support you with my victorious right hand.

¹¹Now shall all who defy you
be disappointed and put to shame;
all who set themselves against you
shall be as nothing; they shall vanish.

¹²You will look for your assailants but not find them;
all who take up arms against you
shall be as nothing, nothing at all.

¹³For I, the LORD your God,
take you by the right hand;
I say to you, Do not fear;
it is I who help you,

¹⁴fear not, Jacob you worm and Israel poor louse.
It is I who help you, says the LORD,
your ransom, the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵See, I will make of you a sharp threshing-sledge,
new and studded with teeth;

you shall thresh the mountains and crush them
and reduce the hills to chaff;

¹⁶you shall winnow them, the wind shall carry them away
and a great gale shall scatter them.
Then shall you rejoice in the LORD
and glory in the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁷The wretched and the poor look for water and find none,
their tongues are parched with thirst;
but I the LORD will give them an answer,
I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

¹⁸I will open rivers among the sand-dunes
and wells in the valleys;

I will turn the wilderness into pools
and dry land into springs of water;

¹⁹I will plant cedars in the wastes,
and acacia and myrtle and wild olive;
the pine shall grow on the barren heath
side by side with fir and box,

²⁰that men may see and know,
may once for all give heed and understand
that the LORD himself has done this,
that the Holy One of Israel has performed it.

²¹Come, open your plea, says the LORD,
present your case, says Jacob's King;

²²let them come forward, these idols,
let them foretell the future.

Let them declare the meaning of past events
that we may give our minds to it;
let them predict things that are to be
that we may know their outcome.

²³Declare what will happen hereafter;
then we shall know you are gods.

Do what you can, good or ill,
anything that may grip us with fear and awe.

²⁴You cannot! You are sprung from nothing,
your works are rotten;
whoever chooses you is vile as you are.

²⁵I roused one from the north, and he obeyed;
I called one from the east, summoned him in [summoned him in: *or* who will
call on] my name,
he marches over viceroys as if they were mud,
like a potter treading his clay.

²⁶Tell us, who declared this from the beginning, that we might know it,
or told us beforehand so that we could say, 'He was right'?
Not one declared, not one foretold,
not one heard a sound from you.

²⁷Here is one who will speak first as advocate for Zion,

here I appoint defending counsel for Jerusalem;
²⁸but from the other side no advocate steps forward
and, when I look, there is no one there.
I ask a question and no one answers;
²⁹see what empty things they are!
Nothing that they do has any worth,
their effigies are wind, mere nothings.

42¹Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom I delight,
I have bestowed my spirit upon him,
and he will make justice shine on the nations.
²He will not call out or lift his voice high,
or [He will not ... or: *or* In very truth he will call out and lift his voice high,
and] make himself heard in the open street.
³He will not break a bruised reed,
or snuff out a smouldering wick;
he will make justice shine on every race [on every race: *or* in truth],
⁴never faltering, never breaking down [never faltering ... down: *or* he will
neither rebuke nor wound],
he will plant justice on earth,
while coasts and islands wait for his teaching.

⁵Thus speaks the LORD who is God,
he who created the skies and stretched them out,
who fashioned the earth and all that grows in it,
who gave breath to its people,
the breath of life to all who walk upon it:
⁶I, the LORD, have called you with righteous purpose
and taken you by the hand;
I have formed you, and appointed you
to be a light [*Or* a covenant] to all peoples,
a beacon for the nations,
⁷to open eyes that are blind,
to bring captives out of prison,
out of the dungeons where they lie in darkness.
⁸I am the LORD; the LORD [the LORD: *or* He] is my name;
I will not give my glory to another god,
nor my praise to any idol.
⁹See how the first prophecies have come to pass,
and now I declare new things;
before they break from the bud I announce them to you.

¹⁰Sing a new song to the LORD,
sing his praise throughout the earth,
you that sail the sea, and all sea-creatures,
and you that inhabit the coasts and islands.
¹¹Let the wilderness and its towns rejoice,
and the villages of the tribe of Kedar.

Let those who live in Sela shout for joy
and cry out from the hill-tops.

¹²You coasts and islands, all uplift his praises;
let all ascribe glory to the LORD.

¹³The LORD will go forth as a warrior,
he will rouse the frenzy of battle like a hero;
he will shout, he will raise the battle-cry
and triumph over his foes.

¹⁴Long have I lain still,
I kept silence and held myself in check;
now I will cry like a woman in labour,
whimpering, panting and gasping.

¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills
and shrivel all their green herbs;
I will turn rivers into desert wastes [*desert wastes: prob. rdg, Heb coasts
and islands*]
and dry up all the pools.

¹⁶Then will I lead blind men on their way [*prob. rdg, Heb adds which they do
not know*]
and guide them by paths they do not know;
I will turn darkness into light before them
and straighten their twisting roads.
All this I will do and leave nothing undone.

¹⁷Those who trust in an image,
those who take idols for their gods
turn tail in bitter shame.

¹⁸Hear now, you that are deaf;
you blind men, look and see:

¹⁹yet who is blind but my servant,
who so deaf as the messenger whom I send?
Who so blind as the one who holds my commission,
so deaf as the servant of the LORD?

²⁰You have seen much but remembered little,
your ears are wide open but nothing is heard.

²¹It pleased the LORD, for the furtherance of his justice,
to make his law a law of surpassing majesty;

²²yet here is a people plundered and taken as prey,
all of them ensnared, trapped in holes,
lost to sight in dungeons,

I carried off as spoil without hope of rescue,
as plunder with no one to say, 'Give it back.'

²³Hear this, all of you who will,
listen henceforward and give me a hearing:

²⁴who gave away Jacob for plunder,
who gave Israel away for spoil?
Was it not the LORD? They sinned against him,
they would not follow his ways
and refused obedience to his law;

²⁵so in his anger he poured out upon Jacob
his wrath and the fury of battle.
It wrapped him in flames, yet still he did not learn the lesson.
scorched him, yet he did not lay it to heart.

43¹But now this is the word of the LORD,
the word of your creator, O Jacob,
of him who fashioned you, Israel:
Have no fear; for I have paid your ransom;
I have called you by name and you are my own.

²When you pass through deep waters, I am with you,
when you pass through rivers,
they will not sweep you away;
walk through fire and you will not be scorched,
through flames and they will not burn you.

³For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your deliverer;
for your ransom I give Egypt,
Nubia and Seba are your price.

⁴You are more precious to me than the Assyrians,
you are honoured and I have loved you,
I would give the Edomites in exchange for you,
and the Leummim for your life.

⁵Have no fear; for I am with you;
I will bring your children from the east
and gather you all from the west.

⁶I will say to the north, 'Give them up',
and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.
Bring my sons and daughters from afar,
bring them from the ends of the earth;

⁷bring every one who is called by my name,
all whom I have created, whom I have formed,
all whom I have made for my glory.'

⁸Bring out this people,
a people who have eyes but are blind,
who have ears but are deaf.

⁹All the nations are gathered together
and the peoples assembled.

Who amongst them can expound this thing
and interpret for us all that has gone before?
Let them produce witnesses to prove their case,
or let them listen and say, 'That is the truth.'

¹⁰My witnesses, says the LORD, are you, my servants,
you whom I have chosen
to know me and put your faith in me
and understand that I am He.
Before me there was no god fashioned
nor ever shall be after me.

¹¹I am the LORD, I myself,
and none but I can deliver.

¹²I myself have made it known in full, and declared it,
I and no alien god amongst you,
and you are my witnesses, says the LORD.

¹³I am God; from this very day I am He.
What my hand holds, none can snatch away;
what I do, none can undo.

¹⁴Thus says the LORD your ransomer, the Holy One of Israel:
For your sakes I have sent to Babylon;
I will lay the Chaldeans prostrate as they flee,
and their cry of triumph will turn to groaning.

¹⁵I am the LORD, your Holy One,
your creator, Israel, and your King.

¹⁶Thus says the LORD,
who opened a way in the sea
and a path through mighty waters,

¹⁷who drew on chariot and horse to their destruction,
a whole army, men of valour;
there they lay, never to rise again;
they were crushed, snuffed out like a wick:

¹⁸Cease to dwell on days gone by
and to brood over past history.

¹⁹Here and now I will do a new thing;
this moment it will break from the bud.
Can you not perceive it?

I will make a way even through the wilderness
and paths in the barren desert;

²⁰the wild beasts shall do me honour,
the wolf and the ostrich;
for I will provide water in the wilderness
and rivers in the barren desert,
where my chosen people may drink.

²¹I have formed this people for myself
and they shall proclaim my praises.

²²Yet you did not call upon me, O Jacob;
much less did you weary yourself in my service, O Israel.

²³You did not bring me sheep as whole-offerings
or honour me with sacrifices;
I asked you for no burdensome offerings
and wearied you with no demands for incense.

²⁴You did not buy me sweet-cane with your money
or glut me with the fat of your sacrifices;
rather you burdened me with your sins
and wearied me with your iniquities.

²⁵I alone, I am He,

who for his own sake wipes out your transgressions,
who will remember your sins no more.

²⁶Cite me by name, let us argue it out;
set forth your pleading and justify yourselves.

²⁷Your first father transgressed,
your spokesmen rebelled against me,

²⁸and your princes profaned my sanctuary;
so I sent Jacob to his doom
and left Israel to execration.

44¹Hear me now, Jacob my servant,
hear me, my chosen Israel.

²Thus says the LORD your maker,
your helper, who fashioned you from birth:
have no fear, Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen,

³for I will pour down rain on a thirsty land,
showers on the dry ground.

I will pour out my spirit on your offspring
and my blessing on your children.

⁴They shall spring up like a green tamarisk,
like poplars by a flowing stream.

⁵This man shall say, 'I am the LORD's man',
that one shall call himself a son of Jacob,
another shall write the LORD's name on his hand
and shall add the name of Israel to his own.

⁶Thus says the LORD, Israel's King,
the LORD of Hosts, his ransom:
I am the first and I am the last,
and there is no god but me.

⁷Who is like me? Let him stand up,
let him declare himself and speak and show me his evidence,
let him announce beforehand [let him announce beforehand: *prob. rdg, Heb*
since my appointing an ancient people and] things to come,
let him [*prob. rdg, Heb* them] declare what is yet to happen.

⁸Take heart, do not be afraid.

Did I not foretell this long ago?

I declared it, and you are my witnesses.

Is there any god beside me,
or any creator, even one that I do not know?

⁹Those who make idols are less than nothing;
all their cherished images profit nobody;
their worshippers are blind,
sheer ignorance makes fools of them.

¹⁰If a man makes a god or casts an image,
his labour is wasted.

¹¹Why! its votaries show their folly;
the craftsmen too are but men.

Let them all gather together and confront me,
all will be afraid and look the fools they are.

¹²The blacksmith sharpens a graving tool and hammers out his work [his work: *prob. rdg, Heb he works*] hot from the coals and shapes it with his strong arm; when he grows hungry his strength fails, if he has no water to drink he tires. ¹³The woodworker draws his line taut and marks out a figure with a scribe; he planes the wood and measures it with callipers, and he carves it to the shape of a man, comely as the human form, to be set up presently in a house [*Or a shrine*].

¹⁴A man plants a cedar and the rain makes it grow, so that later on he will have cedars to cut down; or he chooses an ilex or an oak to raise a stout tree for himself in the forest. ¹⁵It becomes fuel for his fire: some of it he takes and warms himself, some he kindles and bakes bread on it, and some he makes into a god and prostrates himself, shaping it into an idol and bowing down before it. ¹⁶The one half of it he burns in the fire and on this he roasts meat, so that he may eat his roast and be satisfied; he also warms himself at it and he says, 'Good! I can feel the heat, I am growing warm.' ¹⁷Then what is left of the wood he makes into a god by carving it into shape; he bows down to it and prostrates himself and prays to it, saying, 'Save me; for thou art my god.' ¹⁸Such people neither know nor understand, their eyes made too blind to see, their minds too narrow to discern. ¹⁹Such a man will not use his reason, he has neither the wit nor the sense to say, 'Half of it I have burnt, yes, and used its embers to bake bread; I have roasted meat on them too and eaten it; but the rest of it I turn into this abominable thing and so I am worshipping a log of wood.' ²⁰He feeds on ashes indeed! His own deluded mind has misled him, he cannot recollect himself so far as to say, 'Why! this thing in my hand is a sham.'

²¹Remember all this, Jacob,
remember, Israel, for you are my servant,
I have fashioned you, and you are to serve me;
you shall not forget me, Israel.

²²I have swept away your sins like a dissolving mist,
and your transgressions are dispersed like clouds;
turn back to me; for I have ransomed you.

²³Shout in triumph, you heavens, for it is the LORD's doing;
cry out for joy, you lowest depths of the earth;
break into songs of triumph, you mountains,
you forest and all your trees;
for the LORD has ransomed Jacob
and made Israel his masterpiece.

²⁴Thus says the LORD, your ransomer,
who fashioned you from birth:
I am the LORD who made all things,
by myself I stretched out the skies,
alone I hammered out the floor of the earth.

²⁵I frustrate false prophets and their signs
and make fools of diviners;
I reverse what wise men say
and make nonsense of their wisdom.

²⁶I make my servants' prophecies come true
and give effect to my messengers' designs.
I say of Jerusalem,
'She shall be inhabited once more',
and of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be rebuilt;
all their ruins I will restore.'

²⁷I say to the deep waters, 'Be dried up;
I will make your streams run dry.'

²⁸I say to Cyrus, 'You shall be my shepherd
to carry out all my purpose,
so that Jerusalem may be rebuilt
and the foundations of the temple may be laid.'

45¹Thus says the LORD to Cyrus his anointed,
Cyrus whom he has taken by the hand
to subdue nations before him
and undo the might of kings;
before whom gates shall be opened
and no doors be shut:

²I will go before you
and level the swelling hills;
I will break down gates of bronze
and hack through iron bars.

³I will give you treasures from dark vaults,
hoarded in secret places,
that you may know that I am the Lord,
Israel's God who calls you by name.

⁴For the sake of Jacob my servant and Israel my chosen
I have called you by name
and given you your title, though you have not known me.

⁵I am the LORD, there is no other;
there is no god beside me.
I will strengthen you though you have not known me,

⁶so that men from the rising and the setting sun
may know that there is none but I:
I am the LORD, there is no other;

⁷I make the light, I create darkness,
author alike of prosperity and trouble.
I, the LORD, do all these things.

⁸Rain righteousness, you heavens,
let the skies above pour down;
let the earth open to receive it,
that it may bear the fruit of salvation
with righteousness in blossom at its side.
All this I, the LORD, have created.

⁹Will the pot contend [Will ... contend: *prob. rdg, Heb* Ho! he has
contended] with the potter,

or the earthenware [*Or shard*] with the hand that shapes it?
Will the clay ask the potter what he is making?
or his [*prob. rdg, Heb your*] handiwork say to him, 'You have no skill'?
¹⁰Will the babe say [*Will ... say: prob. rdg, Heb Ho! you that say*] to his
father, 'What are you begetting?',
or to his mother, 'What are you bringing to birth?'
¹¹Thus says the LORD, Israel's Holy One, his maker:
Would you dare question me concerning my children,
or instruct me in my handiwork?
¹²I alone, I made the earth
and created man upon it;
I, with my own hands, stretched out the heavens
and caused all their host to shine.
¹³I alone have roused this man in righteousness,
and I will smooth his path before him;
he shall rebuild my city
and let my exiles go free –
not for a price not for a bribe,
says the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁴Thus says the LORD:
Toilers of Egypt and Nubian merchants
and Sabaeans bearing tribute [*bearing tribute: or men of stature*]
shall come into your power and be your slaves,
shall come and march behind you in chains;
they shall bow down before you in supplication, saying,
'Surely God is among you and there is no other,
no other god.

¹⁵How then canst thou be a god that hidest thyself,
O God of Israel, the deliverer?'

¹⁶Those who defy him are confounded and brought to shame,
those who make idols perish in confusion.

¹⁷But Israel has been delivered by the LORD,
delivered for all time to come;
they shall not be confounded or put to shame for all eternity.

¹⁸Thus says the LORD, the creator of the heavens,
he who is God,
who made the earth and fashioned it
and himself fixed it fast,
who created it no empty void,
but made it for a place to dwell in:
I am the LORD, there is no other.

¹⁹I do not speak in secret, in realms of darkness,
I do not say to the sons of Jacob,
'Look for me in the empty void.'
I the LORD speak what is right, declare what is just.

²⁰Gather together, come, draw near,

all you survivors of the nations,
you fools, who carry your wooden idols in procession
and pray to a god that cannot save you.

²¹Come forward and urge your case, consult together:
who foretold this in days of old,
who stated it long ago?
Was it not I the LORD?
There is no god but me;
there is no god other than I, victorious and able to save.

²²Look to me and be saved,
you peoples from all corners of the earth;
for I am God, there is no other.

²³By my life I have sworn,
I have given a promise of victory,
a promise that will not be broken,
that to me every knee shall bend
and by me every tongue shall swear.

²⁴In the LORD alone, men shall say,
are victory and might;
and all who defy him
shall stand ashamed in his presence,

²⁵but all the sons of Israel shall stand victorious
and find their glory in the LORD.

46¹Bel has crouched down, Nebo has stooped low:
their images, once carried in your processions,
have been loaded on to beasts and cattle,
a burden for the weary creatures;

²they stoop and they crouch;
not for them to bring the burden to safety;
the gods themselves go into captivity.

³Listen to me, house of Jacob
and all the remnant of the house of Israel,
a load on me from your birth, carried by me from the womb:

⁴till you grow old I am He,
and when white hairs come, I will carry you still;
I have made you and I will bear the burden,
I will carry you and bring you to safety.

⁵To whom will you liken me? Who is my equal?
With whom can you compare me? Where is my like?

⁶Those who squander their bags of gold
and weigh out their silver with a balance
hire a goldsmith to fashion them into a god;
then they worship it and fall prostrate before it;

⁷they hoist it shoulder-high and carry it home;
they set it down on its base;
there it must stand, it cannot stir from its place.
Let a man cry to it as he will, it never answers him;
it cannot deliver him from his troubles.

⁸Remember this, you rebels,
consider it well, and abandon hope,
⁹remember all that happened long ago;
for I am God, there is no other,
I am God, and there is no one like me;
¹⁰I reveal the end from the beginning,
from ancient times I reveal what is to be;
I say, 'My purpose shall take effect,
I will accomplish all that I please.'
¹¹I summon a bird of prey [*a bird of prey: or a massed host*] from the east,
one from a distant land to fulfil my purpose.
Mark this; I have spoken, and I will bring it about,
I have a plan to carry out, and carry it out I will.
¹²Listen to me, all you stubborn hearts,
for whom victory is far off:
¹³I bring my victory near, it is not far off,
and my deliverance shall not be delayed;
I will grant deliverance in Zion
and give my glory to Israel [*and give my glory to Israel: or for Israel my
glory*].

47¹Down with you, sit in the dust,
virgin daughter of Babylon.
Down from your throne, sit on the ground,
daughter of the Chaldaeans;
never again shall men call you
soft-skinned and delicate.
²Take up the millstone, grind meal, uncover your tresses;
strip off your skirt, bare your thighs, wade through rivers,
³so that your nakedness may be plain to see
and your shame exposed.
I will take vengeance, I will treat with none of you,
⁴says the Holy One of Israel, our ransom, our
ransomer,
whose name is the LORD of Hosts.

⁵Sit silent,
be off into the shadows, daughter of the Chaldaeans;
for never again shall men call you
queen of many kingdoms.
⁶When I was angry with my people,
I dishonoured my own possession
and gave them into your power.
You showed them no mercy,
you made your yoke weigh heavy on the aged.
⁷You said then, 'I shall reign a queen for ever',
while [*for ever', while: or of a wide realm, for all time'; but*] you gave no
thought to this
and did not consider how it would end.

⁸Now therefore listen to this,
you lover of luxury, carefree on your throne.
You say to yourself,
'I am, and who but I?
No widow's weeds for me, no deaths of children.'

⁹Yet suddenly, in a single day,
these two things shall come upon you;
they shall both come upon you in full measure [in full measure: *or at random*]:
children's deaths and widowhood,
for all your monstrous sorceries, your countless spells.

¹⁰Secure in your wicked ways you thought, 'No one is looking.'
Your wisdom betrayed you, omniscient as you were,
and you said to yourself,
'I am, and who but I?'

¹¹Therefore evil shall come upon you,
and you will not know how to master it;
disaster shall befall you,
and you will not be able to charm it away;
ruin all unforeseen
shall come suddenly upon you.

¹²Persist in your spells and your monstrous sorceries [*prob. rdg, Heb adds with which you have trafficked all your life (cp v15)*],
maybe you can get help from them,
maybe you will yet inspire awe.

¹³But no! in spite of your many wiles you are powerless.
Let your astrologers, your star-gazers
who foretell your future month by month,
persist, and save you!

¹⁴But look, they are gone like chaff;
fire burns them up;
they cannot snatch themselves from the flames;
this is no glowing coal to warm them,
no fire for them to sit by.

¹⁵So much for your magicians
with whom you have trafficked all your life:
they have stumbled off, each his own way,
and there is no one to save you.

48¹Hear this, you house of Jacob,
you who are called by the name of Israel,
you who spring from the seed of Judah;
who swear by the name of the LORD
and boast in the God of Israel,
but not in honesty or sincerity,
²although you call yourselves citizens of a holy city
and lean for support on the God of Israel;
his name is the LORD of Hosts.

³Long ago I announced what would first happen,

I revealed it with my own mouth;
suddenly I acted and it came about.

⁴I knew that you were stubborn,
your neck stiff as iron, your brow like bronze,
⁵therefore I told you of these things long ago,
and declared them before they came about,
so that you could not say, 'This was my idol's doing;
my image, the god that I fashioned, he ordained them.'

⁶You have heard what I said; consider it well,
and you must admit the truth of it. I
Now I show you new things,
hidden things which you did not know before.

⁷They were not created long ago, but in this very hour;
you had never heard of them before today.
You cannot say, 'I know them already.'

⁸You neither heard nor knew,
long ago your ears were closed;
for I knew that you were untrustworthy, treacherous,
a notorious rebel from your birth.

⁹For the sake of my own name I was patient, *[See note on v11]*
rather than destroy you I held myself in check.

¹⁰See how I tested you, not as silver is tested,
but in the furnace of affliction; there I purified you.

¹¹For my honour, for my own honour I did it;
let them disparage my past triumphs *[my past triumphs: transposed from v9]* if they will:
I will not give my glory to any other god.

¹²Hear me, Jacob,
and Israel whom I called:
I am He; I am the first,
I am the last also.

¹³With my own hands I founded the earth,
with my right hand I formed the expanse of sky;
when I summoned them,
they sprang at once into being.

¹⁴Assemble, all of you, and listen to me;
which of you has declared what is coming,
that he whom I love shall wreak my *[Or his]* will on Babylon
and the Chaldaeans shall be scattered?

¹⁵I, I myself, have spoken, I have called him,
I have made him appear, and wherever he goes he shall prosper.

¹⁶Draw near to me and hear this:
from the beginning I have never spoken in secret;
from the moment of its first happening I was there *[prob. rdg, Heb adds and now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his spirit]*.

¹⁷Thus says the LORD your ransomer, the Holy One of Israel:
I am the LORD your God:

I teach you for your own advantage
and lead you in the way you must go.

¹⁸If only you had listened to my commands,
your prosperity would have rolled on like a river in flood
and your just success like the waves of the sea;

¹⁹in number your children would have been like the sand
and your descendants countless as its grains;
their name would never be erased or blotted from my sight.

²⁰Come out of Babylon, hasten away from the Chaldeans;
proclaim it with loud songs of triumph,
crying the news to the ends of the earth;
tell them, 'The LORD has ransomed his servant Jacob.'

²¹Though he led them through desert places they suffered no thirst,
for them he made water run from the rock,
for them he cleft the rock and streams gushed forth.

²²There is no peace for the wicked,
says the LORD.

Israel a light to the nations

49¹Listen to me, you coasts and islands,
pay heed, you peoples far away:
from birth the LORD called me,
he named me from my mother's womb.

²He made my tongue his sharp sword
and concealed me under cover of his hand;
he made me a polished arrow
and hid me out of sight in his quiver.

³He said to me, 'You are my servant,
Israel through whom I shall win glory';
so I rose to honour in the LORD's sight
and my God became my strength [so I rose ... strength: *transposed from
end of v5*].

⁴Once I said, 'I have laboured in vain;
I have spent my strength for nothing, to no purpose';
yet in truth my cause is with the LORD
and my reward is in God's hands.

⁵And now the LORD who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him
that Israel should be gathered to him [be gathered to him: *or not be swept
away*],

now the LORD calls me again: [*See note on v3*]

⁶it is too slight a task for you, as my servant,
to restore the tribes of Jacob,
to bring back the descendants of Israel:

I will make you a light to the nations,
to be my salvation [to be my salvation: *or that my salvation may reach*] to

earth's farthest bounds.

⁷Thus says the Holy One, the LORD who ransoms Israel,
to one who thinks little of himself,
whom every nation abhors,
the slave of tyrants:
When they see you kings shall rise,
princes shall rise and bow down,
because of the LORD who is faithful,
because of the Holy One of Israel who has chosen you.

⁸Thus says the LORD:
In the hour of my favour I answered you,
and I helped you on the day of deliverance [*prob. rdg, Heb adds I have formed you, and appointed you to be a light to all peoples (cp 42.6)*],
putting the land to rights
and sharing out afresh its desolate fields;
⁹I said to the prisoners, 'Go free',
and to those in darkness, 'Come out and be seen.'
They shall find pasture in the desert sands [*desert sands: prob. rdg, Heb ways*]
and grazing on all the dunes.

¹⁰They shall neither hunger nor thirst,
no scorching heat or sun shall distress them;
for one who loves them shall lead them
and take them to water at bubbling springs.

¹¹I will make every hill a path
and build embankments for my highways.

¹²See, they come; some from far away,
these from the north and these from the west
and those from the land of Syene.

¹³Shout for joy, you heavens, rejoice, O earth,
you mountains, break into songs of triumph,
for the LORD has comforted his people
and has had pity on his own in their distress.

¹⁴But Zion says,
'The LORD has forsaken me; my God has forgotten me.'

¹⁵Can a woman forget the infant at her breast,
or a loving mother the child of her womb?
Even these forget, yet I will not forget you.

¹⁶Your walls are always before my eyes,
I have engraved them on the palms of my hands.

¹⁷Those who are to rebuild you make better speed
than those who pulled you down,
while those who laid you waste depart.

¹⁸Raise your eyes and look around you:
see how they assemble, how they are flocking back to you.
By my life I, the LORD, swear it,

you shall wear them proudly as your jewels,
and adorn yourself with them like a bride;
¹⁹I did indeed make you waste and desolate,
I razed you to the ground,
but your boundaries [I did ... boundaries: *or* your wasted and desolate land,
your ruined countryside] shall now be too narrow
for your inhabitants –
and those who laid you in ruins are far away.

²⁰The children born in your bereavement shall yet say in your hearing,
'This place is too narrow; make room for me to live in.'

²¹Then you will say to yourself,
'All these children, how did I come by them,
bereaved and barren as I was?

Who reared them
when I was left alone, left by myself;
where did I get them all?'

²²The Lord GOD says,
Now is the time: I will beckon to the nations
and hoist a signal to the peoples,
and they shall bring your sons in their arms
and carry your daughters on their shoulders;

²³kings shall be your foster-fathers
and their princesses shall be your nurses.
They shall bow to the earth before you
and lick the dust from your feet;
and you shall know that I am the LORD
and that none who look to me will be disappointed.

²⁴Can his prey be taken from the strong man,
or the captive be rescued from the ruthless?

²⁵And the LORD answers,
The captive shall be taken even from the strong,
and the prey of the ruthless shall be rescued;
I will contend with all who contend against you
and save your children from them.

²⁶I will force your oppressors to feed on their own flesh
and make them drunk with their own blood as if with fresh wine.
and all mankind shall know
that it is I, the LORD, who save you,
I your ransomer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

50¹The LORD says,
Is there anywhere a deed of divorce
by which I have put your mother away?
Was there some creditor of mine
to whom I sold you?

No; it was through your own wickedness that you were sold
and for your own misconduct that your mother was put away.

²Why, then, did I find no one when I came?
Why, when I called, did no one answer?

Did you think my arm too short to redeem,
did you think I had no power to save?
Not so. By my rebuke I dried up the sea
and turned rivers into desert;
their fish perished for lack of water
and died on the thirsty ground;
³I clothed the skies in mourning
and covered them with sackcloth.

⁴The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher
and skill to console the weary
with a word in the morning;
he sharpened my hearing
that I might listen like one who is taught.

⁵The Lord GOD opened my ears
and I did not disobey or turn back in defiance.

⁶I offered my back to the lash,
and let my beard be plucked from my chin,
I did not hide my face from spitting and insult;

⁷but the Lord GOD stands by to help me;
therefore no insult can wound me.

I have set my face like flint,
for I know that I shall not be put to shame,

⁸because one who will clear my name is at my side.
Who dare argue against me? Let us confront one another.
Who will dispute my cause? Let him come forward.

⁹The Lord GOD will help me;
who then can prove me guilty?
They will all wear out like a garment,
the moths will eat them up.

¹⁰Which of you fears the LORD and obeys his servant's commands?
The man who walks in dark places with no light,
yet trusts in the name of the LORD and leans on his God.

¹¹But you who kindle a fire and set fire-brands alight,
go, walk into your own fire
and among the fire-brands you have set ablaze.
This is your fate at my hands:
you shall lie down in torment.

51¹Listen to me, all who follow the right and seek the LORD:
look to the rock from which you were hewn,
to the quarry from which you were dug;

²look to your father Abraham
and to Sarah who gave you birth:
when I called him he was but one,
I blessed him and made him many.

³The LORD has indeed comforted Zion,

comforted all her ruined homes,
turning her wilderness into an Eden,
her thirsty plains into a garden of the LORD.
Joy and gladness shall be found in her,
thanksgiving and melody.

⁴Pay heed to me, my people,
and hear me, O my nation;
for my law shall shine forth
and I will flash the light of my judgement over the nations.

⁵My victory is near, my deliverance has gone [*Or shone*] forth
and my arm shall rule the nations;
for me coasts and islands shall wait
and they shall look to me for protection.

⁶Lift your eyes to the heavens,
look at the earth beneath:
the heavens grow murky as smoke;
the earth wears into tatters like a garment,
and those who live on it die like maggots;
but my deliverance is everlasting
and my saving power shall never wane.

⁷Listen to me, my people who know what is right,
you who lay my law to heart:
do not fear the taunts of men,
let no reproaches dismay you;

⁸for the grub will devour them like a garment
and the moth as if they were wool,
but my saving power shall last for ever
and my deliverance to all generations.

⁹Awake, awake, put on your strength, O arm of the LORD,
awake as you did long ago, in days gone by.
Was it not you
who hacked the Rahab in pieces and ran the dragon through?

¹⁰Was it not you
who dried up the sea, the waters of the great abyss,
and made the ocean depths a path for the ransomed?

¹¹So the LORD's people shall come back, set free,
and enter Zion with shouts of triumph,
crowned with everlasting joy;
joy and gladness shall overtake them as they come,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

¹²I, I myself, am he that comforts you.
Why then fear man, man who must die,
man frail as grass?

¹³Why have you forgotten the LORD your maker,
who stretched out the skies and founded the earth?
Why are you continually afraid, all the day long,
why dread the fury of oppressors ready to destroy you?

Where is that fury?

¹⁴He that cowers under it shall soon stand upright and not die,
he shall soon reap the early crop and not lack bread.

¹⁵I am the LORD your God, the LORD of Hosts is my name. I cleft the sea and its waves roared, ¹⁶that I might fix the heavens in place and form the earth and say to Zion, 'You are my people.' I have put my words in your mouth and kept you safe under the shelter of my hand.

¹⁷Awake, awake; rise up, Jerusalem.

You have drunk from the LORD's hand
the cup of his wrath,
drained to its dregs the bowl of drunkenness;

¹⁸of all the sons you have borne there is not one to guide you,
of all you have reared, not one to take you by the hand.

¹⁹These two disasters have overtaken you;
who can console you? –
havoc and ruin, famine and the sword;
who can comfort you?

²⁰Your sons are in stupor, they lie at the head of every street,
like antelopes caught in the net,
glutted with the wrath of the LORD,
the rebuke of your God.

²¹Therefore listen to this, in your affliction,
drunk that you are, but not with wine:

²²thus says the LORD, your Lord and your God,
who will plead his people's cause:
Look, I take from your hand
the cup of drunkenness;

you shall never again drink from the bowl of my wrath,

²³I will give it instead to your tormentors and oppressors,
those who said to you, 'Lie down and we will walk over you';
and you made your backs like the ground beneath them,
like a roadway for passers-by.

52¹Awake, awake, put on your strength, O Zion,
put on your loveliest garments, holy city of Jerusalem;
for never shall the uncircumcised and the unclean enter you again.

²Rise up, captive Jerusalem, shake off the dust;
loose your neck from the collar that binds it,
O captive daughter of Zion.

³The LORD says, You were sold but no price was paid, and without payment you shall be ransomed. ⁴The Lord GOD says, At the beginning my people went down into Egypt to live there, and at the end it was the Assyrians who oppressed them; ⁵but now what do I find here? says the LORD. My people carried off and no price paid, their rulers derided, and my name reviled all day long, says the LORD. ⁶But on that day my people shall know my name; they shall know that it is I who speak; here I am.

⁷How lovely on the mountains are the feet of the herald

who comes to proclaim prosperity and bring good news,
the news of deliverance,
calling to Zion, 'Your God is king.'

⁸Hark, your watchmen raise their voices
and shout together in triumph;
for with their own eyes they shall see
the LORD returning in pity to Zion.

⁹Break forth together in shouts of triumph,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has taken pity on his people
and has ransomed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
in the sight of all nations,
and the whole world from end to end
shall see the deliverance of our God.

¹¹Away from Babylon; come out, come out,
touch nothing unclean.
Come out from Babylon, keep yourselves pure,
you who carry the vessels of the LORD.

¹²But you shall not come out in urgent haste
nor leave like fugitives;
for the LORD will march at your head,
your rearguard will be Israel's God.

¹³Behold, my servant shall prosper,
he shall be lifted up, exalted to the heights.

¹⁴Time was when many [*Or the great*] were aghast at you, my people; [*See note on 53.2*]

¹⁵so now many nations [*Or great nations*] recoil at sight of him,
and kings curl their lips in disgust.
For they see what they had never been told
and things unheard before fill their thoughts.

53¹Who could have believed what we have heard,
and to whom has the power of the LORD been revealed?

²He grew up before the LORD like a young plant
whose roots are in parched ground;
he had no beauty, no majesty to draw our eyes,
no grace to make us delight in him;
his form, disfigured, lost all the likeness of a man,
his beauty changed beyond human semblance [*his form ... semblance: transposed from end of 52.14*].

³He was despised, he shrank from the sight of men,
tormented and humbled by suffering;
we despised him, we held him of no account,
a thing from which men turn away their eyes.

⁴Yet on himself he bore our sufferings,

our torments he endured,
while we counted him smitten by God,
struck down by disease and misery;
⁵but he was pierced for our transgressions,
tortured for our iniquities;
the chastisement he bore is health for us
and by his scourging we are healed.

⁶We had all strayed like sheep,
each of us had gone his own way;
but the LORD laid upon him
the guilt of us all.

⁷He was afflicted, he submitted to be struck down
and did not open his mouth;
he was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
like a ewe that is dumb before the shearers [*prob. rdg, Heb adds and he would not open his mouth*].

⁸Without protection, without justice [*Without protection, without justice: or After arrest and sentence*], he was taken away;
and who gave a thought to his fate,
how he was cut off from the world of living men,
stricken to the death for my people's transgression?

⁹He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
a burial-place among the refuse of mankind,
though he had done no violence
and spoken no word of treachery.

¹⁰Yet the LORD took thought for his tortured servant
and healed him who had made himself [*healed ... himself: prob. rdg, Heb he made sick, if you make*] a sacrifice for sin;
so shall he enjoy long life and see his children's children,
and in his hand the LORD's cause shall prosper.

¹¹After all his pains he shall be bathed in light,
after his disgrace he shall be fully vindicated;
so shall he, my servant, vindicate many,
himself bearing the penalty of their guilt.

¹²Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall share the spoil with the mighty,
because he exposed himself to face death [*Or because he poured out his life to the death*]
and was reckoned among transgressors,
because he bore the sin of many
and interceded for their transgressions.

54¹Sing aloud, O barren woman who never bore a child,
break into cries of joy, you who have never been in labour;
for the deserted wife has more sons than she who lives in wedlock,
says the LORD.

²Enlarge the limits of your home,
spread wide the curtains of your tent;
let out its ropes to the full

and drive the pegs home;

³for you shall break out of your confines right and left,
your descendants shall dispossess wide regions [wide regions: *or* the
nations],

and re-people cities now desolate.

⁴Fear not; you shall not be put to shame,
you shall suffer no insult, have no cause to blush.

It is time to forget the shame of your younger days
and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood;

⁵for your husband is your maker, whose name is the LORD of Hosts;
your ransom is the Holy One of Israel
who is called God of all the earth.

⁶The LORD has acknowledged you a wife again,
once deserted and heart-broken,
your God has called you a bride still young
though once rejected.

⁷On the impulse of a moment I forsook you,
but with tender affection I will bring you home again.

⁸In sudden anger
I hid my face from you for a moment;
but now have I pitied you with a love which never fails,
says the LORD who ransoms you.

⁹These days recall for me the days of Noah:
as I swore that the waters of Noah's flood
should never again pour over the earth,
so now I swear to you
never again to be angry with you or reproach you.

¹⁰Though the mountains move and the hills shake,
my love shall be immovable and never fail,
and my covenant of peace shall not be shaken.
So says the LORD who takes pity on you.

¹¹O storm-battered city, distressed and disconsolate,
now I will set your stones in the finest mortar
and your foundations in lapis lazuli;

¹²I will make your battlements of red jasper [*Or* carbuncle]
and your gates of garnet [*Or* firestone],
all your boundary-stones shall be jewels.

¹³Your masons shall all be instructed by the LORD,
and your sons shall enjoy great prosperity;

¹⁴and in triumph [*Or* in righteousness] shall you be restored.
You shall be free from oppression and have no fears,
free from terror, and it shall not come near you;

¹⁵should any attack you, it will not be my doing,
the aggressor, whoever he be, shall perish for his attempt.

¹⁶It was I who created the smith
to fan the coals in the furnace
and forge weapons each for its purpose,
and I who created the destroyer to lay waste;

¹⁷but now no weapon made to harm you shall prevail,
and you shall rebut every charge brought against you.
Such is the fortune of the servants of the LORD;
their vindication comes from me.
This is the very word of the LORD.

55¹Come, all who are thirsty, come, fetch water;
come, you who have no food, buy corn and eat;
come and buy, not for money, not for a price [*prob. rdg, Heb adds wine and milk*].

²Why spend money and get what is not bread,
why give the price of your labour and go unsatisfied?
Only listen to me and you will have good food to eat,
and you will enjoy the fat of the land.

³Come to me and listen to my words,
hear me, and you shall have life:
I will make a covenant with you, this time for ever,
to love you faithfully as I loved David.

⁴I made him a witness to all races,
a prince and instructor of peoples;

⁵and you in turn shall summon nations you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall come running to you,
because the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, has glorified you.

⁶Inquire of the LORD while he is present,
call upon him when he is close at hand.

⁷Let the wicked abandon their ways
and evil men their thoughts:
let them return to the LORD, who will have pity on them,
return to our God, for he will freely forgive.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
and your ways are not my ways.
This is the very word of the LORD.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts;

¹⁰and as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return until they have watered the earth,
making it blossom and bear fruit,
and give seed for sowing and bread to eat,

¹¹so shall the word which comes from my mouth prevail;
it shall not return to me fruitless
without accomplishing my purpose
or succeeding in the task I gave it.

¹²You shall indeed go out with joy
and be led forth in peace.

Before you mountains and hills shall break into cries of joy,
and all the trees of the wild shall clap their hands,

¹³pine-trees shall shoot up in place of camel-thorn,
myrtles instead of briars;
all this shall win the LORD a great name,
imperishable, a sign for all time.

Warnings to keep the moral law

56¹These are the words of the LORD:

Maintain justice, do the right;
for my deliverance is close at hand,
and my righteousness will show itself victorious.

²Happy is the man who follows these precepts,
happy the mortal who holds them fast,
who keeps the sabbath undefiled,
who refrains from all wrong-doing!

³The foreigner who has given his allegiance to the LORD must not say,
'The LORD will keep me separate from his people for ever';
and the eunuch must not say,
'I am nothing but a barren tree.'

⁴For these are the words of the LORD:

The eunuchs who keep my sabbaths,
who choose to do my will and hold fast to my covenant,

⁵shall receive from me something better than sons and daughters,
a memorial and a name in my own house and within my walls;
I will give them an everlasting name,
a name imperishable for all time.

⁶So too with the foreigners who give their allegiance to me, the LORD,
to minister to me and love my name
and to become my servants,
all who keep the sabbath undefiled
and hold fast to my covenant:

⁷them will I bring to my holy hill
and give them joy in my house of prayer.
Their offerings and sacrifices shall be acceptable on my altar;
for my house shall be called
a house of prayer for all nations.

⁸This is the very word of the Lord GOD,
who brings home the outcasts of Israel:
I will yet bring home all that remain to be brought in.

⁹Come, beasts of the plain, beasts of the forest,
come, eat your fill,

¹⁰for Israel's watchmen are blind, all of them unaware.
They are all dumb dogs who cannot bark,
stretched on the ground, dreaming, lovers of sleep,

¹¹greedy dogs that can never have enough.
They are shepherds who understand nothing,
absent each of them on his own pursuits,

each intent on his own gain wherever he can find it.

¹²'Come,' says each of them, 'let me fetch wine,
strong drink, and we will drain it down;
let us make tomorrow like today,
or greater far!'

57¹The righteous perish,
and no one takes it to heart;
men of good faith are swept away, but no one cares,
the righteous are swept away before the onset of evil,
²but they enter into peace;
they have run a straight course
and rest in their last beds.

³Come, stand forth, you sons of a soothsayer.

You spawn of an adulterer and a harlot,

⁴who is the target of your jests?

Against whom do you open your mouths
and wag your tongues,

children of sin that you are, spawn of a lie,

⁵burning with lust under the terebinths,

under every spreading tree,

and sacrificing children in the gorges,
under the rocky clefts?

⁶And you, woman,

your place is with the creatures of the gorge;
that is where you belong.

To them you have dared to pour a libation
and present an offering of grain. [See note on v7]

⁷On a high mountain-top
you have made your bed;

there too you have gone up to offer sacrifice.

[Line transposed from end of v6] In spite of all this am I to relent?

⁸Beside door and door-post you have put up your sign.

Deserting me, you have stripped and lain down

on the wide bed which you have made,

and you drove bargains with men

for the pleasure of sleeping together,

and you have committed countless acts of fornication
in the heat of your lust.

⁹You drenched your tresses in oil

blended with many perfumes;

you sent out your procurers far and wide

even down to the gates of Sheol.

¹⁰Worn out by your unending excesses,

even so you never said, 'I am past hope.'

You earned a livelihood

and so you had no anxiety.

¹¹Whom do you fear so much, that you should be false,

that you never remembered me or gave me a thought?
Did I not hold my peace and seem not to see
while you showed no fear of me?

¹²Now I will denounce your conduct
that you think so righteous,

¹³These idols of yours shall not help when you cry;
no idol shall save you.

The wind shall carry them off, one and all,
a puff of air shall blow them away;
but he who makes me his refuge shall possess the earth
and inherit my holy hill.

¹⁴Then a voice shall be heard;
Build up a highway, build it and clear the track,
sweep away all that blocks my people's path.

¹⁵Thus speaks the high and exalted one,
whose name is holy, who lives for ever;
I dwell in a high and holy place
with him who is broken and humble in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble,
to revive the courage of the broken,

¹⁶I will not be always accusing,
I will not continually nurse my wrath.
For a breath of life passed out from me,
and by my own act I created living creatures.

¹⁷For a time I was angry at the guilt of Israel;
I smote him in my anger and withdrew my favour.
But he ran wild and went his wilful way,

¹⁸Then I considered his ways,
I cured him and gave him relief,
and I brought him comfort in full measure,
brought peace to those who mourned for him,
by the words that issue from my lips,

¹⁹peace for all men, both near and far,
and so I cured him, says the LORD.

²⁰But the wicked are like a troubled sea,
a sea that cannot rest,
whose troubled waters cast up mud and filth.

²¹There is no peace for the wicked,
says the LORD.

58¹Shout aloud without restraint;
lift up your voice like a trumpet.
Call my people to account for their transgression
and the house of Jacob for their sins,

²although they ask counsel of me day by day
and say they delight in knowing my ways,
although, like nations which have acted rightly

and not forsaken the lust laws of their gods,
they ask me for righteous laws
and say they delight in approaching God.

³Why do we fast, if thou dost not see it?
Why mortify ourselves, if thou payest no heed?
Since you serve your own interest only on your fast-day
and make all your men work the harder,

⁴since your fasting leads only to wrangling and strife
and dealing vicious blows with the fist,
on such a day you are keeping no fast
that will carry your cry to heaven.

⁵Is it a fast like this that I require,
a day of mortification such as this,
that a man should bow his head like a bulrush
and make his bed on sackcloth and ashes?
Is this what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶Is not this what I require of you as a fast:
to loose the fetters of injustice,
to untie the knots of the yoke,
to snap every yoke
and set free those who have been crushed?

⁷Is it not sharing your food with the hungry,
taking the homeless poor into your house,
clothing the naked when you meet them
and never evading a duty to your kinsfolk?

⁸Then shall your light break forth like the dawn
and soon you will grow healthy like a wound newly healed;
your own righteousness shall be your vanguard
and the glory of the LORD your rearguard.

⁹Then, if you call, the LORD will answer;
if you cry to him, he will say, 'Here I am.'
If you cease to pervert justice,
to point the accusing finger and lay false charges,

¹⁰if you feed the hungry from your own plenty
and satisfy the needs of the wretched,
then your light will rise like dawn out of darkness
and your dusk be like noonday;

¹¹the LORD will be your guide continually
and will satisfy your needs in the shimmering heat;
he will give you strength of limb;
you will be like a well-watered garden,
like a spring whose waters never fail.

¹²The ancient ruins will be restored by your own kindred
and you will build once more on ancestral foundations;
you shall be called Rebuilder of broken walls,
Restorer of houses in ruins.

¹³If you cease to tread the sabbath underfoot,

and keep my holy day free from your own affairs,
if you call the sabbath a day of joy
and the LORD's holy day a day to be honoured,
if you honour it by not plying your trade,
not seeking your own interest
or attending to your own affairs,
¹⁴then you shall find your joy in the LORD,
and I will set you riding on the heights of the earth,
and your father Jacob's patrimony shall be yours to enjoy;
the LORD himself has spoken it.

59¹The LORD's arm is not so short that he cannot save
nor his ear too dull to hear;

²it is your iniquities that raise a barrier
between you and your God,
because of your sins he has hidden his face
so that he does not hear you.

³Your hands are stained with blood
and your fingers with crime;
your lips speak lies
and your tongues utter injustice.

⁴No man sues with just cause,
no man goes honestly to law;
all trust in empty words, all tell lies,
conceive mischief and give birth to trouble.

⁵They hatch snakes' eggs, they weave cobwebs;
eat their eggs and you will die,
for rotten eggs hatch only rottenness.

⁶As for their webs, they will never make cloth,
no one can use them for clothing;
their works breed trouble
and their hands are busy with deeds of violence.

⁷They rush headlong into crime
in furious haste to shed innocent blood;
their schemes are schemes of mischief
and leave a trail of ruin and devastation.

⁸They do not know the way to peace,
no justice guides their steps;
all the paths they follow are crooked;
no one who walks in them enjoys true peace.

⁹Therefore justice is far away from us,
right does not reach us;
we look for light but all is darkness,
for the light of dawn, but we walk in deep gloom.

¹⁰We grope like blind men along a wall,
feeling our way like men without eyes;
we stumble at noonday as if it were twilight,
like dead men in the ghostly underworld.

¹¹We growl like bears,
like doves we moan incessantly,
waiting for justice, and there is none;
for deliverance, but it is still far away.

¹²Our acts of rebellion against thee are past counting
and our sins bear witness against us;
we remember our many rebellions, we know well our guilt:

¹³we have rebelled and broken faith with the LORD,
we have relapsed and forsaken our God;
we have conceived lies in our hearts and repeated them
in slanderous and treacherous words.

¹⁴Justice is rebuffed and flouted
while righteousness stands aloof;
truth stumbles in the market-place
and honesty is kept out of court,

¹⁵so truth is lost to sight,
and whoever shuns evil is thought a madman.

The LORD saw, and in his eyes it was an evil thing,
that there was no justice;

¹⁶he saw that there was no man to help
and was outraged that no one intervened;
so his own arm brought him victory
and his own integrity upheld him.

¹⁷He put on integrity as a coat of mail
and the helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on garments of vengeance
and wrapped himself in a cloak of jealous anger.

¹⁸High God of retribution that he is,
he pays in full measure,
wreaking his anger on his foes, retribution on his enemies.

¹⁹So from the west men shall fear his name,
fear his glory from the rising of the sun;
for it shall come like a shining river,
the spirit of the LORD hovering over it,

²⁰come as the ransom of Zion
and of all in Jacob who repent of their rebellion.
This is the very word of the LORD.

²¹This, says the LORD, is my covenant, which I make with them: My spirit which rests on you and my words which I have put into your mouth shall never fail you from generation to generation of your descendants from now onward for ever. The LORD has said it.

Promise of the new Jerusalem

60¹Arise, Jerusalem,

rise clothed in light; your light has come
and the glory of the LORD shines over you.

²For, though darkness covers the earth
and dark night the nations,
the LORD shall shine upon you
and over you shall his glory appear;

³and the nations shall march towards your light
and their kings to your sunrise.

⁴Lift up your eyes and look all around:
they flock together, all of, them, and come to you;
your sons also shall come from afar,
your daughters walking beside them leading the way.

⁵Then shall you see, and shine with joy,
then your heart shall thrill with pride:
the riches of the sea shall be lavished upon you
and you shall possess the wealth of nations.

⁶Camels in droves shall cover the land,
dromedaries of Midian and Ephah,
all coming from Sheba
laden with golden spice [*golden spice: or gold*] and frankincense,
heralds of the LORD's praise.

⁷All Kedar's flocks shall be gathered for you,
rams of Nebaioth shall serve your need,
acceptable offerings on my altar,
and glory shall be added to glory in my temple.

⁸Who are these that sail along like clouds,
that fly like doves to their dove-cotes?

⁹They are vessels assembling from the coasts and islands,
ships from Tarshish leading the convoy;
they bring your sons from afar,
their gold and their silver with them,
to the honour of the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel;
for he has made you glorious.

¹⁰Foreigners shall rebuild your walls
and their kings shall be your servants;
for though in my wrath I struck you down,
now I have shown you pity and favour.

¹¹Your gates shall be open continually,
they shall never be shut day or night,
that through them may be brought the wealth of nations
and their kings under escort.

¹²For the nation or kingdom which refuses to serve you shall perish, and wide regions
shall be laid utterly waste.

¹³The wealth of Lebanon shall come to you,
pine, fir [*Or elm*], and boxwood [*Or cypress*], all together,
to bring glory to my holy sanctuary,
to honour the place where my feet rest.

¹⁴The sons of your oppressors shall come forward to do homage,
all who reviled you shall bow low at your feet;
they shall call you the City of the LORD,
the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵No longer will you be deserted,
a wife hated and unvisited [*Or divorced and unmated*];
I will make you an eternal pride
and a never-ending joy.

¹⁶You shall suck the milk of nations
and be suckled at the breasts of kings.
So you shall know that I the LORD am your deliverer,
your ransomer the Mighty One of Jacob.

¹⁷For bronze [*Or copper*] I will bring you gold
and for iron I will bring silver,
bronze [*Or copper*] for timber and iron for stone;
and I will make your government be peace
and righteousness rule over you.

¹⁸The sound of violence shall be heard no longer in your land,
or ruin and devastation within your borders;
but you shall call your walls Deliverance
and your gates Praise.

¹⁹The sun shall no longer be your light by day,
nor the moon shine on you when evening falls;
the LORD shall be your everlasting light,
your God shall be your glory.

²⁰Never again shall your sun set
nor your moon withdraw her light;
but the LORD shall be your everlasting light
and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

²¹Your people shall all be righteous
and shall for ever possess the land,
a shoot of my own planting,
a work of my own hands to bring me glory.

²²The few shall become ten thousand,
the little nation great.
I am the LORD;
soon, in the fullness of time, I will bring this to pass.

61¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the humble,

to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to captives
and release to those in prison;
²to proclaim a year of the LORD's favour
and a day of the vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn [*prob. rdg, Heb adds to appoint to Zion's mourners*],

³to give them garlands instead of ashes,
oil of gladness instead of mourners' tears,
a garment of splendour for the heavy heart.
They shall be called Trees of Righteousness,
planted by the LORD for his glory.

⁴Ancient ruins shall be rebuilt
and sites long desolate restored;
they shall repair the ruined cities
and restore what has long lain desolate.

⁵Foreigners shall serve as shepherds of your flocks,
and aliens shall till your land and tend your vines;

⁶but you shall be called priests of the LORD
and be named ministers of our God;
you shall enjoy the wealth of other nations
and be furnished [*be furnished: prob. rdg, Heb unintelligible*] with their riches.

⁷And so, because shame in double measure
and jeers and insults [*and insults: prob. rdg, Heb they shout in triumph*]
have been my people's lot,
they shall receive in their own land a double measure of wealth,
and everlasting joy shall be theirs.

⁸For I, the LORD, love justice
and hate robbery and wrong-doing;
I will grant them a sure reward
and make an everlasting covenant with them;

⁹their posterity will be renowned among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them will acknowledge in them
a race whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰Let me rejoice in the LORD with all my heart,
let me exult in my God;
for he has robed me in salvation as a garment
and clothed me in integrity as a cloak,
like a bridegroom with his priestly garland,
or a bride decked in her jewels.

¹¹For, as the earth puts forth her blossom
or bushes in the garden burst into flower,
so shall the Lord GOD make righteousness and praise
blossom before all the nations.

62¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silence,

for Jerusalem's sake I will speak out,
until her right shines forth like the sunrise,
her deliverance like a blazing torch,
²until the nations see the triumph of your right
and all kings see your glory.

Then you shall be called by a new name
which the LORD shall pronounce with his own lips;
³you will be a glorious crown in the LORD's hand,
a kingly diadem in the hand of your God.

⁴No more shall men call you Forsaken,
no more shall your land be called Desolate,
but you shall be named Hephzi-bah [*That is My delight is in her*]
and your land Beulah [*That is Wedded*],
for the LORD delights in you
and to him your land is wedded.

⁵For, as a young man weds a maiden,
so you shall wed him who rebuilds you,
and your God shall rejoice over you
as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride.

⁶I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem,
who shall not keep silence day or night:
'You who invoke the LORD's name,
take no rest, ⁷give him no rest
until he makes Jerusalem
a theme of endless praise on earth.'

⁸The LORD has sworn with raised right hand and mighty arm:
Never again will I give your grain to feed your foes
or let foreigners drink the new wine
for which you have toiled;

⁹but those who bring in the corn shall eat and praise the LORD,
and those who gather the grapes shall drink in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go out of the gates, go out,
prepare a road for my people;
build a highway, build it up,
clear away the boulders;
raise a signal to the peoples.

¹¹This is the LORD's proclamation
to earth's farthest bounds:
Tell the daughter of Zion,
Behold, your deliverance has come.
His recompense comes with him;
he carries his reward before him;

¹²and they shall be called a Holy People,
the Ransomed of the LORD,
a People long-sought, a City not forsaken.

63¹Who is this coming from Edom,

coming from Bozrah, his garments stained red?
Under his clothes his muscles stand out,
and he strides, stooping in his might.'
It is I, who announce that right has won the day,
I, who am strong to save.

²Why is your clothing all red,
like the garments of one who treads grapes in the vat?'

³I have trodden the winepress alone;
no man, no nation was with me.
I trod them down in my rage,
I trampled them in my fury;
and their life-blood spurted over my garments
and stained all my clothing.

⁴For I resolved on a day of vengeance;
the year for ransoming my own had come.

⁵I looked for a helper but found no one,
I was amazed that there was no one to support me;
yet my own arm brought me victory,
alone my anger supported me.

⁶I stamped on nations in my fury,
I pierced them in my rage
and let their life-blood run out upon the ground.

⁷I will recount the LORD's acts of unfailing love
and the LORD's praises as High God,
all that the LORD has done for us
and his great goodness to the house of Israel,
all that he has done for them in his tenderness
and by his many acts of love.

⁸He said, 'Surely they are my people,
my sons who will not play me false';
and he became their deliverer ⁹in all their troubles.
It was no envoy, no angel, but he himself that delivered them;
he himself ransomed them by his love and pity,
lifted them up and carried them
through all the years gone by.

¹⁰Yet they rebelled and grieved his holy spirit;
only then was he changed into their enemy
and himself fought against them.

¹¹Then men remembered days long past
and him who drew out [That is Moses whose name resembles the Heb verb meaning draw
out, cp Exod. 2.10 and the note there] his people:

Where is he who brought them up from the Nile
with the shepherd [Or shepherds] of his flock?
Where is he who put within him
his holy spirit,

¹²who made his glorious power march
at the right hand of Moses,
dividing the waters before them,

to win for himself an everlasting name,
¹³causing them to go through the depths
sure-footed as horses in the wilderness,
¹⁴like cattle moving down into a valley without stumbling,
guided by the spirit of the LORD?
So didst thou lead thy people
to win thyself a glorious name.

¹⁵Look down from heaven and behold
from the heights where thou dwellest holy and glorious.
Where is thy zeal, thy valour,
thy burning and tender love?

¹⁶Stand not aloof [*Stand not aloof: prob. rdg, Heb obscure in context*]; for
thou art our father,
though Abraham does not know us nor Israel acknowledge us.
Thou, LORD, art our father;
thy name is our Ransomer [*Or our Kinsman.*] from of old.

¹⁷Why, LORD, dost thou let us wander from thy ways
and harden our hearts until we cease to fear thee?
turn again for the sake of thy servants,
the tribes of thy patrimony.

¹⁸Why have wicked men trodden down thy sanctuary [*Why ... sanctuary: prob. rdg, Heb For a little while they possessed thy holy people*],
why have our enemies trampled on thy shrine?

¹⁹We have long been reckoned as beyond thy sway,
as if we had not been named thy own.

64¹Why didst thou not rend the heavens and come down,
and make the mountains shudder before thee

²as when fire blazes up in brushwood
or fire makes water boil?
then would thy name be known to thy enemies
and nations tremble at thy coming.

³When thou didst terrible things that we did not look for,
the mountains shuddered before thee.

⁴Never has ear heard [*Never ... heard: prob. rdg, Heb They have never heard or listened*] or eye seen
any other god taking the part of those who wait for him.

⁵Thou dost welcome him who rejoices to do what is right,
who remembers thee in thy ways.

Though thou wast angry, yet we sinned,
in spite of it we have done evil from of old,

⁶we all became like a man who is unclean
and all our righteous deeds like a filthy rag;
we have all withered [*have all withered: or are all carried away*] like leaves
and our iniquities sweep us away like the wind.

⁷There is no one who invokes thee by name
or rouses himself to cling to thee;
for thou hast hidden thy face from us

and abandoned us to our iniquities.

⁸But now, LORD, thou art our father;
we are the clay, thou the potter,
and all of us are thy handiwork.

⁹Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity for ever;
look on us all, look on thy people.

¹⁰Thy holy cities are a wilderness,
Zion a wilderness, Jerusalem desolate;

¹¹our sanctuary, holy and glorious,
where our fathers praised thee,
has been burnt to the ground
and all that we cherish is a ruin.

¹²After this, O LORD, wilt thou hold back,
wilt thou keep silence and punish us beyond measure?

65¹I was there to be sought by a people who did not ask,
to be found by men who did not seek me.

I said, 'Here am I, here am I',
to a nation that did not invoke me by name.

²I spread out my hands all day
appealing to an unruly people
who went their evil way,
following their own devices,

³a people who provoked me
continually to my face,
offering sacrifice in gardens, burning incense on brick altars,
⁴crouching among graves, keeping vigil all night long,
eating swine's flesh, their cauldrons full of a tainted brew.

⁵'Stay where you are,' they cry,
'do not dare touch me; for I am too sacred for you.'
Such people are a smouldering fire,
smoking in my nostrils all day long.

⁶All is on record before me; I will not keep silence;
I will repay [*prob. rdg, transposing and then pay to follow reward*] ⁷your
iniquities,
yours and your fathers', all at once, says the LORD,
because they burnt incense [*Or sacrifices*] on the mountains
and defied me on the hills;
I will first measure out their reward
and then pay them in full.

⁸These are the words of the LORD:
As there is new wine in a cluster of grapes
and men say, 'Do not destroy it; there is a blessing in it',
so will I do for my servants' sake:
I will not destroy the whole nation.

⁹I will give Jacob children to come after him
and Judah heirs who shall possess my mountains;

my chosen shall inherit them
and my servants shall live there.

¹⁰flocks shall range over Sharon,
and the Vale of Achor be a pasture for cattle;
they shall belong to my people who seek me.

¹¹But you that forsake the LORD and forget my holy mountain,
who spread a table for the god of Fate,
and fill bowls of spiced wine in honour of Fortune,

¹²I will deliver you to your fate, to execution,
and you shall all bend the neck to the sword,
because I called and you did not answer,
I spoke and you did not listen;
and you did what was wrong in my eyes
and you chose what was against my will.

¹³Therefore these are the words of the Lord GOD:
My servants shall eat but you shall starve;
my servants shall drink but you shall go thirsty;
my servants shall rejoice but you shall be put to shame;

¹⁴my servants shall shout in triumph
in the gladness of their hearts,
but you shall cry from sorrow
and wail from anguish of spirit;

¹⁵your name shall be used as an oath by my chosen,
and the Lord GOD shall give you over to death;
but his servants he shall call by another name.

¹⁶He who invokes a blessing on himself in the land
shall do so by the God whose name is Amen,
and he who utters an oath in the land
shall do so by the God of Amen;
the former troubles are forgotten
and they are hidden from my sight.

¹⁷For behold, I create
new heavens and a new earth.
Former things shall no more be remembered
nor shall they be called to mind.

¹⁸Rejoice and be filled with delight,
you boundless realms which I create;
for I create Jerusalem to be a delight
and her people a joy;

¹⁹I will take delight in Jerusalem and rejoice in my people;
weeping and cries for help
shall never again be heard in her.

²⁰There no child shall ever again die an infant,
no old man fail to live out his life;
every boy shall live his 'hundred years before he dies,
whoever falls short of a hundred shall be despised [*Or* cursed].

²¹Men shall build houses and live to inhabit them,
plant vineyards and eat their fruit;

²²they shall not build for others to inhabit

nor plant for others to eat.

My people shall live the long life of a tree,
and my chosen shall enjoy the fruit of their labour.

²³They shall not toil in vain or raise children for misfortune.

For they are the offspring of the blessed of the LORD
and their issue after them;

²⁴before they call to me, I will answer,
and while they are still speaking I will listen.

²⁵The wolf and the lamb shall feed together
and the lion shall eat straw like cattle [*prob. rdg, Heb adds and the food of
the snake shall be dust*].

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,
says the LORD.

66¹These are the words of the LORD:

Heaven is my throne and earth my footstool.

Where will you build a house for me,
where shall my resting-place be?

²All these are of my own making
and all these are mine.

This is the very word of the LORD.

The man I look to is a man down-trodden and distressed,
one who reveres my words.

³But to sacrifice an ox or to [*to sacrifice an ox or to: or those who sacrifice
an ox and*] kill a man,

slaughter a sheep or break a dog's neck,
offer grain or offer pigs' blood,
burn incense as a token and worship an idol –

all these are the chosen practices of men
who [*are the chosen practices of men who: or have chosen their own
devices and*] revel in their own loathsome rites.

⁴I too will practise those wanton rites of theirs
and bring down on them the very things they dread;
for I called and no one answered,
I spoke and no one listened.

They did what was wrong in my eyes
and chose practices not to my liking.

⁵Hear the word of the LORD, you who revere his word:

Your fellow-countrymen who hate you,
who spurn you because you bear my name, have said,
'Let the LORD show his glory,
then we shall see you rejoice';
but they shall be put to shame.

⁶That roar from the city, that uproar in the temple,
is the sound of the LORD dealing retribution to his foes.

⁷Shall a woman bear a child without pains?

give birth to a son before the onset of labour?

⁸Who has heard of anything like this?

Who has seen any such thing?

Shall a country be born after one day's labour,
shall a nation be brought to birth all in a moment?
But Zion, at the onset of her pangs, bore her sons.

⁹Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver?

the LORD says;

shall I who deliver close the womb?

your God has spoken.

¹⁰Rejoice with Jerusalem and exult in her,

all you who love her;

share her joy with all your heart,

all you who mourn over her.

¹¹Then you may suck and be fed from the breasts that give comfort,
delighting in her plentiful milk.

¹²For thus says the LORD:

I will send peace flowing over her like a river,
and the wealth of nations like a stream in flood,
it shall suckle you,

and you shall be carried in their arms
and dandled on their knees.

¹³As a mother comforts her son,

so will I myself comfort you,

and you shall find comfort in Jerusalem.

¹⁴This you shall see and be glad at heart,

your limbs shall be as fresh as grass in spring;

the LORD shall make his power known among his servants
and his indignation felt among his foes.

¹⁵For see, the LORD is coming in fire,
with his chariots like a whirlwind,
to strike home with his furious anger
and with the flaming fire of his reproof.

¹⁶The LORD will judge by fire,

with fire he will test all living men,

and many will be slain by the LORD;

¹⁷those who hallow and purify themselves in garden-rites,
one after another in a magic ring,

those who eat the flesh of pigs and rats [*Or jerboas*] and all vile vermin,
shall meet their end, one and all,

says the LORD,.

¹⁸for I know their deeds and their thoughts.

Then I myself will come to gather all nations and races,
and they shall come and see my glory;

¹⁹and I will perform a sign among them.

I will spare some of them and send them to the nations,
to Tarshish, Put, and Lud [*Or Lydia*],

to Meshek, Rosh [Meshek, Rosh: *prob. rdg, Heb* those who draw the bow],
Tubal, and Javan [*Or Greece*],
distant coasts and islands which have never yet heard of me
and have not seen my glory;
these shall announce that glory among the nations.
²⁰From every nation they shall bring your countrymen
on horses, in chariots and wagons,
on mules and dromedaries,
as an offering to the LORD,
on my holy mountain Jerusalem,
says the LORD,
as the Israelites bring offerings.
in pure vessels to the LORD's house;
²¹and some of them I will take for priests, for Levites,
says the LORD.
²²For, as the new heavens and the new earth
which I am making shall endure in my sight,
says the LORD,
so shall your race and your name endure;
²³and month by month at the new moon,
week by week on the sabbath,
all mankind shall come to bow down before me,
says the LORD;
²⁴and they shall come out and see
the dead bodies of those who have rebelled against me;
their worm shall not die nor their fire be quenched,
and they shall be abhorred by all mankind.