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THE HOLY BIBLE **NKJV** REFERENCE GUIDE

OLD TESTAMENT

BOOK 23

ISAIAH



The Prophet Isaiah by Michelangelo

SUMMARY

Isaiah prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The Lord vituperates a people laden with iniquity- no soundness from foot to head. Your cities are overthrown by strangers. We have been left a very small remnant.

What good is ritual observance when you do evil? Do well – care for the needy. The faithful city has become a harlot. It will be purged to what it was before, and become the city of righteousness once more.

In the last days, the Lord's house shall be established on Zion, and all nations shall flow unto it. The Lord shall judge the nations, and rebuke many. They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation. The land of the house of Jacob is full of gold, silver and idols. The Lord shall level the land, including the mountains, the towers, and the proud.

The Lord will take away all people of status from Jerusalem and Judah, and give babes to rule over them. The Lord will punish pride, including that of the daughters of Zion, who are wanton and mincing, and wear all manner of finery. The Lord will smite them with scabs and other afflictions. The men and the mighty shall fall in war.

The calamities of war will be so great that seven women shall be left to one man. Purged of filth, the Lord will bless the remnant, and the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night will be created in every dwelling place, and in all the assemblies.

Israel is like a vineyard, which will be abandoned because it produced only wild grapes. Woes are promised for a variety of sins, including drinking, feasting, pride, and calling evil good. Kindled in wrath against his people, the Lord will allow a foreign nation to devastate the land. Its roaring shall be like a lion.

A vision in the year that king Uzziah died: the Lord on his throne, and above it the seraphims. Each one had six wings – with two they cover their faces, with two they cover their feet, and with two they fly. Isaiah fears he is undone because he is a man of unclean lips.

One of the seraphims lays a lump of burning coal in his mouth, and tells him his sins are burnt away. Isaiah receives his prophetic commission – strangely, it is to ensure that the people do not understand and are not healed. The Lord will remove men far away, but a tenth shall return.

In the days when Israel and Syria joined in league against Judah in the days of Ahaz. Via Isaiah, and in the presence of his son Shear-Jashub (meaning, 'a remnant shall return') the Lord tells Ahaz not to fear, for the attack will not succeed, and Israel will no longer be a nation in 65 years' time.

The Lord will give a sign: a virgin will conceive, called Immanuel, God with us. (Actually, the Hebrew word *alma* could mean 'young woman', though the Septuagint translated *parthenos*, which does mean 'virgin'.)

SUMMARY Continued

Before the child can distinguish good from evil (ie within a couple of years), he will be eating curds and honey (ie the land will be back to producing plenteous food), and both Israel and Syria will be defeated. (A prophecy of Hezekiah?)

However, the Assyrians (whom Judah called upon for help) will inflict heavy calamities upon Judah. Isaiah counsels against an Judah-Assyria alliance to counter the threat from the Israel-Syria one.

Isaiah has a son, whom the Lord tells him to name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, which means 'speed to the spoil, hurry to the plunder'. Before the children can call his mother and father, the riches of Damascus and Israel will be taken away by Assyria.

However, the Assyrian army, compared to water, will overflow its banks and flood Judah with violence and destruction. Judah can prepare for the invasion by fearing God rather than Assyria. Seek the Lord's light and word, not the darkness of the occult.

Judah will not suffer as greatly as Israel. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. 'You' will deliver the land, 'for unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'

Because of their unholy pride, Israel will be defeated by her enemies: its head (elder and honorable) and tail (false prophet) will be cut off. The people of Israel will also attack each other. Exile and slaughter will be a punishment for social injustice.

Woe to Assyria, the unintentional instrument in the hand of the Lord – it will be punished for its arrogant superiority. Shall an axe boast against him who chops with it? Do not be afraid of the Assyrians – the Lord will preserve a remnant of the house of Jacob. Isaiah prophesies attacks on a number of specific Judah cities. The proud of Judah will be humbled.

A shoot shall come forth from the rod of Jesse, possessing the seven spirits of God:

He will judge the poor with equity and slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb. The gentiles shall seek him. The Lord will gather together scattered Israel. Peace will reign, and neighboring nations be subdued.

Praise will be offered to the Lord when his anger has passed away. 'Yah, the Lord, is my strength and salvation'. You will draw water from the well of salvation. Praise sung – great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!

The burden against Babylon. ('Burden' = an important message causing sorrow.) An army comes against Babylon. A day of the Lord is promised – great slaughter shall occur, and mortals be rarer than gold. The Medes will be stirred up against Babylon. Babylon will be laid waste and populated only by wild beasts.

Israel will be settled in its own land, and rule over strangers. The whole earth will rejoice at the fall of the king of Babylon. The pomp of Babylon shall come to nothing and be received in hell. How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

SUMMARY Continued

The fall is a punishment for aspiring to be like the Most High. The nations will be amazed at the complete reversal of fortune. Unlike other kings who sleep in glory, the king of Babylon will be cast out of his grave. Assyria and Philistia will also be crushed.

The burden against Moab. The cities and soldiers of Moab fall under a night attack. Refugees will flee from Moab. Refugees and the remnant of Moab will be attacked by lions.

Moab shall send the lamb as tribute to Jerusalem. Judah is to be a place of refuge and protection for the Moabites. Moab is then counselled to be a refuge for Israel. Moab shall wail at the judgment of God against it. Judgment will come in three years.

The burden against Damascus. Damascus will become a ruinous heap, and Israel (the northern kingdom, referred to as Ephraim, its dominant tribe) will wane. God's judgment will bring man's work to nothing. Many nations will rush against Syria and Israel like the rush of many waters. These nations will also be rebuked, however.

Ethiopian help is not required to deal with Assyria. The Lord will cut off Assyria's sprigs with pruning hooks. Ethiopians will come to Zion to worship God.

The burden against Egypt. The Lord strikes Egypt by giving them over to civil war and submission to a cruel master. The Nile will be dried, and the Egyptian economy thereby ruined.

Foolish counsel has caused Egypt to stagger like a drunk man in his vomit. Judah will be a terror to Egypt. The Egyptians will turn to the Lord, and a savior shall deliver them. There will be a peace between the three former enemies of Egypt, Assyria and Israel.

In the year of the fall of the Philistine king Ashdod at the hands of the Assyrians (711 BC). The Lord commands Isaiah to go naked – as he is naked, so shall the Egyptians and Ethiopians be led away naked as captives by Assyria. On this day, Judah will be ashamed that it once trusted to these nations.

The burden against the Wilderness of the Sea (ie Babylon). A army from Elam (Persia) marches against it. A report will come to the watchman: Babylon is fallen, is fallen! The (brief) burden against Dumah (Edom): the watchman will report that the morning comes, and also the night. The burden against Arabia: within a year, all the glory of Kedar will fall.

The burden against the Valley of Vision (Jerusalem). An army is coming, against which there is no deliverance. Instead of turning their hearts in humble repentance to the Lord, the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!' Shebna, Hezekiah's chief steward, is denounced. Shebna will be replaced by Eliakim. He will be given the key of the house of David.

The burden against Tyre. The sailors will agonize when they hear about the destruction of their home port. The pride of Tyre will be dishonored. Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years. God will allow Tyre, symbolized by a prostitute, to continue her gross materialism with all the kingdoms of the world, but her gain and her pay will be set apart for the Lord.

SUMMARY Continued

The land will be emptied and laid waste. The earth will mourn and fade away, because people have transgressed laws and broken the everlasting covenant.

All rejoicing shall cease. The glory of God is contrasted with the woe of man. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. After judgment and punishment, the Lord will reign on Mount Zion, in Jerusalem.

God is praised for his righteous judgment, and for assisting the needy. A feast will be prepared on Zion. Death will be swallowed up forever, and all tears wiped away. People will proclaim a God they have waited for, and who has saved them. The pride of Moab will be brought down, as the Lord spreads out his hands like a swimmer reaches out to swim.

The strength of the city will be celebrated. The Lord is the source of the city's strength. The Lord will bring down those who dwell on high. The upright will desire the Lord, and the wicked shall remain unaware as the fire of enemies devours them. All masters other than the Lord are dead. We have been in pain, as if in labor. The dead shall rise. The day of the Lord's judgment will come.

Leviathan will be defeated. Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit. In the Kingdom of the Lord, the city of man lies desolate. The Lord will be worshipped at the holy mount in Jerusalem.

The drunkards of Ephraim will be trampled underfoot. The beauty of the Lord will replace the faded beauty of Ephraim. Judah also suffers from the corruption of drunkenness. The reply of the drunkards is imagined – this message is fit only for those just weaned from milk.

Scornful men have made a covenant with death. God will lay in Zion a stone for a foundation. The bed is too short to stretch out on, and the covering so narrow that one cannot wrap himself in it. The timing of a farmer is compared to the timing of the Lord.

Woe to Ariel (Jerusalem) – its pride shall be humbled. However, the humbled Jerusalem will be protected from its enemies. Jerusalem suffers from spiritual drunkenness and illiteracy. However, the spiritually blind will see, and justice for the wicked be administered.

Woe to the rebellious children who look to Egypt to protect them from Assyria. The people do not want seers to see and want prophets to prophesy deceits rather than right things. Judah will be broken like a potter's vessel.

Blessed are those who wait for the Lord. He shall respond to his people, who cry to him from Jerusalem. The Lord's people will throw away their graven images of gold and silver. Nature will bring forth abundance. There is a place in Tophet (the rubbish dump outside Jerusalem) for the Assyrian king. The breath of the Lord shall kindle it.

Woe to those who look to Egypt rather than the Lord. The Lord is mightier than the Egyptians. The Lord will defend Jerusalem. The children of Israel are invited to repent. Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice. People will see, hear and understand. The foolish man will be exposed as foolish.

SUMMARY Continued

Women at ease are called upon to repent. The Spirit will be poured out upon a humbled people, who will enjoy peace and security.

The plundering Assyria will itself be plundered. Zion will be filled with wisdom and righteousness. The earth will mourn and lie waste. The breath of the Lord will devour like fire. Sinners shall be afraid, but the righteous will see the king in his beauty. Zion, the city of appointed feasts, will be blessed and delivered.

The indignation of the Lord is against all nations. The sword of the Lord will make a great slaughter in Edom. The land will be inhabited only by animals of the wilderness.

Lands will be restored, and the desert blossom. The weak will be strengthened, the sick and diseased healed. Abundance shall replace lack. There shall be a Way of Holiness – a road leading to Zion.

Officials from King Hezekiah's government meet Rabshakeh, general of the armies of Assyria. Rabshakeh speaks against Judah's trust in an alliance with Egypt and says the Lord will not save them. Rabshakeh speaks directly to the people of Jerusalem in Hebrew, seeking to demoralize them.

Hezekiah tears his clothes and covers himself with sackcloth. Isaiah speaks words of assurance to Hezekiah and tells him that Rabshakeh's blasphemy will be repaid. The Ethiopians move against Assyria.

Hezekiah prays, and Isaiah further prophesies against Assyria and gives assurances that the Lord will protect Jerusalem. The angel of the Lord strikes 185,000 Assyrian soldiers dead. Sennacherib is killed by his sons back in Assyria.

The sick Hezekiah is given an assurance by Isaiah that he will not die but live a further fifteen years. The shadow on a sundial goes backwards, as a sign to confirm the promise. Hezekiah thanks the Lord for his deliverance.

Hezekiah entertains the envoys from the king of Babylon, showing them all his treasures. Isaiah reproves him, saying that all treasures will be taken to Babylon at a future date. Hezekiah is relieved that he himself will not see this happen.

Comfort ye, my people. A voice in the wilderness cries, 'Prepare the way of the Lord.' Every valley shall be exalted, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.

Zion and Jerusalem, who bring good tidings, are invited to tell the cities of Judah to behold their God. The Lord will feed his flock like a shepherd. God's greatness surpasses all nations, and all idols. He brings the princes and the judges of the earth to nothing. The weak shall be strengthened.

The people from the coastlands are invited to approach for judgment. Along with everybody else. Who raised up one from the East? (Abraham? Cyrus?) The Lord did. The people of the coastlands approach with fear.

Israel has been chosen and gathered from the ends of the earth. Fear not – you will be strengthened, and your enemies ashamed.

SUMMARY Continued

You will thresh and winnow the mountains. God will supply water and other resources. One will come from the north (Cyrus?) who shall conquer. The Lord judges idols and deems them worthless.

The Lord's servant will bring justice to the gentiles, and establish justice on earth. A light to the gentiles. Psalm-like invitation to sing to the Lord a new song. The Lord will unleash his devastating power against idolaters. The deaf and the blind come to the servant. The Lord's people have been robbed, plundered and punished because they have not walked in the ways of the Lord.

The Lord has redeemed his people from slavery – he will protect them from waters and from fire. The Lord has chosen his servant, and commissioned Israel as his witnesses. 'Before the day was, I am He.' The Lord will judge Babylon, and supply roads and water for his people in the wilderness. Jacob (Israel) has not offered sacrifices, and has been full of iniquity – nonetheless, the Lord will forgive previous sins.

The Lord's spirit will be poured onto the descendants of Jacob, and they will spring up like grass. 'I am the first and the last; besides me, there is no God.' Idols and idol makers achieve nothing. Israel's transgressions have been blotted out, as with a thick cloud. Jacob has been redeemed. Cyrus is the Lord's shepherd, who will help to rebuild Judah and Jerusalem.

The Lord calls upon Cyrus to subdue nations. Cyrus and Israel will know the Lord, who formed the light and created darkness. The skies are commanded to rain down righteousness, and the earth to bring forth salvation. Resisting the creator is foolish.

God's role as the creator of heaven and earth is emphasized alongside the deliverance of Israel via Cyrus. When the Lord is revealed as the true God, idolaters will submit and God's people will be saved. The Lord has not concealed Himself but let Himself be known. 'Look to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth.'

False gods are carried away on carriages. The Lord will carry His people into old age. Golden idols are mute and incapable of offering help. The Lord knew the end from the beginning. A bird of prey shall be called from the East. Salvation will be placed in Zion, and glory in Israel.

Babylon is depicted as a degraded woman, naked and uncovered. The pride and arrogance of Babylon is rebuked. The stargazers and sorcerers of Babylon will be unable to help.

The Lord rebukes Israel for perfunctory religious observance. The Lord made sure that he was revealed rather than concealed, but Israel did not see or hear. The Lord defers his anger for His name's sake – he is the first and the last.

The Lord wishes that his people had obeyed Him in the past. Exodus from Babylon conflated with that from Egypt – the rock in the wilderness flowed with water.

The servant speaks in his own voice – he has been called from the womb. His mouth has been made like a sharp sword. He will be a light to the gentiles. He will release prisoners, and those in darkness. The Lord cannot forget Israel, as a nurse cannot forget her nursing child.

SUMMARY Continued

The Lord will protect Israel from her enemies, who will be humbled and defeated.

Israel has brought its misfortunes on itself. The servant is obedient and has been given a wise tongue. 'I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard.' He has faith that the Lord will justify him, however, and that his adversaries will grow old like a garment and be eaten up by moths. People will be kindled by fire from his hand.

The Lord will comfort – the wilderness shall become an Eden. The Lord's salvation and righteousness are forever. Fear God, not man. God defeated Rahab (sea monster), and parted the seas (again, the exodus from Babylon and Egypt are conflated). The cup of the Lord's fury will be taken from Israel and given to its enemies.

Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! You shall be redeemed for no money. Israel's oppressors will wail. All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. When departing, the Lord will be the rear guard. The Lord's servant will be both exalted and humiliated. Nations will be cleansed and astonished by him.

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was bruised for our iniquities...and by his stripes we are healed.

We all like sheep have gone astray. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. The Lord made his soul an offering for sin. The righteous servant shall justify many. He bore the sins of many.

Israel will be restored like a barren woman who bears many children. Israel will be restored like a widow who is rescued from her reproach. The Lord has shown temporary wrath and will now show everlasting kindness. Covenant with Noah cited as a precedent. The city shall be build with precious stones. Peace, and protection are promised.

The Lord invites those who are thirsty to come and be richly fed. The everlasting covenant is talked about in terms of the sure mercies of David. The wicked will be forgiven if they forsake their ways.

The Lord's thoughts are higher than men's thoughts. The Lord's word shall make the earth fertile. Psalm-like image of the mountains and hills breaking forth in singing.

A call is made to be righteous, and not defile the Sabbath. The foreigner and the eunuch will not be separated from the Lord. The Lord will judge the blind watchmen who live hedonistically, however.

The righteous are persecuted. God's people have committed spiritual adultery. He who puts his trust in the Lord shall possess the land and inherit His holy mountain – in contrast to those who trust in idols. The stumbling block shall be removed. The Lord will restore – but there is no rest for the wicked.

God's people ask why their prayers go unanswered. In fact, their ritual observance was shallow and did not proceed from the heart. God is more pleased to see people help the oppressed and poor.

SUMMARY Continued

The light of the true worshipper shall break forth like the morning; he shall be as a watered garden. Those who keep the Sabbath will ride on the high hills of the earth.

The problem is not that the Lord's hand is shortened, so it cannot save. The problem is the sins of the people – lies, iniquity and injustice. Darkness comes, and the people growl like bears, and moan sadly like doves.

In the absence of righteousness, the Lord Himself became a righteous warrior, and lifted up his standard before the enemy. The Redeemer shall come to Zion.

Arise, shine, for your light has come. The gentiles shall come to your light. Great treasures will come to Israel from many lands. The sons of those who afflicted Israel shall come bowing.

The walls shall be called Salvation, and the gates Praise. The Lord will be an everlasting light to replace the sun and the moon. The days of mourning shall be ended.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He (the servant? Isaiah himself?) will preach good tidings to the poor, proclaim liberty to the captives, comfort those who mourn. Ruined cities will be rebuilt. Shame will replace honor.

The covenant will endure for future generations and be famous among the gentiles. He is clothed in the garment of salvation, and the robe of righteousness. Righteousness and praise will spring forth.

Zion's righteousness shall go forth as brightness. The gentiles shall witness its glory. The Lord loves Zion as a bridegroom loves a bride and will protect it against enemies. Build the highway for the Lord! Zion shall be peopled with the redeemed of the Lord.

Who is this who comes from Edom with dyed red garments? He has trodden the winepress furiously. Nobody was by to help him. A savior redeemed his people, though afflicted. His people rebelled and grieved his holy spirit, so he turned against them. A exile's plea for restoration – where is the God of Moses, who redeemed his people?

A prayer for God to intervene, shaking the mountains and making His name known to his adversaries. Sinfulness is confessed and acknowledged as an obstacle. A plea is made to forget iniquity. God is asked to act in light of the fact that Zion is a wilderness, and Jerusalem a desolation.

'I was sought by those who did not ask for me.' These people (presumably gentiles) are contrasted with God's rebellious people. Blessings are promised for the true servants of the Lord, and a chastisement for false or shallow servants.

God will create a new heaven, and a new earth, and there shall be no more weeping. People will live so long that if someone dies being one hundred years old, people will consider that one accursed. They shall provide for themselves. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together.

SUMMARY Continued

Heaven is the Lord's throne, and the earth His footstool. The Lord will look on one who is poor and of a contrite spirit. Empty religious rituals are rejected. The Lord repays his enemies. After labor pains, Zion experiences the joy of birth.

The Lord will come in judgment, to judge all flesh. Gentiles will come to know of the Lord, and some of them will even become priests and Levites. All flesh shall worship before the Lord. For those who transgress, their corpses will be looked upon – their worm shall not die, nor their fire quenched.

NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 9:6** For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 9:7** Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.
- 11:1** There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
- 11:2** The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.
- 11:3** His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;
- 11:4** But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.
- 11:5** Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.
- 11:10** And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious.
- 12:1** And in that day you will say: O Lord, I will praise You; Though You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.
- 12:2** Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For Yah, the Lord, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.
- 12:3** Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation.
- 12:4** And in that day you will say: Praise the Lord, call upon His name; Declare His deeds among the peoples, Make mention that His name is exalted.
- 12:5** Sing to the Lord, For He has done excellent things; This is known in all the earth.
- 12:6** Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!
- 25:9** And it will be said in that day: Behold, this is our God; We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; We have waited for Him; We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.
- 28:7** But they also have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine,

NKJV SCRIPTURE Continued

- They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble in judgment.
- 35:3** Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees.
- 35:4** Say to those who are fearful-hearted, Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you.
- 40:31** But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.
- 41:10** ***Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.***
- 41:11** ***Behold, all those who were incensed against you Shall be ashamed and disgraced; They shall be as nothing, And those who strive with you shall perish.***
- 41:12** ***You shall seek them and not find them-- Those who contended with you. Those who war against you Shall be as nothing, As a nonexistent thing.***
- 41:13** ***For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, Fear not, I will help you.***
- 48:22** There is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked.
- 51:7** ***Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, You people in whose heart is My law: Do not fear the reproach of men, Nor be afraid of their insults.***
- 51:8** ***For the moth will eat them up like a garment, And the worm will eat them like wool; But My righteousness will be forever, And My salvation from generation to generation.***
- 53:1** Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
- 53:2** For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
- 53:3** He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
- 53:4** Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.
- 53:5** But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.
- 53:6** All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.
- 53:7** He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.
- 53:8** He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.
- 53:9** And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.

NKJV SCRIPTURE Continued

- 54:14** *In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you.*
- 54:15** *Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me. Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake.*
- 54:16** *Behold, I have created the blacksmith Who blows the coals in the fire, Who brings forth an instrument for his work; And I have created the spoiler to destroy.*
- 54:17** *No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, And their righteousness is from Me, Says the Lord.*
- 56:1** *Thus says the Lord: Keep justice, and do righteousness, For My salvation is about to come, And My righteousness to be revealed.*
- 56:2** *Blessed is the man who does this, And the son of man who lays hold on it; Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And keeps his hand from doing any evil.*
- 58:7** Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?
- 58:8** Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
- 58:9** Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
- 58:10** If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.
- 58:11** The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

CHARACTER Definitions

ISAIAH - The Holy Prophet Isaiah lived 700 years before the birth of Christ and was of royal lineage. Isaiah's father Amos raised his son in the fear of God and in the law of the Lord.

Having attained the age of maturity, the Prophet Isaiah entered into marriage with a pious prophetess and had a son Jashub. Saint Isaiah was called to prophetic service during the reign of Oziah [Uzziah], king of Judea, and he prophesied for 60 years during the reign of kings Joatham, Achaz [Ahaz], Hezekiah and Manasseh.

The start of his service was marked by the following vision: he beheld the Lord God, sitting in a majestic heavenly temple upon a high throne. Six-winged Seraphim encircled Him.

With two wings they covered their faces, and with two wings they covered their feet, and with two wings they flew about crying out one to another, "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord

CHARACTERS Continued

Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with His glory!" The pillars of the heavenly temple shook from their shouts, and in the temple arose the smoke of incense.

The prophet cried out in terror, "Oh, an accursed man am I, granted to behold the Lord Sabaoth, and having impure lips and living amidst an impure people!" Then was sent him one of the Seraphim, having in hand a red-hot coal, which he took with tongs from the altar of the Lord.

He touched it to the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah and said, "Lo, this has touched thy lips, and will take away with thine iniquities, and will cleanse thy sins." After this Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord, directed towards him, "Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?"

Isaiah answered, "Here am I, send me". And the Lord sent him to the Jews to exhort them to turn from the ways of impiety and idol worship, and to offer repentance. To those that repent and turn to the true God, the Lord promised mercy and forgiveness, but punishment and the judgment of God are appointed for the unrepentant.

Then Isaiah asked the Lord, how long would the falling away of the Jewish nation from God continue. The Lord answered, "Until the cities be deserted, by reason of there being no people, and the land shall be made desolate.

Just as when a tree be felled and from the stump come forth new shoots, so also from the destruction of the nation a holy remnant will remain, from which will emerge a new tribe."

Isaiah left behind him a book of prophecy in which he denounces the Jews for their unfaithfulness to the God of their Fathers. He predicted the captivity of the Jews and their return from captivity during the time of the emperor Cyrus, the destruction and renewal of Jerusalem and of the Temple.

Together with this he predicts the historical fate also of the other nations bordering the Jews. But what is most important of all for us, the Prophet Isaiah with particular clarity and detail prophesies about the coming of the Messiah, Christ the Savior. The prophet names the Messiah as God and Man, teacher of all the nations, founder of the Kingdom of peace and love.

The prophet foretells the birth of the Messiah from a Virgin, and with particular clarity he describes the Suffering of the Messiah for the sins of the world. He foresees His Resurrection and the universal spreading of His Church.

By his clear foretelling of Christ the Savior, the Prophet Isaiah deserves to be called an Old Testament Evangelist. To him belong the words, "He beareth our sins and is smitten for us.... He was wounded for our sins and tortured for our transgressions. The chastisement of our world was upon Him, and by His wounds we were healed...."

The holy Prophet Isaiah had also a gift of wonderworking. And so, when during the time of a siege of Jerusalem by enemies the besieged had become exhausted with

CHARACTERS Continued

thirst, he by his prayer drew out from beneath Mount Sion a spring of water, which was called Siloam, i.e. "sent from God."

It was to this spring afterwards that the Savior sent the man blind from birth to wash, and He restored his sight. By the prayer of the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord prolonged the life of Hezekiah for 15 years.

The Prophet Isaiah died a martyr's death. By order of the Jewish king Manasseh he was sawn through by a wood-saw. The prophet was buried not far from the Pool of Siloam.

AHAZ – was king of Judah, and the son and successor of Jotham. Ahaz was 20 when he became king of Judah and reigned for 16 years. Ahaz is portrayed as an evil king in the Book of Kings.

Edwin R. Thiele concluded that Ahaz was coregent with Jotham from 736/735 BC, and that his sole reign began in 732/731 and ended in 716/715 BC. The Gospel of Matthew lists Ahaz of Judah in the genealogy of Jesus. He is also mentioned in the book of Isaiah.

Ahaz's reign commenced at the age of 20, in the 17th year of the reign of Pekah of Israel. Immediately upon his accession Ahaz had to meet a coalition formed by northern Israel, under Pekah, and Damascus (Syria), under Rezin.

These kings wished to compel him to join them in opposing the Assyrians, who were arming a force against the Northern Kingdom under Tiglath-Pileser III. (Pul). To protect himself Ahaz called in the aid of the Assyrians. Tiglath-Pileser sacked Damascus and annexed Aram.

According to 2 Kings, the population of Aram was deported and Rezin executed. Tiglath-Pileser then attacked Israel and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh and Hazor. He took Gilead and Galilee, including all the land of Naphtali, and deported the people to Assyria. Tiglath-Pileser also records this act in one of his inscriptions.

Through Assyria's intervention, and as a result of its invasion and subjection of the kingdom of Damascus and the Kingdom of Israel, Ahaz was relieved of his troublesome neighbors; but his protector henceforth claimed and held suzerainty over his kingdom.

This war of invasion lasted two years (734-732 BC), and ended in the capture and annexation of Damascus to Assyria and of the territory of Israel north of the border of Jezreel.

Ahaz in the meanwhile furnished auxiliaries to Tiglath-Pileser. This appeal to Assyria met with stern opposition from the prophet Isaiah, who counseled Ahaz to rely upon the Lord and not upon outside aid. The sequel seemed to justify the king and to condemn the prophet.

Ahaz, during his whole reign, was free from troubles with which the neighboring rulers were harassed, who from time to time revolted against Assyria.

CHARACTERS Continued

Thus it was that, in 722, Samaria was taken and northern Israel wholly incorporated into the Assyrian empire.

Ahaz, who was irresolute and impressionable, yielded readily to the glamour and prestige of the Assyrians in religion as well as in politics. In 732 he went to Damascus to swear homage to Tiglath-Pileser and his gods; and, taking a fancy to an altar which he saw there, he had one like it made in Jerusalem, which, with a corresponding change in ritual, he made a permanent feature of the Temple worship.

Changes were also made in the arrangements and furniture of the Temple, "because of the king of Assyria". Furthermore, Ahaz fitted up an astrological observatory with accompanying sacrifices, after the fashion of the ruling people. In other ways Ahaz lowered the character of the national worship. It is recorded that he even offered his son by fire to Moloch.

His government is considered by the Deuteronomistic historian, as having been disastrous to the religious state of the country; and a large part of the reforming work of his son Hezekiah was aimed at undoing the evil that Ahaz had done.

He died at the age of 36 and was succeeded by his son, Hezekiah. Because of his wickedness he was not brought into the sepulcher of the kings.

An insight into Ahaz's neglect of the worship of the Lord is found in the statement that on the first day of the month of Nisan that followed Ahaz's death, his son Hezekiah commissioned the priests and Levites to open and repair the doors of the Temple and to remove the defilements of the sanctuary, a task which took 16 days.

TIGLATH-PILESER – Formerly the governor of Kalhu and a general, the usurper Pulu assumed his Assyrian throne-name (Tiglath-Pileser) from two more-legitimate predecessors.

He described himself as a son of Adad-Nirari III in his inscriptions, but the accuracy of this claim remains uncertain. He seized the throne in the midst of civil war on 13 Ayaru, 745 BCE.

As a result of Pulu seizing the throne in a bloody coup d'état, the old royal family was slaughtered, and the new monarch set Assyria on the path to expand the empire in order to ensure the survival of the kingdom.

More so it was in Babylon that he was referred to as Pulu and his son as Ululayu. Pulu and both his sons taking up Assyrian names is another suggestion that they were foreigners who had usurped the crown of Assyria at the revolt of Kalhu.

Biblical records describe how Tiglath-Pileser III exacted 1,000 talents of silver as tribute from King Menahem of the Kingdom of Israel and later defeated his successor Pekah.

Pekah had allied with Rezin, king of the Arameans against Ahaz (known to the Assyrians as Yahu-Kkhazi), of the Kingdom of Judah, who responded by appealing for the Assyrian monarch's help with the Temple gold and silver.

CHARACTERS Continued

Tiglath-Pileser answered swiftly. He first marched his army down the eastern Mediterranean coast, taking coastal cities all the way to Egypt. This cut off his enemies' access to the sea.

Once this was achieved, he returned to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, destroyed their army, and deported the Reubenites, Gadites, and the people of Manasseh to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the Gozan river. He then installed an Israelite puppet king, Hoshea, (732–723 BCE) in the place of Pekah.

He concluded this extensive campaign by marching north and west, ravaging Aramaea, seizing Damascus, executing Rezin, and deporting the survivors to Kir. Beyond this, the Assyrian alliance was not beneficial to Ahaz.

KING SENNACHERIB - Sennacherib is the biblical form of the name Sin-Akheeriba. Though a younger son, he was chosen as heir by his father, Sargon II. As crown prince, he gained experience fighting on the northern frontier.

On hearing of Sargon's death, he hastened back to Nineveh, but rebellion broke out. In Babylonia, a Chaldean, Merodach-Baladan, seized the throne, supported by the Elamites, but he was put to flight and the Chaldean tribes surrendered.

The city-states and kingdoms of Syria and Palestine, encouraged by Egypt, refused tribute. In 701 B.C. Sennacherib marched to the coast and occupied Ascalon and Sidon; Judah was next invaded, Lachish captured by assault, and Jerusalem invested.

Hezekiah, King of Judah, defied the Assyrians and was forced to pay a heavy indemnity. Sennacherib then attempted to invade Egypt, but disaster, perhaps plague, struck his army and he was forced to turn back.

A second rebellion in Babylonia was foiled, and Sennacherib made his son, Assur-Nadin-Shum, king of Babylon. Merodach-Baladan took refuge in the marshes of southern Elam.

Seven years later, after repeated provocation, Sennacherib decided to seek him out; building a fleet at Nineveh, he sailed the ships downriver to Opis, then dragged them overland to the Euphrates, and thence to the Persian Gulf. After a sea battle, Elamite coastal towns were destroyed.

Meanwhile, Assur-Nadin-Shum was murdered and replaced by an Elamite nominee. In 689 Sennacherib avenged his son. Marching to Babylon, he took the city by storm and mercilessly destroyed it, deporting the inhabitants and flooding the ruins. This sacrilege to a holy city shocked the ancient world but effectively discouraged further rebellion.

The war annals of Sennacherib depict him as a ruthless destroyer, "the flame that consumes those who will not submit." In his building inscriptions, however, he appears as "he who cares for the welfare of Assyria."

His greatest achievement was the rebuilding of Nineveh, the ancient capital. He strengthened the walls, cut new streets, and redesigned the water system.

CHARACTERS Continued

Water was brought from the hills 50 miles away and carried over a valley on a stone aqueduct—one of the engineering feats of antiquity.

His palace, built on an artificial platform, covered 8 acres and was surrounded by parks and orchards stocked with exotic plants and animals. In January 681, while at prayer, Sennacherib was murdered by his own sons.

BIBLE TIMELINE

739 BC	Isaiah Complains of Zion's Corruption	Isaiah 1 - 5
739 BC	Isaiah's Vision and Commission	Isaiah 6
735 BC	Isaiah's Prophecy of Immanuel	Isaiah 7
734 BC	Uriah and Zechariah	Isaiah 8
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies a Child Is Born	Isaiah 9
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies Judgments Upon Israel	Isaiah 9:8
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies Judgment on Assyria	Isaiah 10
730 BC	Isaiah Prophecies The Root of Jesse	Isaiah 11
730 BC	Isaiah's Joyful Thanksgiving	Isaiah 12
725 BC	Isaiah Prophecies against the Nations	Isaiah 13 - 22
725 BC	Isaiah's Valley of Vision	Isaiah 22
725 BC	Isaiah's Burden of Tyre	Isaiah 23
725 BC	Devastation on the Earth	Isaiah 24
725 BC	Isaiah's Songs of Praise	Isaiah 25 - 27
725 BC	Isaiah's Further Warnings	Isaiah 28 - 32
725 BC	Isaiah Prophecies a King Shall Reign	Isaiah 32
725 BC	Isaiah Declares God's Judgments	Isaiah 33, 34
725 BC	Isaiah Declares the Joyful Will Flourish in Zion	Isaiah 35
712 BC	Hezekiah's Illness and Healing	Isaiah 38
711 BC	Hezekiah Shows Treasures	Isaiah 39
711 BC	Isaiah Prophecies Captivity and Restoration	Isaiah 40 - 66
701 BC	Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem	Isaiah 36
701 BC	Hezekiah's Prayer	Isaiah 37

MAP REFERENCES

