

Isaiah

Heading

1:1 Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem¹ that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz during the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah reigned over Judah.²

Obedience, not Sacrifice

1:2 Listen, O heavens,
pay attention, O earth!³
For the LORD speaks:

“I raised children,⁴ I brought them up,⁵
but⁶ they have rebelled⁷ against me!”

1:3 An ox recognizes its owner,
a donkey recognizes where its owner puts
its food;⁸
but Israel does not recognize me,⁹

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

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

³ sn Isaiah’s prophetic career probably began in the final year of Uzziah’s reign (ca. 740 B.C., see Isa 6:1) and extended into the later years of Hezekiah’s reign, which ended in 686 B.C.

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

⁵ tn Or “sons” (NAB, NASB).

⁶ sn “Father” and “son” occur as common terms in ancient Near Eastern treaties and covenants, delineating the suzerain and vassal as participants in the covenant relationship. The prophet uses these terms, the reference to heavens and earth as witnesses, and allusions to deuteronomistic covenant curses (1:7-9, 19-20) to set his prophecy firmly against the backdrop of Israel’s covenantal relationship with Yahweh.

⁷ sn The normal word pair for giving birth to and raising children is יָלַד (yalad, “to give birth to”) and יָגַד (gadal, “to grow, raise”). The pair רֹעֵם (re’em, “to raise up”) probably occurs here to highlight the fact that Yahweh made something important of Israel (cf. R. Mosis, *TDOT* 2:403).

⁸ sn Against the backdrop of Yahweh’s care for his chosen people, Israel’s rebellion represents abhorrent treachery. The conjunction prefixed to a nonverbal element highlights the sad contrast between Yahweh’s compassionate care for His people and Israel’s thankless rebellion.

⁹ sn To rebel carries the idea of “covenant treachery.” Although an act of בְּשִׁבֶּת (peshā, “rebellion”) often signifies a breach of the law, the legal offense also represents a violation of an existing covenantal relationship (E. Carpenter and M. Grisanti, *NIDOTTE* 3:707).

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

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

my people do not understand.”

1:4¹⁰ The sinful nation is as good as dead,¹¹

the people weighed down by evil deeds.
They are offspring who do wrong,
children¹² who do wicked things.
They have abandoned the LORD,
and rejected the Holy One of Israel.¹³
They are alienated from him.¹⁴

1:5¹⁵ Why do you insist on being battered?

Why do you continue to rebel?¹⁶
Your head has a massive wound,¹⁷
your whole body is weak.¹⁸

1:6 From the soles of your feet to your head,
there is no spot that is unharmed.¹⁹
There are only bruises, cuts,
and open wounds.

They have not been cleansed²⁰ or banded,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁷ tn Heb “all the head is ill”; NRSV “the whole head is sick”; CEV “Your head is badly bruised.”

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

¹⁹ tn Heb “there is not in it health”; NAB “there is no sound spot.”

²⁰ tn Heb “pressed out.”

nor have they been treated¹ with olive oil.²

1:7 Your land is devastated,
your cities burned with fire.

Right before your eyes your crops
are being destroyed by foreign invaders.³
They leave behind devastation and de-
struction.⁴

1:8 Daughter Zion⁵ is left isolated,
like a hut in a vineyard,
or a shelter in a cucumber field;
she is a besieged city.⁶

1:9 If the LORD who commands armies⁷
had not left us a few survivors,
we would have quickly become like
Sodom.⁸

we would have become like Gomorrah.

1:10 Listen to the LORD's word,
you leaders of Sodom!⁹

¹ tn Heb "softened" (so NASB, NRSV); NIV "soothed."

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

³ tn Heb "As for your land, before you foreigners are devouring it."

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pay attention to our God's rebuke,¹⁰
people of Gomorrah!

1:11 "Of what importance to me are your many sacrifices?"¹¹
says the LORD.

"I am stuffed with¹² burnt sacrifices
of rams and the fat from steers.
The blood of bulls, lambs, and goats
I do not want.¹³

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

1:13 Do not bring any more meaningless¹⁵
offerings;

I consider your incense detestable!¹⁶

You observe new moon festivals, Sab-
baths, and convocations,
but I cannot tolerate sin-stained celebra-
tions!¹⁷

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

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

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

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

¹² tn In this section the LORD refutes a potential objection that his sinful people might offer in their defense. He has charged them with rebellion (vv. 2-3), but they might respond that he has brought him many sacrifices. So he points out that he requires social justice first and foremost, not empty ritual.

¹³ tn The verb שָׁבַע (*sava'*, "be satisfied, full") is often used of eating and/or drinking one's fill. See BDB 959 s.v. שָׁבַע. Here sacrifices are viewed, in typical ancient Near Eastern fashion, as food for the deity. God here declares that he has eaten and drunk, as it were, his fill.

¹⁴ tn In the chiastic structure of the verse, the verbs at the beginning and end highlight God's displeasure, while the heaping up of references to animals, fat, and blood in the middle lines hints at why God wants no more of their sacrifices. They have, as it were, piled the food on his table and he needs no more.

¹⁵ tn Heb "When you come to appear before me, who requires this from your hand, trampling of my courtyards?" The rhetorical question sarcastically makes the point that God does not require this parade of livestock. The verb "trample" probably refers to the eager worshipers and their sacrificial animals walking around in the temple area.

¹⁶ tn Or "worthless" (NASB, NCV, CEV); KJV, ASV "vain."

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

¹⁸ tn Heb "sin and assembly" (these two nouns probably represent a hendiadys). The point is that their attempts at worship are unacceptable to God because the people's everyday actions in the socio-economic realm prove they have no genuine devotion to God (see vv. 16-17).

they are a burden
that I am tired of carrying.

1:15 When you spread out your hands in prayer,
I look the other way;¹
when you offer your many prayers,
I do not listen,
because your hands are covered with blood.²

1:16³ Wash! Cleanse yourselves!
Remove your sinful deeds⁴
from my sight.
Stop sinning!

1:17 Learn to do what is right!
Promote justice!
Give the oppressed reason to celebrate!⁵
Take up the cause of the orphan!
Defend the rights of the widow!⁶

1:18⁷ Come, let's consider your options,⁸
says the LORD.

"Though your sins have stained you like the color red,
you can become⁹ white like snow;
though they are as easy to see as the color scarlet,
you can become¹⁰ white like wool.¹¹

1:19 If you have a willing attitude and obey,¹²
then you will again eat the good crops of the land.
1:20 But if you refuse and rebel,
you will be devoured¹³ by the sword."
Know for certain that the LORD has spoken.¹⁴

Purifying Judgment

1:21 How tragic that the once-faithful city has become a prostitute!¹⁵
She was once a center of¹⁶ justice,
fairness resided in her,
but now only murderers.¹⁷

1:22 Your¹⁸ silver has become scum,¹⁹

¹ tn Heb "I close my eyes from you."

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁸ tn Traditionally, "let us reason together," but the context suggests a judicial nuance. The Lord is giving the nation its options for the future.

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

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

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

¹² tn Heb "listen"; KJV "obedient"; NASB "If you consent and obey."

¹³ sn The wordplay in the Hebrew draws attention to the options. The people can obey, in which case they will "eat" v. 19. [וּקְחֶלֶת] Qal active participle of אָכַל (אָכְלָה) God's blessing, or they can disobey, in which case they will be devoured (Heb "eaten", חָמֵת), [וּקְנַפְתָּל] Qal passive/Pual of נִפְתַּל by God's judgment.

¹⁴ tn Heb "for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." The introductory כי (ki) may be asseverative (as reflected in the translation) or causal/explanatory, explaining why the option chosen by the people will become reality (it is guaranteed by the divine word).

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

¹⁶ tn Heb "filled with."

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

¹⁸ tn The pronoun is feminine singular; personified Jerusalem (see v. 21) is addressed.

¹⁹ tn Or "dross." The word refers to the scum or impurities floating on the top of melted metal.

your beer is diluted with water.¹
1:23 Your officials are rebels,²
 they associate with³ thieves.
 All of them love bribery,
 and look for⁴ payoffs.⁵
 They do not take up the cause of the
 orphan,⁶
 or defend the rights of the widow.⁷
1:24 Therefore, the sovereign LORD who
 commands armies,⁸
 the powerful Ruler of Israel,⁹ says this:
 "Ah, I will seek vengeance¹⁰ against my
 adversaries,
 I will take revenge against my enemies.¹¹
1:25 I will attack you;¹²
 I will purify your metal with flux.¹³
 I will remove all your slag.¹⁴
1:26 I will reestablish honest judges as in
 former times,
 wise advisers as in earlier days.¹⁵

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

2 tn Or "stubborn"; CEV "have rejected me."

3 tn Heb "and companions of" (so KJV, NASB); CEV "friends of crooks."

4 tn Heb "pursue"; NIV "chase after gifts."

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

6 sn See the note at v. 17.

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

8 tn Heb "the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts]." On the title "the LORD who commands armies," see the note at v. 9.

9 tn Heb "the powerful [one] of Israel."

10 tn Heb "console myself" (i.e., by getting revenge); NRSV "pour out my wrath on."

11 sn The LORD here identifies with the oppressed and comes as their defender and vindicator.

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

13 tn Heb "I will purify your dross as [with] flux." "Flux" refers here to minerals added to the metals in a furnace to prevent oxides from forming. For this interpretation of בָּר (bor), see HALOT 153 s.v. II בָּר and 750 s.v. סַג.

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

15 tn Heb "I will restore your judges as in the beginning; and your counselors as in the beginning." In this context, where social injustice and legal corruption are denounced (see v.

Then you will be called, 'The Just City, Faithful Town.'"

1:27¹⁶ Zion will be freed by justice,¹⁷

and her returnees by righteousness.¹⁸

1:28 All rebellious sinners will be shattered,¹⁹

those who abandon the LORD will perish.

1:29 Indeed, they²⁰ will be ashamed of the

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

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

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

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

19 tn Heb "and [there will be] a shattering of rebels and sinners together."

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

sacred trees
you⁴ find so desirable;
you will be embarrassed because of the
sacred orchards²
where you choose to worship.
1:30 For you will be like a tree whose
leaves wither,
like an orchard³ that is unwatered.
1:31 The powerful will be like⁴ a thread
of yarn,
their deeds like a spark;
both will burn together,
and no one will put out the fire.

The Future Glory of Jerusalem

2:1 Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem⁵ that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz.⁶

2:2 In the future⁷
the mountain of the LORD's temple will
endure⁸
as the most important of mountains,
and will be the most prominent of hills.⁹
All the nations will stream to it,
2:3 many peoples will come and say,
“Come, let us go up to the LORD's moun-
tain,
to the temple of the God of Jacob,
so¹⁰ he can teach us his requirements,¹¹
and¹² we can follow his standards.”¹³

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

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

2 tn Or “gardens” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB “groves.”
3 tn Or “a garden” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

4 tn Heb “will become” (so NASB, NIV).

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

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

7 tn Heb “in the end of the days.” This phrase may refer
generally to the future, or more technically to the final period
of history. See BDB 31 s.v. תְּרוֹתָה. The verse begins with a verb
that functions as a “discourse particle” and is not translated.
In numerous places throughout the OT, the “to be” verb with
a prefixed conjunction (תִּהְיֶה [v^ehayah] and תִּזְהַיֵּל [vay^ehi]) occurs
in this fashion to introduce a circumstantial clause and does
not require translation.

8 tn Or “be established” (KJV, NIV, NRSV).

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

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

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

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

13 tn Heb “walk in his ways.”

For Zion will be the center for moral in-
struction,¹⁴
the LORD will issue edicts from Jerusa-
lem.¹⁵
2:4 He will judge disputes between na-
tions;
he will settle cases for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plow-
shares,¹⁶
and their spears into pruning hooks.¹⁷
Nations will not take up the sword
against other nations,
and they will no longer train for war.
2:5 O descendants¹⁸ of Jacob,
come, let us walk in the LORD’s guiding
light.¹⁹

The Lord’s Day of Judgment

2:6 Indeed, O LORD,²⁰ you have aban-
doned your people,
the descendants of Jacob.
For diviners from the east are every-
where,²¹
they consult omen readers like the Philis-
tines do.²²
Plenty of foreigners are around.²³

14 tn Heb “for out of Zion will go instruction.”

15 tn Heb “the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

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

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

18 tn Heb “house,” referring to the family line or descen-
dants (likewise in v. 6).

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

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

21 tc Heb “they are full from the east.” Various scholars re-
tain the BHS reading and suggest that the prophet makes a
general statement concerning Israel’s reliance on foreign cus-
toms (J. Watts, *Isaiah* [WBC], 1:32; J. de Waard, *Isaiah*, 12-
13). Nevertheless, it appears that a word is missing. Based
on the parallelism (note “omen readers” in 5:6c), many
suggest that קָשִׁים (*qos̄imim*, “diviners”) or מִiqṣam,
“divination”) has been accidentally omitted. Homoioteleuton
could account for the omission of an original קָשִׁים (note how
this word and the following מִקְדֵּם [*miqedem*, “from the east”]
both end in *mem*); an original קָשִׁם could have fallen out by
homoiotacton (note how this word and the following מִקְדֵּם
both begin with *mem*).

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

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

2:7 Their land is full of gold and silver; there is no end to their wealth.¹
 Their land is full of horses; there is no end to their chariots.²
2:8 Their land is full of worthless idols; they worship³ the product of their own hands,
 what their own fingers have fashioned.
2:9 Men bow down to them in homage, they lie flat on the ground in worship.⁴
 Don't spare them!⁵
2:10 Go up into the rocky cliffs, hide in the ground.
 Get away from the dreadful judgment of the Lord,⁶
 from his royal splendor!
2:11 Proud men will be brought low, arrogant men will be humiliated,⁷ the Lord alone will be exalted⁸ in that day.
2:12 Indeed, the Lord who commands armies has planned a day of judgment,⁹ for¹⁰ all the high and mighty, for all who are proud – they will be humiliated;
2:13 for all the cedars of Lebanon,

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

¹ tn Or "treasures"; KJV "treasures."

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

³ tn Or "bow down to" (NIV, NRSV).

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

⁵ tn Heb "don't lift them up." The idiom "lift up" (נָשַׁף; with בְּ, nasa' with preposition lamed) can mean "spare, forgive" (see Gen 18:24, 26). Here the idiom plays on the preceding verbs. The idolaters are bowed low as they worship their false gods; the prophet asks God not to "lift them up."

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

⁷ tn Heb "and the eyes of the pride of men will be brought low, and the arrogance of men will be brought down." The repetition of the verbs חֲשַׁךְ (shafal) and חֲשַׁךְ (shakhakh) from v. 9 draws attention to the appropriate nature of the judgment. Those proud men who "bow low" before idols will be forced to "bow low" before God when he judges their sin.

⁸ tn Or "elevated"; CEV "honored."

⁹ tn Heb "indeed [or "for"] the Lord who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts] has a day."

¹⁰ tn Or "against" (NAB, NASB, NRSV).

that are so high and mighty,¹¹ for all the oaks of Bashan,¹² for all the tall mountains, for all the high hills,¹² for every high tower,¹³ for every fortified wall,¹³ for all the large ships,¹⁴ for all the impressive¹⁴ ships.¹⁵

2:17 Proud men will be humiliated, arrogant men will be brought low,¹⁶ the Lord alone will be exalted¹⁷ in that day.

2:18 The worthless idols will be completely eliminated.¹⁸

2:19 They¹⁹ will go into caves in the rocky cliffs and into holes in the ground,²⁰ trying to escape the dreadful judgment of the Lord²¹ and his royal splendor, when he rises up to terrify the earth.²²

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

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

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

¹⁴ tn Heb "desirable"; NAB, NIV "stately"; NRSV "beautiful."

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

¹⁶ sn The ships mentioned in this verse were the best of their class, and therefore an apt metaphor for the proud men being denounced in this speech.

¹⁷ tn Heb "and the pride of men will be brought down, and the arrogance of men will be brought low." As in v. 11, the repetition of the verbs חֲשַׁךְ (shafal) and חֲשַׁךְ (shakhakh) from v. 9 draws attention to the appropriate nature of the judgment. Those proud men who "bow low" before idols will be forced to "bow low" before God when he judges their sin.

¹⁸ tn Or "elevated"; NCV "praised"; CEV "honored."

¹⁹ tc The verb "pass away" is singular in the Hebrew text, despite the plural subject ("worthless idols") that precedes. The verb should be emended to a plural; the final vav (ו) has been accidentally omitted by haplography (note the vav at the beginning of the immediately following form).

²⁰ tn Heb "will completely pass away"; ASV "shall utterly pass away."

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

²² tn Heb "dust"; ASV "into the holes of the earth."

²³ tn Heb "from the dread of the Lord," that is, from the dread that he produces in the objects of his judgment." The words "trying to escape" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁴ tn Or "land." It is not certain if these verses are describing the judgment of Judah (see vv. 6-9) or a more universal judgment on all proud men.

2:20 At that time⁴ men will throw their silver and gold idols, which they made for themselves to worship,² into the caves where rodents and bats live;³

2:21 so they themselves can go into the crevices of the rocky cliffs and the openings under the rocky overhangs,⁴ trying to escape the dreadful judgment of the LORD⁵

and his royal splendor, when he rises up to terrify the earth.⁶

2:22 Stop trusting in human beings, whose life's breath is in their nostrils. For why should they be given special consideration?

A Coming Leadership Crisis

3:1 Look, the sovereign LORD who commands armies⁷ is about to remove from Jerusalem⁸ and Judah every source of security, including⁹ all the food and water,¹⁰

3:2 the mighty men and warriors, judges and prophets, omen readers and leaders,¹¹

3:3 captains of groups of fifty, the respected citizens,¹² advisers and those skilled in magical arts,¹³

¹ tn Or “in that day” (KJV).

² tn Or “bow down to.”

³ tn Heb “to the shrews and to the bats.” On the meaning of קַחְפָּרָה (khaṣparāh, “shrew”), see HALOT 341 s.v. קַחְפָּרָה. The BHS text as it stands (פֶּרֶת לָקְפָּרָה, perot lakhp̄ar), makes no sense. Based on Theodotion’s transliteration and a similar reading in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a, most scholars suggest that the MT mistakenly divided a noun (a hapax legomenon) that should be translated “moles,” “shrews,” or “rodents.”

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

⁵ tn Heb “from the dread of the LORD,” that is, from the dread that he produces in the objects of his judgment.” The words “trying to escape” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

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

⁷ tn Heb “the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].” On the title “the LORD who commands armies,” see the note at 1:9.

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

⁹ tn Heb “support and support.” The masculine and feminine forms of the noun are placed side-by-side to emphasize completeness. See GKC 394 §122.v.

¹⁰ tn Heb “all the support of food, and all the support of water.”

¹¹ tn Heb “elder” (so ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); NCV “older leaders.”

¹² tn Heb “the ones lifted up with respect to the face.” For another example of the Hebrew idiom, see 2 Kgs 5:1.

¹³ tn Heb “and the wise with respect to magic.” On the

and those who know incantations.

3:4 The LORD says,¹⁴ “I will make youths their officials; malicious young men¹⁵ will rule over them.

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

3:6 Indeed, a man will grab his brother right in his father’s house¹⁸ and say,¹⁹ ‘You own a coat – you be our leader! This heap of ruins will be under your control.’²⁰

3:7 At that time²¹ the brother will shout,²² ‘I am no doctor,²³

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

3:8 Jerusalem certainly stumbles, Judah falls, for their words and their actions offend the LORD.²⁴

meaning of קָרְשִׁים (kharashim, “magic”), see HALOT 358 s.v. III רָשֵׁם. Some understand here a homonym, meaning “craftsmen.” In this case, one could translate, “skilled craftsmen” (cf. NIV, NASB).

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

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

16 tn Heb “man against man, and a man against his neighbor.”

17 tn Heb “and those lightly esteemed those who are respected.” The verb רָהַב (rahav) does double duty in the parallelism.

18 tn Heb “[in] the house of his father” (so ASV); NIV “at his father’s home.”

19 tn The words “and say” are supplied for stylistic reasons.

20 tn Heb “your hand”; NASB “under your charge.”

21 sn The man’s motives are selfish. He tells his brother to assume leadership because he thinks he has some wealth to give away.

22 tn Or “in that day” (KJV).

23 tn Heb “he will lift up [his voice].”

24 tn Heb “wrapper [of wounds]”; KJV, ASV, NRSV “healer.”

24 tn Heb “for their tongue and their deeds [are] to the LORD.”

they rebel against his royal authority.¹
3:9 The look on their faces² testifies to
 their guilt;³
 like the people of Sodom they openly
 boast of their sin.⁴
 Too bad for them!⁵
 For they bring disaster on themselves.
3:10 Tell the innocent⁶ it will go well with
 them,⁷
 for they will be rewarded for what they
 have done.⁸
3:11 Too bad for the wicked sinners!
 For they will get exactly what they de-
 serve.⁹
3:12 Oppressors treat my¹⁰ people cruelly;
 creditors rule over them.¹¹
 My people's leaders mislead them;
 they give you confusing directions.¹²
3:13 The LORD takes his position to judge;
 he stands up to pass sentence on his
 people.¹³
3:14 The LORD comes to pronounce judg-
 ment

on the leaders of his people and their of-
 ficials.
 He says,¹⁴ “It is you¹⁵ who have ruined¹⁶
 the vineyard!¹⁷
 You have stashed in your houses what
 you have stolen from the poor.¹⁸
3:15 Why do you crush my people
 and grind the faces of the poor?”¹⁹
 The sovereign LORD who commands
 armies²⁰ has spoken.

Washing Away Impurity

3:16 The LORD says,
 “The women²¹ of Zion are proud.
 They walk with their heads high²²
 and flirt with their eyes.
 They skip along²³
 and the jewelry on their ankles jingles.²⁴
3:17 So²⁵ the sovereign master²⁶ will af-
 flict the foreheads of Zion's women²⁷
 with skin diseases,²⁸
 the LORD will make the front of their
 heads bald.”²⁹

¹ tn Heb “to rebel [against] the eyes of his majesty.” The word **כָּבוֹד** (*kavod*) frequently refers to the Lord's royal splendor that is an outward manifestation of his authority as king.

² sn This refers to their proud, arrogant demeanor.

³ tn Heb “answers against them”; NRSV “bears witness against them.”

⁴ tn Heb “their sin, like Sodom, they declare, they do not conceal [it].”

⁵ tn Heb “woe to their soul.”

⁶ tn Or “the righteous” (KJV, NASB, NIV, TEV); NLT “those who are godly.”

⁷ tn Heb “that it is good.”

⁸ tn Heb “for the fruit of their deeds they will eat.”

⁹ tn Heb “for the work of his hands will be done to him.”

¹⁰ sn This may refer to the prophet or to the LORD.

¹¹ tc The Hebrew text appears to read literally, “My people, his oppressors, he deals severely, and women rule over them.” The correct text and precise meaning of the verse are debated. The translation above assumes (1) an emendation of **נוֹגֶשׁ־אֲנָשִׁים** (*nog'esh-anashim*, “his oppressors”) to **נוֹגֶשׁ־שְׁמַנִּים** (*nog'esh-shemanim*, “op-
 pressors”) by moving the *mem* (ם) on the following form to the end of the word and dropping the *vav* (ו) as virtually ditto-
 graphic; (2) an emendation of **מֵעַלְוָה** (*m'e'ol'a*), a singular parti-
 ciple that does not agree with the preceding plural subject) to **עַלְוָה** (*ol'u*), a third plural Poel perfect from **עַלְלָה** (*al'al*, “deal se-
 verely”); note that the following form begins with a *vav* (ו); the
 text may be haplographic or misreadied); and (3) an emenda-
 tion (with support from the LXX) of **נָשִׁים** (*nashim*, “women”) to
נָשִׁים (*noshim*, “creditors”); a particle from **נָשָׁה** (*nasa*). Another
 option is to emend **תַּשְׁלִיל** to **תַּשְׁלִיל** (*tol'lim*, “children”) and
 read, “My people's oppressors are children; women rule over
 them.” In this case the point is the same as in v. 4; the leader-
 ship void left by the judgment will be filled by those incompe-
 tent to lead the community – children and women. (The text
 reflects the ancient Israelite patriarchal mindset.)

¹² tn Heb “and the way of your paths they confuse.” The verb **בָּלַע** (*bala'*, “confuse”; HALOT 135 s.v. **בָּלַע**) is a homonym of the more common **בָּלַע** (“swallow”; see HALOT 134 s.v. **בָּלַע**).

¹³ tc The Hebrew text has “nations,” but the preceding and following contexts make it clear that the Lord is judging his covenant people. **אָנִים** (*anim*) should be changed (with support from the LXX) to **נוֹנוֹ**. The final *mem* (ם) on the form in the Hebrew is either dittographic or enclitic. When the *mem* was added or read as a plural ending, the *vav* (ו) was then misread as a *yod* (י).

¹⁴ tn The words “he says” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁵ tn The pronominal element is masculine plural; the leaders are addressed.

¹⁶ tn The verb **בָּנַר** (*ba'ar*, “graze, ruin”; HALOT 146 s.v. II **בָּנַר**) is a homonym of the more common **בָּנַר** (*ba'ar*, “burn”); see HALOT 145 s.v. I **בָּנַר**.

¹⁷ sn The vineyard is a metaphor for the nation here. See 5:1-7.

¹⁸ tn Heb “the plunder of the poor [is] in your houses” (so NASB).

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

²⁰ tn Heb “the master, the Lord who commands armies [tradi-
 tionally, the Lord of hosts].” On the title “the Lord who com-
 mands armies,” see the note at 1:9.

²¹ sn The use of this title, which also appears in v. 1, forms an inclusio around vv. 1-15. The speech begins and ends with a reference to “the master, the Lord who commands armies.”

²² tn Heb “daughters” (so KJV, NAB, NRSV).

²³ tn Heb “with an outstretched neck.” They proudly hold their heads high so that others can see the jewelry around their necks.

²⁴ tn Heb “walking and skipping, they walk.”

²⁵ tn Heb “and with their feet they jingle.”

²⁶ tn In the Hebrew text vv. 16-17 and one long sentence, “Because the daughters of Zion are proud and walk..., the sovereign master will afflict....” In v. 17 the Lord refers to himself in the third person.

²⁷ tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in v. 18 is **אֱדוֹנָי** (*adonay*).

²⁸ tn Heb “the daughters of Zion.”

²⁹ tn Or “a scab” (KJV, ASV); NIV, NCV, CEV “sores.”

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

3:18⁴ At that time² the sovereign master will remove their beautiful ankle jewelry,³ neck ornaments, crescent shaped ornaments, **3:19** earrings, bracelets, veils, **3:20** headdresses, ankle ornaments, sashes, sachets,⁴ amulets, **3:21** rings, nose rings, **3:22** festive dresses, robes, shawls, purses, **3:23** garments, vests, head coverings, and gowns.⁵

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

3:25 Your⁷ men will fall by the sword,
your strong men will die in battle.⁸

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

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

They will say, "We will provide¹¹ our own food,
we will provide¹² our own clothes;
but let us belong to you¹³ – take away our shame!"¹⁴

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

2 tn Or "in that day" (KJV).

3 tn Or "the beauty of [their] ankle jewelry."

4 tn Heb "houses of breath." HALOT 124 s.v. בָּתִים defines them as "scent-bottles"; cf. NAB, NRSV "perfume boxes."

5 tn The precise meaning of many of the words in this list is uncertain.

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

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

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

8 tn Heb "your strength in battle." The verb in the first clause provides the verbal idea for the second clause.

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

10 tn Or "in that day" (ASV).

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

11 tn Heb "eat" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); CEV "buy."

12 tn Heb "wear" (so NASB, NRSV); NCV "make."

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

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

The Branch of the Lord

4:2 At that time¹⁵

the crops given by the LORD will bring admiration and honor;¹⁶
the produce of the land will be a source of pride and delight
to those who remain in Israel.¹⁷

4:3 Those remaining in Zion,¹⁸ those left in Jerusalem,¹⁹
will be called "holy,"²⁰

all in Jerusalem who are destined to live.²¹

4:4 At that time²² the sovereign master²³
will wash the excrement²⁴ from Zion's women,

he will rinse the bloodstains from Jerusalem's midst,²⁵
as he comes to judge
and to bring devastation.²⁶

a wife and mother.

15 tn Or "in that day" (KJV).

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

17 tn Heb "and the fruit of the land will become pride and beauty for the remnant of Israel."

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

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

20 tn Or "set apart," cf. CEV "special."

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

22 tn Heb "when" (so KJV, NAB, NASB); CEV "after"; NRSV "once."

23 tn The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is אֲדֹנֵי (adonai).

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

25 tn See 1:21 for a related concept.

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

4:5 Then the LORD will create over all of Mount Zion¹ and over its convocations a cloud and smoke by day and a bright flame of fire by night;² indeed a canopy will accompany the LORD's glorious presence.³

4:6 By day it will be a shelter to provide shade from the heat, as well as safety and protection from the heavy downpour.⁴

A Love Song Gone Sour

5:1 I⁵ will sing to my love – a song to my lover about his vineyard.⁶ My love had a vineyard on a fertile hill.⁷

5:2 He built a hedge around it,⁸ removed its stones, and planted a vine. He built a tower in the middle of it, and constructed a winepress. He waited for it to produce edible grapes, but it produced sour ones instead.⁹

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

1 tn Heb “over all the place, Mount Zion.” Cf. NLT “Jerusalem”; CEV “the whole city.”

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

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

3 tn Heb “indeed (or “for”) over all the glory, a canopy.” This may allude to Exod 40:34-35, where a cloud overshadows the meeting tent as it is filled with God’s glory.

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

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

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

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

8 tn Or, “dug it up” (so NIV); KJV “fenced it.” See HALOT 810 s.v. גַּנְתִּי.

9 tn Heb “wild grapes,” i.e., sour ones (also in v. 4).

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

5:3 So now, residents of Jerusalem,¹⁰ people¹¹ of Judah, you decide between me and my vineyard!

5:4 What more can I do for my vineyard beyond what I have already done?

When I waited for it to produce edible grapes,

why did it produce sour ones instead?

5:5 Now I will inform you what I am about to do to my vineyard: I will remove its hedge and turn it into pasture.¹²

I will break its wall and allow animals to graze there.¹³

5:6 I will make it a wasteland; no one will prune its vines or hoe its ground.¹⁴

and thorns and briars will grow there. I will order the clouds not to drop any rain on it.

5:7 Indeed¹⁵ Israel¹⁶ is the vineyard of the LORD who commands armies, the people¹⁷ of Judah are the cultivated place in which he took delight.

He waited for justice, but look what he got – disobedience!¹⁸

He waited for fairness, but look what he got – cries for help!¹⁹

Disaster is Coming

5:8 Those who accumulate houses are as good as dead,²⁰ those who also accumulate landed property²¹

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

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

11 tn Heb “men,” but in a generic sense.

12 tn Heb “and it will become [a place for] grazing.” בָּאָר (*ba'ar*, “grazing”) is a homonym of the more often used verb “to burn.”

13 tn Heb “and it will become a trampled place” (NASB “trampled ground”).

14 tn Heb “it will not be pruned or hoed” (so NASB); ASV and NRSV both similar.

15 tn Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

16 tn Heb “the house of Israel” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

17 tn Heb “men,” but in a generic sense.

18 tn Heb “but, look, disobedience.” The precise meaning of מִשְׁפָךְ (*mishpach*), which occurs only here in the OT, is uncertain. Some have suggested a meaning “bloodshed.” The term is obviously chosen for its wordplay value; it sounds very much like מִשְׁפָט (*mishpat*, “justice”). The sound play draws attention to the point being made; the people have not met the LORD’s expectations.

19 tn Heb “but, look, a cry for help.” The verb (“he waited”) does double duty in the parallelism. צְרִזְעָה (*ts'ra'ah*) refers to the cries for help made by the oppressed. It sounds very much like צְרִזָּה (*ts'ra'ah*, “fairness”). The sound play draws attention to the point being made; the people have not met the LORD’s expectations.

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

21 tn Heb “[who] bring a field near a field.”

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

until there is no land left,¹
and you are the only landowners remaining within the land.²

5:9 The LORD who commands armies told me this:³
“Many houses will certainly become desolate,
large, impressive houses will have no one living in them.”⁴

5:10 Indeed, a large vineyard⁵ will produce just a few gallons,⁶
and enough seed to yield several bushels⁷ will produce less than a bushel.”⁸

5:11 Those who get up early to drink beer are as good as dead,⁹
those who keep drinking long after dark until they are intoxicated with wine.¹⁰

5:12 They have stringed instruments,¹¹
tambourines, flutes,
and wine at their parties.
So they do not recognize what the LORD is doing,
they do not perceive what he is bringing about.¹²

5:13 Therefore my¹³ people will be

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

1 tn Heb “until the end of the place”; NASB “until there is no more room.”

2 tn Heb “and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land.”

3 tn Heb “in my ears, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].”

4 tn Heb “great and good [houses], without a resident.”

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

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

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

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

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

10 tn Heb “[who] delay until dark, [until] wine enflames them.”

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

11 tn Two types of stringed instruments are specifically mentioned in the Hebrew text, the *קנור* (*kinnor*, “zither”) and *בּוֹלֶן* (*nevel*, “harp”).

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

13 sn It is not certain if the prophet or the LORD is speaking at this point.

deported¹⁴ because of their lack of understanding. Their¹⁵ leaders will have nothing to eat,¹⁶ their¹⁷ masses will have nothing to drink.¹⁸

5:14 So Death¹⁹ will open up its throat, and open wide its mouth,²⁰ Zion’s dignitaries and masses will descend into it, including those who revel and celebrate within her.²¹

5:15 Men will be humiliated, they will be brought low; the proud will be brought low.²²

5:16 The LORD who commands armies will be exalted²³ when he punishes,²⁴ the sovereign God’s authority will be recognized when he judges.²⁵

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

15 tn The third masculine singular suffix refers back to “my people.”

16 tn Heb “Their glory will be men of hunger.” בָּכָר (*kavod*, “glory”) is in opposition to הַמּוֹן (*hamon*, “masses”) and refers here to the rich and prominent members of the nation. Some prefer to repoint בָּכָר (*m’tey*, “men of”) as מְתִיָּה (*mitiyah*, “dead ones of”).

17 tn The third masculine singular suffix refers back to “my people.”

18 tn Heb “and their masses will be parched [by] thirst.”

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

20 tn Heb “so Sheol will make wide its throat, and open its mouth without limit.”

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

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

22 tn Heb “men are brought down, men are brought low, the eyes of pride are brought low.”

23 tn Or “elevated”; TEV “the Lord Almighty shows his greatness.”

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

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

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

5:17 Lambs⁴ will graze as if in their pastures,
amid the ruins the rich sojourners will graze.²

5:18 Those who pull evil along using cords of emptiness are as good as dead,³
who pull sin as with cart ropes.⁴
5:19 They say, “Let him hurry, let him act quickly,⁵
so we can see;
let the plan of the Holy One of Israel⁶
take shape⁷ and come to pass,

¹ tn Or “young rams”; NIV, NCV “sheep”; NLT “flocks.”

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

³ sn The image completes the picture begun in v. 14 and adds to the irony. When judgment comes, Sheol will eat up the sinners who frequent the feasts; then the banqueting halls will lie in ruins and only sheep will eat there.

³ tn See the note at v. 8.

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

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

⁶ sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

⁷ tn Heb “draw near” (so NASB); NRSV “hasten to fulfillment.”

then we will know it!”

5:20 Those who call evil good and good evil are as good as dead,⁸
who turn darkness into light and light into darkness,
who turn bitter into sweet and sweet into bitter.⁹

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

5:22 Those who are champions¹² at drinking wine are as good as dead,¹³
who display great courage when mixing strong drinks.

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

5:24 Therefore, as flaming fire¹⁵ devours straw,
and dry grass disintegrates in the flames,
so their root will rot,
and their flower will blow away like dust.¹⁶

⁸ tn Heb “Woe [to] those who call.” See the note at v. 8.

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

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

¹¹ tn Heb “[who] before their faces are understanding.”

¹² sn Verses 18-21 contain three “woe-sayings” that are purely accusatory and have no formal announcement of judgment attached (as in the “woe-sayings” recorded in vv. 8-17). While this lack of symmetry is odd, it has a clear rhetorical purpose. Having established a pattern in vv. 8-17, the prophet deviates from it in vv. 18-21 to grab his audience’s attention. By placing the “woes” in rapid succession and heaping up the accusatory elements, he highlights the people’s guilt and introduces an element of tension and anticipation. One is reasonably certain that judgment will come, and when it does, it will be devastating. This anticipated devastation is described in frightening detail after the sixth and final woe (see vv. 22-30).

¹³ tn Heb “Woe [to]....” See the note at v. 8.

¹⁴ tn Heb “and the just cause of the innocent ones they turn aside from him.”

¹⁵ sn In vv. 22-23 the prophet returns to themes with which he opened his speech. The accusatory elements of vv. 8, 11-12, 18-23 are arranged in a chiastic manner: (A) social injustice (8), (B) carousing (11-12a), (C) spiritual insensitivity (12b) // (C') spiritual insensitivity (18-21), (B') carousing (22), (A') social injustice (23).

¹⁶ tn Heb “a tongue of fire” (so NASB), referring to a tongue-shaped flame.

¹⁶ sn They are compared to a flowering plant that withers quickly in a hot, arid climate.

For they have rejected the law of the LORD who commands armies, they have spurned the commands¹ of the Holy One of Israel.²

5:25 So the LORD is furious³ with his people; he lifts⁴ his hand and strikes them. The mountains shake, and corpses lie like manure⁵ in the middle of the streets. Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.⁶

5:26 He lifts a signal flag for a distant nation,⁷ he whistles for it to come from the far regions of the earth. Look, they⁸ come quickly and swiftly.

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

5:28 Their arrows are sharpened, and all their bows are prepared.¹⁰ The hooves of their horses are hard as flint,¹¹ and their chariot wheels are like a wind storm.¹²

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

5:30 At that time¹³ they will growl over their prey,¹⁴ it will sound like sea waves crashing

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

Isaiah's Commission

6:1 In the year of King Uzziah's death,¹⁷ I saw the sovereign master¹⁸ seated on a high, elevated throne. The hem of his robe filled the temple. **6:2** Seraphs¹⁹ stood over him; each one had six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet,²⁰ and they used the remaining two to fly. **6:3** They called out to one another, "Holy, holy, holy²¹ is the Lord who commands armies!²² His majestic splendor fills the entire earth!" **6:4** The sound of

¹⁵ tn Heb "like the growling of the sea."

¹⁶ tn Heb "and one will gaze toward the land, and look, darkness of distress, and light will grow dark by its [the land?] clouds."

¹⁷ sn The motif of light turning to darkness is ironic when compared to v. 20. There the sinners turn light (= moral/ethical good) to darkness (= moral/ethical evil). Now ironically the Lord will turn light (= the sinners' sphere of existence and life) into darkness (= the judgment and death).

¹⁸ sn That is, approximately 740 B.C.

¹⁹ tn The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in vv. 8, 11 is אֲדֹנָי ("adonay").

²⁰ tn Hebrew שְׁרָפָה (saraf, "seraph") literally means "burning one," perhaps suggesting that these creatures had a fiery appearance (cf. TEV, CEV "flaming creatures"; NCV "heavenly creatures of fire"). Elsewhere in the OT the word "seraph" refers to poisonous snakes (Num 21:6; Deut 8:15; Isa 14:29; 30:6). Perhaps they were called "burning ones" because of their appearance or the effect of their venomous bites, which would cause a victim to burn up with fever. It is possible that the seraphs seen by Isaiah were at least partially serpentine in appearance. Though it might seem strange for a snake-like creature to have wings, two of the texts where "seraphs" are snakes describe them as "flying" (Isa 14:29; 30:6), perhaps referring to their darting movements. See the note at 14:29.

²¹ tn Some understand "feet" here as a euphemistic reference to the genitals.

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

¹ tn Heb "the word."

² sn See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

³ tn Heb "the anger of the LORD rages."

⁴ tn Or "extends"; KJV, ASV "he hath stretched forth."

⁵ tn Or "garbage" (NCV, CEV, NLT); NAB, NASB, NIV "refuse."

⁶ tn Heb "in all this his anger is not turned, and still his hand is outstretched."

⁷ tc The Hebrew text has literally, "for nations from a distance." The following verses use singular forms to describe this nation, so the final mem (ם) on נַעֲמִים (*ləgoyim*) may be enclitic or dittographic. In the latter case one could read נְגֻם (*ləgoy merakhaq*, "for a nation from a distance"; see Deut 28:49; Joel 3:8). Another possibility is to emend the text from מְרֻחָה (*lagoyim merakhaq*) to לְגֻם מְרֻחָה (*ləgoy min-merkhaq*, "for a nation from a distant place") a phrase which occurs in Jer 5:15. In this case an error of misdivision has occurred in MT, the mem of the prefixed preposition being accidentally taken as a plural ending on the preceding word.

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

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

¹⁰ tn Heb "bent" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); NIV "are strung."

¹¹ tn Heb "regarded like flint."

¹² sn They are like a windstorm in their swift movement and in the way they kick up dust.

¹³ tn Or "in that day" (KJV).

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

¹⁵ tn Or "set apart from that which is commonplace, special, unique." In this context the Lord's holiness is first and foremost his transcendent sovereignty as the ruler of the world. He is "set apart" from the world over which he rules. Note the emphasis on the elevated position of his throne in v. 1 and his designation as "the king" in v. 5. At the same time his holiness encompasses his moral authority, which derives from his royal position. As king he has the right to dictate to his subjects how they are to live; indeed his very own character sets the standard for proper behavior. He is "set apart" from his subjects in a moral sense as well. He sets the standard; they fall short of it. Note that in v. 5 Isaiah laments that he is morally unworthy to be in the king's presence.

¹⁶ tn Perhaps in this context, the title has a less militaristic connotation and pictures the Lord as the ruler of the heavenly assembly. See the note at 1:9.

their voices shook the door frames,¹ and the temple was filled with smoke.

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

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

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

¹ tn On the phrase אָמֹת הַסְּפִירִים (*ammot hassippim*, “pivots of the frames”) see HALOT 763 s.v. סִיר.

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

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

⁴ tn Heb “and among a nation unclean of lips I live.”

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

⁶ tn Or “ritually cleansed,” or “atoned for” (NIV).

⁷ tn Heb “for us.” The plural pronoun refers to the Lord, the seraphs, and the rest of the heavenly assembly.

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

6:11 I replied, “How long, sovereign master?” He said,

“Until cities are in ruins and unpopulated,
and houses are uninhabited,
and the land is ruined and devastated,
6:12 and the Lord has sent the people off

to a distant place,
and the very heart of the land is completely abandoned.”⁹

6:13 Even if only a tenth of the people remain in the land, it will again be destroyed,¹⁰ like one of the large sacred trees¹¹ or an Asherah pole, when a sacred pillar on a high place is thrown down.¹² That sacred pillar symbolizes

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

⁹ tn Heb “and great is the abandonment in the midst of the land.”

¹⁰ tn Or “be burned” (NRSV); NIV “laid waste.”

¹¹ tn Heb “like a massive tree or like a big tree” (perhaps, like a terebinth or like an oak).

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

the special chosen family.”¹

Ahaz Receives a Sign

7:1 During² the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel marched up to Jerusalem³ to do battle, but they were unable to prevail against it.⁴

7:2 It was reported to the family⁵ of David, “Syria has allied with⁶ Ephraim.” They and their people were emotionally shaken, just as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.⁷ **7:3** So the LORD told Isaiah, “Go out with your son Shear-jashub⁸

and meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.⁹ **7:4** Tell him, ‘Make sure you stay calm!¹⁰ Don’t be afraid! Don’t be intimidated¹¹ by these two stubs of smoking logs,¹² or by the raging anger of Rezin, Syria, and the son of Remaliah. **7:5** Syria has plotted with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah to bring about your demise.¹³ **7:6** They say, “Let’s attack Judah, terrorize it, and conquer it.¹⁴ Then we’ll set up the son of Tabeel as its king.”¹⁵ **7:7** For this reason the sovereign master,¹⁶ the LORD, says:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7:9 Ephraim's leader is Samaria,
and Samaria's leader is the son of Remaliah.
If your faith does not remain firm,
then you will not remain secure.¹¹

7:10 The LORD again spoke to Ahaz: **7:11** "Ask for a confirming sign from the LORD your God. You can even ask for something miraculous."¹² **7:12** But Ahaz responded, "I don't want to ask; I don't want to put the LORD to a test."¹³ **7:13** So Isaiah replied,⁴ "Pay attention,⁵ family⁶ of David.⁷ Do you consider it too insignificant to try the patience of men? Is that why you are also trying the patience of my God? **7:14** For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign.⁸ Look, this⁹ young woman¹⁰ is about to

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

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

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

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

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

6 tn Heb "house." See the note at v. 2.

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

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

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

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

conceive¹¹ and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him¹² Immanuel.¹³ **7:15** He will eat sour milk¹⁴ and honey, which will help him know how¹⁵ to reject evil and choose what is right.

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

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

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

13 sn The name *Immanuel* means "God [is] with us."

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

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

7:16 Here is why this will be so:¹ Before the child knows how to reject evil and choose what is right, the land² whose two kings you fear will be desolate.³ **7:17** The LORD will bring on you, your people, and your father's family a time⁴ unlike any since Ephraim departed from Judah – the king of Assyria!"⁵

7:18 At that time⁶ the LORD will whistle for flies from the distant streams of Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria.⁷ **7:19** All of them will come and make their home⁸ in the ravines between the cliffs, and in the crevices of the cliffs, in all the thorn bushes, and in all the watering holes.⁹ **7:20** At that time¹⁰ the sovereign master will use a razor hired from the banks of

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

² sn Since "two kings" are referred to later in the verse, the "land" must here refer to Syria-Israel.

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

⁴ tn Heb "days" (so KJV, NAB); NASB, NRSV "such days."

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

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

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

⁸ tn Heb "and shall rest" (so KJV, ASV); NASB, NIV, NRSV "and settle."

⁹ tn The meaning of this word (נַהֲלוֹל, *nahalol*) is uncertain; some understand this as referring to another type of thorn bush. For bibliography, see HALOT 676 s.v. I נַהֲלוֹל.

¹⁰ tn Heb "in that day" (so ASV, NASB); KJV "In the same day."

the Euphrates River,¹¹ the king of Assyria, to shave the head and the pubic hair;¹² it will also shave off the beard. **7:21** At that time¹³ a man will keep alive a young cow from the herd and a couple of goats. **7:22** From the abundance of milk they produce,¹⁴ he will have sour milk for his meals. Indeed, everyone left in the heart of the land will eat sour milk and honey. **7:23** At that time¹⁵ every place where there had been a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels will be overrun¹⁶ with thorns and briars. **7:24** With bow and arrow¹⁷ men will hunt¹⁸ there, for the whole land will be covered¹⁹ with thorns and briars. **7:25** They will stay away from all the hills that were cultivated, for fear of the thorns and briars.²⁰ Cattle will graze there and sheep will trample on them.²¹

A Sign-Child is Born

8:1 The LORD told me, "Take a large tablet²² and inscribe these words²³ on it with an ordinary

¹¹ tn Heb "the river" (so KJV); NASB "the Euphrates." The name of the river has been supplied in the present translation for clarity.

¹² tn Heb "the hair of the feet." The translation assumes that the word "feet" is used here as a euphemism for the genitals. See BDB 920 s.v. נַעַל.

¹³ tn Heb "in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

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

¹⁵ tn Heb "in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

¹⁶ tn Heb "will become" (so NASB); NAB "shall be turned to."

¹⁷ tn Heb "with arrows and a bow." The more common English idiom is "bow(s) and arrow(s)."

¹⁸ tn Heb "go" (so NAB, NIV, NRSV); TEV "go hunting."

¹⁹ tn Heb "will be" (so NASB, NRSV).

²⁰ tn Heb "and all the hills which were hoed with a hoe, you will not go there [for] fear of the thorns and briars."

²¹ tn Heb "and it will become a pasture for cattle and a trampling place for sheep."

²² tn At this point one is able to summarize the content of the "sign" (vv. 14-15) as follows: A young woman known to be present when Isaiah delivered this message to Ahaz (perhaps a member of the royal family or the prophetess mentioned in 8:3) would soon give birth to a boy whom the mother would name Immanuel, "God is with us." Eventually Immanuel would be forced to eat sour milk and honey, which would enable him to make correct moral decisions. How would this situation come about and how would it constitute a sign? Before this situation developed, the Israelites and Syrians would be defeated. But then the Lord would usher in a period of time unlike any since the division of the kingdom almost 200 years before. The Assyrians would overrun the land, destroy the crops, and force the people to subsist on goats' milk and honey. At that time, as the people saw Immanuel eating his sour milk and honey, the Davidic family would be forced to acknowledge that God was indeed with them. He was present with them in the Syrian-Israelite crisis, fully capable of rescuing them, but he was also present with them in judgment, disciplining them for their lack of trust. The moral of the story is quite clear: Failure to appropriate God's promises by faith can turn potential blessing into disciplinary judgment.

²³ tn Probably made of metal, wood, or leather. See HALOT 193 s.v. יְתַבֵּל.

²⁴ tn Heb "write" (so KJV, ASV, NIV, NRSV).

stylus:⁴ ‘Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.’² **8:2** Then I will summon³ as my reliable witnesses Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah.” **8:3** I then had sexual relations with the prophetess; she conceived and gave birth to a son. The LORD told me, “Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, **8:4** for before the child knows how to cry out, ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria⁴ will be carried off by the king of Assyria.”⁵

8:5 The LORD spoke to me again: **8:6** “These people⁶ have rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah⁷ and melt in fear over Rezin and the son of Remaliah.⁸ **8:7** So look, the sovereign master⁹ is bringing up against them the turbulent and mighty waters of the Euphrates River¹⁰ – the

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

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

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

⁴ map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

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

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

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

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

⁹ tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is *מֶלֶךְ אֱדוֹן* (*adony*).

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

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

8:9 You will be broken.¹⁴ O nations;
you will be shattered!¹⁵
Pay attention, all you distant lands of the
earth!

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

¹¹ tn Heb “it will go up over all its stream beds and go over all its banks.”

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

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

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

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

Get ready for battle, and you will be shattered!
 Get ready for battle, and you will be shattered!¹
8:10 Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted!
 Issue your orders, but they will not be executed!²
 For God is with us!³

The Lord Encourages Isaiah

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

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

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

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

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

8:12 "Do not say, 'Conspiracy,' every time these people say the word.⁵
 Don't be afraid of what scares them; don't be terrified.
8:13 You must recognize the authority of the LORD who commands armies.⁶
 He is the one you must respect; he is the one you must fear.⁷
8:14 He will become a sanctuary,⁸ but a stone that makes a person trip, and a rock that makes one stumble – to the two houses of Israel.⁹
 He will become¹⁰ a trap and a snare to the residents of Jerusalem.¹¹
8:15 Many will stumble over the stone and the rock,¹² and will fall and be seriously injured, and will be ensnared and captured."

8:16 Tie up the scroll as legal evidence,¹³ seal the official record of God's instructions and give it to my followers.¹⁴

change the pointing of the suffix and thereby emend the Qal imperfect *יבנֵי רֹנִי* (*yiss^ereni*, "he was warning me") to the more common Piel perfect *מִבְנֵי רֹנִי* (*yiss^rani*, "he warned me"). Others follow the lead of the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a and read *יבנֵי סָרִי* (*yis^esireni*, "he was turning me aside," a Hiphil imperfect from *סָרָה*, *sar*).

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

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

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

7 tn *Heb* "he is your [object of] fear, he is your [object of] terror." The roots נַפְתַּח ('yare') and נַפְתַּח ('arats) are repeated from v. 12b.

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

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

10 tn These words are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. הַיְהָ ("y^ehayah, "and he will be") does double duty in the parallel structure of the verse.

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

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

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

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

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

8:18 Look, I and the sons whom the LORD has given me² are reminders and object lessons³ in Israel, sent from the LORD who commands armies, who lives on Mount Zion.

Darkness Turns to Light as an Ideal King Arrives

8:19⁴ They will say to you, “Seek oracles at the pits used to conjure up underworld spirits, from the magicians who chirp and mutter incantations.⁵ Should people not seek oracles from their gods, by asking the dead about the destiny of the living?”⁶ **8:20** Then you must recall the LORD’s instructions and the prophetic testimony of what would happen.⁷ Certainly they say such things because their minds are spiritually darkened.⁸ **8:21** They will pass through the land⁹

over them.

¹ tn Heb “who hides his face from the house of Jacob.”

² tn This refers to Shear-jashub (7:3) and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (8:1, 3).

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

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

⁵ tn Heb “inquire of the ritual pits and of the magicians who chirp and mutter.” The Hebrew word בָּבֶל (*babel*, “ritual pit”) refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. In 1 Sam 28:7 the witch of Endor is called בְּבִתְהַבְּלָה (*babat-habbel*, “owner of a ritual pit”). See H. Hoffner, “Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew *OB*,” *JBL* 86 (1967): 385-401.

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

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

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

⁹ tn Heb “he will pass through it.” The subject of the col-

destitute and starving. Their hunger will make them angry,¹⁰ and they will curse their king and their God¹¹ as they look upward. **8:22** When one looks out over the land, he sees¹² distress and darkness, gloom¹³ and anxiety, darkness and people forced from the land.¹⁴ **9:1** (8:23)¹⁵ The gloom will be dispelled for those who were anxious.¹⁶

In earlier times he¹⁷ humiliated the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali;¹⁸ but now he brings honor¹⁹ to the way of the sea, the region beyond the Jordan, and Galilee of the nations.²⁰

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

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

11 tn Or “gods” (NAB, NRSV, CEV).

12 tn Heb “and behold” (so KJV, ASV, NASB).

13 tn The precise meaning of מִזְבֵּחַ (*m’zibbəkh*) is uncertain; the word occurs only here. See BDB 734 s.v. מִזְבֵּחַ.

14 tn Heb “and darkness, pushed.” The word מִנְדָּחַ (*m’ndakh*) appears to be a Pual participle from הַנְּדַחַ (“push”), but the Piel is unattested for this verb and the Pual occurs only here.

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

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

17 tn The LORD must be understood as the subject of the two verbs in this verse.

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

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

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

9:1 The people walking in darkness
see a bright light;¹
light shines
on those who live in a land of deep dark-
ness.²

9:3 You³ have enlarged the nation;
you give them great joy.⁴
They rejoice in your presence
as harvesters rejoice;
as warriors celebrate⁵ when they divide
up the plunder.

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

9:5 Indeed every boot that marches and
shakes the earth⁸
and every garment dragged through blood
is used as fuel for the fire.

9:6 For a child has been⁹ born to us,
a son has been given to us.
He shoulders responsibility
and is called:¹⁰
Extraordinary Strategist,¹¹
Mighty God,¹²

^{9 tn} The Hebrew perfect (translated “has been born” and “has been given”) is used here as the prophet takes a rhetorical stance in the future. See the note at 9:1.

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

^{11 tn} Some have seen two titles here (“Wonderful” and “Counselor,” cf. KJV, ASV). However, the pattern of the following three titles (each contains two elements) and the use of the roots פָּלָא (pala') and יְמַנֵּץ (ya'ats) together in Isa 25:1 (cf. בִּין פָּלָא (pala') and 28:29 (cf. עֲשֵׂת יְמַנֵּץ מִרְאֵק אֱמֹן (pele') suggest otherwise. The term יוֹצֵץ (yo'ets) could be taken as ap positional (genitive or otherwise) of species (“a wonder as a counselor,” cf. NAB “Wonder-Counselor”) or as a substantival participle for which פָּלָא provides the direct object (“one who counsels wonders”). יְמַנֵּץ is used as a royal title elsewhere (cf. Mic 4:9). Here it probably refers to the king’s ability to devise military strategy, as suggested by the context (cf. vv. 3-4 and the following title אֵל גִּבּוֹר, ‘el gibor). In Isa 11:2 (also a description of this king) שִׁיחָה (‘etsah) is linked with בְּבוּרָה (gevurah, the latter being typically used of military might, cf. BDB 150 s.v.). Note also עֶזֶר וּבָרוּר לְלִקְחָה in Isa 36:5. פָּלָא (pele') is typically used of God (cf. however Lam 1:9). Does this suggest the deity of the messianic ruler? The NT certainly teaches he is God, but did Isaiah necessarily have this in mind over 700 years before his birth? Since Isa 11:2 points out that this king will receive the spirit of the Lord, which will enable him to counsel, it is possible to argue that the king’s counsel is “extraordinary” because it finds its source in the divine spirit. Thus this title does not necessarily suggest that the ruler is deity.

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

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

^{2 tn} Traditionally תְּלִמְשָׁתָה (tsalmavet) has been interpreted as a compound noun, meaning “shadow of death” (so KJV, ASV, NIV), but usage indicates that the word, though it sometimes refers to death, means “darkness.” The term should probably be repointed as an abstract noun צָלָמוֹת (tsalmut). See the note at Ps 23:4.

^{3 sn} The Lord is addressed directly in vv. 3-4.

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

^{5 tn} Heb “as they are happy.” The word “warriors” is supplied in the translation to clarify the word picture. This last simile comes close to reality, for vv. 4-5 indicate that the people have won a great military victory over their oppressors.

^{6 tn} Heb “for the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the scepter of the oppressor against him.” The singular pronouns are collective, referring to the people. The oppressed nation is compared to an ox weighed down by a heavy yoke and an animal that is prodded and beaten.

^{7 sn} This alludes to Gideon’s victory over Midian (Judg 7-8), when the Lord delivered Israel from an oppressive foreign invader.

^{8 tn} Heb “Indeed every boot marching with shaking.” On the meaning of מַסְף (mas'ef, “boot”) and the related denominative verb, both of which occur only here, see HALOT 738 s.v. מַסְפֵּה.

Everlasting Father,¹
Prince of Peace.²

9:7 His dominion will be vast³
and he will bring immeasurable
prosperity.⁴

He will rule on David's throne
and over David's kingdom,⁵
establishing it⁶ and strengthening it⁷
by promoting justice and fairness,⁷
from this time forward and forevermore.
The LORD's intense devotion to his
people⁸ will accomplish this.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

God's Judgment Intensifies

9:8⁹ The sovereign master¹⁰ decreed judgment¹¹ on Jacob,
and it fell on Israel.¹²

9:9 All the people were aware¹³ of it,
the people of Ephraim and those living in
Samaria.¹⁴

Yet with pride and an arrogant attitude,
they said,¹⁵

9:10¹⁶ "The bricks have fallen,
but we will rebuild with chiseled stone;
the sycamore fig trees have been cut
down,

but we will replace them with cedars."¹⁶

9:11 Then the LORD provoked¹⁷ their adver-
saries to attack them,¹⁸

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

he stirred up¹ their enemies –
9:12 Syria from the east,
and the Philistines from the west,
they gobbled up Israelite territory.²
Despite all this, his anger does not subside,
and his hand is ready to strike again.³
9:13 The people did not return to the one
who struck them,
they did not seek reconciliation⁴ with the
LORD who commands armies.
9:14 So the LORD cut off Israel's head and tail,
both the shoots and stalk⁵ in one day.
9:15 The leaders and the highly respected people⁶ are the head,
the prophets who teach lies are the tail.
9:16 The leaders of this nation were misleading people,
and the people being led were destroyed.⁷
9:17 So the sovereign master was not pleased⁸ with their young men,
he took no pity⁹ on their orphans and widows;
for the whole nation was godless¹⁰ and did wicked things,¹¹

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7 tn *Heb* “and the ones being led were swallowed up.” Instead of taking בְּלֹא בָּלֶבֶל (*mib'alla'im*) from עֲלֹת (*bal'*, “to swallow”), HALOT 134 s.v. בָּלֶבֶל proposes a rare homonymic root בָּלֵב (*“confuse”*) here.

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

9 tn The translation understands the prefixed verbs יִשְׂמַח (*yismakh*) and יִרְחַם (*yirakhem*) as preterites without vav (ו) consecutive. (See v. 11 and the note on “he stirred up.”)

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

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

every mouth was speaking disgraceful words.¹²

Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.¹³

9:18 For¹⁴ evil burned like a fire,¹⁵

it consumed thorns and briars;

it burned up the thickets of the forest,

and they went up in smoke.¹⁶

9:19 Because of the anger of the LORD

who commands armies, the land was scorched,¹⁷

and the people became fuel for the fire.¹⁸

People had no compassion on one another.¹⁹

9:20 They devoured²⁰ on the right, but were still hungry,

they ate on the left, but were not satisfied.

People even ate²¹ the flesh of their own arm!²²

9:21 Manasseh fought against²³ Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh; together they fought against Judah.

Despite all this, his anger does not subside,

condition by committing evil deeds.

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

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

sn See the note at 9:12.

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

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

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

17 tn The precise meaning of the verb בָּנָה (*“tam*), which occurs only here, is uncertain, though the context strongly suggests that it means “burn, scorch.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

and his hand is ready to strike again.¹

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

10:2 to keep the poor from getting fair treatment,
and to deprive⁴ the oppressed among my people of justice,
so they can steal what widows own,
and loot what belongs to orphans.⁵

10:3 What will you do on judgment day,⁶
when destruction arrives from a distant place?
To whom will you run for help?
Where will you leave your wealth?

10:4 You will have no place to go, except to kneel with the prisoners,
or to fall among those who have been killed.⁷
Despite all this, his anger does not subside,
and his hand is ready to strike again.⁸

The Lord Turns on Arrogant Assyria

10:5 Assyria, the club I use to vent my anger, is as good as dead,⁹
a cudgel with which I angrily punish.¹⁰

10:6 I sent him¹¹ against a godless¹² nation,
I ordered him to attack the people with whom I was angry,¹³
to take plunder and to carry away loot,

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

² sn See the note at 9:12.

³ tn Heb “[to] those who decree evil decrees.” On נְהַגֵּת (“woe, ah”) see the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

⁴ tn Heb “[to] the writers who write out harm.” The particle and verb are in the Piel, suggesting repetitive action.

⁵ tn Or “rob” (ASV, NASB, NCV, NRSV); KJV “take away the right from the poor.”

⁶ tn Heb “so that widows are their plunder, and they can loot orphans.”

⁷ tn On the socio-economic background of vv. 1-2, see the note at 1:23.

⁸ tn Heb “the day of visitation” (so KJV, ASV), that is, the day when God arrives to execute justice on the oppressors.

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

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

⁹ sn See the note at 9:12.

⁹ tn Heb “Woe [to] Assyria, the club of my anger.” On נְהַגֵּת (“woe, ah”) see the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

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

¹¹ tn Throughout this section singular forms are used to refer to Assyria; perhaps the king of Assyria is in view (see v. 12).

¹² tn Or “defiled”; cf. ASV “profane”; NAB “impious”; NCV “separated from God.”

¹³ tn Heb “and against the people of my anger I ordered him.”

to trample them down¹⁴ like dirt in the streets.

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

10:8 Indeed,¹⁷ he says:
“Are not my officials all kings?”

10:9 Is not Calneh like Carchemish?
Hamath like Arpad?

Samaria like Damascus?¹⁸

10:10 I overpowered kingdoms ruled by idols,¹⁹

whose carved images were more impressive than Jerusalem’s²⁰ or Samaria’s.

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

so I will do to Jerusalem and its idols.”²¹

10:12 But when²² the sovereign master²³ finishes judging²⁴ Mount Zion and Jerusalem, then I²⁵ will punish the king of Assyria for what he has proudly planned and for the arrogant attitude he displays.²⁶ **10:13** For he says:

“By my strong hand I have accomplished this,
by my strategy that I devised.
I invaded the territory of nations,²⁷
and looted their storehouses.

¹⁴ tn Heb “to make it [i.e., the people] a trampled place.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “but he, not so does he intend, and his heart, not so does it think.”

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

¹⁷ tn Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

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

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

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

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

²² sn This statement indicates that the prophecy dates sometime between 722-701 B.C.

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

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

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

²⁵ tn The LORD is speaking here, as in vv. 5-6a.

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

²⁷ tn Heb “removed the borders of nations”; cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV “boundaries.”

Like a mighty conqueror,¹ I brought down rulers.²

10:14 My hand discovered the wealth of the nations, as if it were in a nest, as one gathers up abandoned eggs, I gathered up the whole earth.

There was no wing flapping, or open mouth chirping.”³

10:15 Does an ax exalt itself over the one who wields it, or a saw magnify itself over the one who cuts with it?⁴

As if a scepter should brandish the one who raises it, or a staff should lift up what is not made of wood!

10:16 For this reason⁵ the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, will make his healthy ones emaciated.⁶ His majestic glory will go up in smoke.⁷

10:17 The Light of Israel⁸ will become a fire, their Holy One⁹ will become a flame; it will burn and consume the Assyrian king’s¹⁰ briers and his thorns in one day.

10:18 The splendor of his forest and his orchard will be completely destroyed,¹¹ as when a sick man’s life ebbs away.¹²

¹ **tc** The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has **כָּבֵר** (*kə'abir*, “like a strong one”); the marginal reading (*Qere*) is **כָּבֵר**, “mighty one”).

² **tn** Heb “and I brought down, like a strong one, ones sitting [or “living”].” The participle **יֹשְׁבָבִים** (*yosh'vevim*, “ones sitting”) could refer to the inhabitants of the nations, but the translation assumes that they refer to those who sit on thrones, i.e., rulers. See BDB 442 s.v. **שָׁבַב** and HALOT 444 s.v. **שָׁבַב**.

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

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

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

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

⁷ **tc** Heb “and in the place of his glory burning will burn, like the burning of fire.” The highly repetitive text (**אָזֶן אָזֶן בְּקָרָב אָזֶן**, *yeqad yiqod kiqod 'esh*) may be dittographic; if the second consonantal sequence **תְּ** is omitted, the text would read “and in the place of his glory, it will burn like the burning of fire.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

10:20 At that time¹⁴ those left in Israel, those who remain of the family¹⁵ of Jacob, will no longer rely on a foreign leader that abuses them.¹⁶ Instead they will truly¹⁷ rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.¹⁸ **10:21** A remnant will come back, a remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.¹⁹ **10:22** For though your people, Israel, are as numerous as²⁰ the sand on the seashore, only a remnant will come back.²¹ Destruction has been decreed;²² just punishment²³ is about to engulf you.²⁴ **10:23** The sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, is certainly ready to carry out the decreed destruction throughout the land.²⁵

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

²⁰ **tn** Heb “are like.”

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

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

²³ **tn** **צָדָקָה** (*ts'daqah*) often means “righteousness,” but here it refers to God’s just judgment.

²⁴ **tn** Or “is about to overflow.”

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

10:24 So¹ here is what the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, says: “My people who live in Zion, do not be afraid of Assyria, even though they beat you with a club and lift their cudgel against you as Egypt did.² **10:25** For very soon my fury³ will subside, and my anger will be directed toward their destruction.” **10:26** The LORD who commands armies is about to beat them⁴ with a whip, similar to the way he struck down Midian at the rock of Oreb.⁵ He will use his staff against the sea, lifting it up as he did in Egypt.⁶

10:27 At that time⁷
the LORD will remove their burden from
your shoulders,⁸
and their yoke from your neck;
the yoke will be taken off because your
neck will be too large.⁹

one idea, with the second qualifying the first.

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

2 tn Heb “in the way [or “manner”] of Egypt.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10:28¹⁰ They¹¹ attacked¹² Aiath, moved through Migron, depositing their supplies at Micmash.

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

Gibeah of Saul ran away.

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

Answer her, Anathoth!¹³

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

10:32 This very day, standing in Nob, they shake their fist at Daughter Zion’s mountain¹⁴ –

at the hill of Jerusalem.

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

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

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

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

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

12 tn Heb “came against,” or “came to.”

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

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

is ready to cut off the branches with terrifying power.¹

The tallest trees² will be cut down,

the loftiest ones will be brought low.
10:34 The thickets of the forest will be chopped down with an ax,
and mighty Lebanon will fall.³

An Ideal King Establishes a Kingdom of Peace

11:1 A shoot will grow out of Jesse's⁴ root stock,
a bud will sprout⁵ from his roots.

11:2 The LORD's spirit will rest on him⁶ – a spirit that gives extraordinary wisdom,⁷ a spirit that provides the ability to execute plans,⁸

a spirit that produces absolute loyalty to the LORD.⁹

11:3 He will take delight in obeying the LORD.¹⁰

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

² **sn** As in vv. 12 (see the note there) and 18, the Assyrians are compared to a tree/forest in vv. 33-34.

³ **tn** *Heb* “the exalted of the height.” This could refer to the highest branches (cf. TEV) or the tallest trees (cf. NIV, NRSV).

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text has, “and Lebanon, by/as [?] a mighty one, will fall.” The translation above takes the preposition נִ (bet) prefixed to “mighty one” as indicating identity, “Lebanon, as a mighty one, will fall.” In this case “mighty one” describes Lebanon. (In Ezek 17:23 and Zech 11:2 the adjective is used of Lebanon's cedars.) Another option is to take the preposition as indicating agency and interpret “mighty one” as a divine title (see Isa 33:21). One could then translate, “and Lebanon will fall by [the agency of] the Mighty One.”

⁵ **sn** The text mentions David's father Jesse, instead of the great king himself. Perhaps this is done for rhetorical reasons to suggest that a new David, not just another disappointing Davidic descendant, will arise. Other prophets call the coming ideal Davidic king “David” or picture him as the second coming of David, as it were. See Jer 30:9; Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hos 3:5; and Mic 5:2 (as well as the note there).

⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text has יִפְרֹה (*yifreh*, “will bear fruit,” from פֶּרֶח, *parah*), but the ancient versions, as well as the parallelism suggest that יִפְרֹךְ (*yifrakh*, “will sprout”), from פֶּרֶךְ, *parakh*) is the better reading here. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT, 1:276, n. 2).

⁷ **sn** Like David (1 Sam 16:13), this king will be energized by the LORD's spirit.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “a spirit of wisdom and understanding.” The synonyms are joined here to emphasize the degree of wisdom he will possess. His wisdom will enable him to make just legal decisions (v. 3). A very similar phrase occurs in Eph 1:17.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “a spirit of counsel [or “strategy”] and strength.” The construction is a hendiadys; the point is that he will have the strength/ability to execute the plans/strategies he devises. This ability will enable him to suppress oppressors and implement just policies (v. 4).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “a spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD.” “Knowledge” is used here in its covenantal sense and refers to a recognition of God's authority and a willingness to submit to it. See Jer 22:16. “Fear” here refers to a healthy respect for God's authority which produces obedience. Taken together the two terms emphasize the single quality of loyalty to the LORD. This loyalty guarantees that he will make just legal decisions and implement just policies (vv. 4-5).

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and his smelling is in the fear of the LORD.” In Amos 5:21 the Hiphil of רֻעָה (*ruakh*, “smell”) carries the nuance of “smell with delight, get plea-

sure from.” There the Lord declares that he does not “smell with delight” (i.e., get pleasure from) Israel's religious assemblies, which probably stand by metonymy for the incense offered during these festivals. In Isa 11:3 there is no sacrificial context to suggest such a use, but it is possible that “the fear of the LORD” is likened to incense. This coming king will get the same kind of delight from obeying (fearing) the LORD, as a deity does in the incense offered by worshipers. Some regard such an explanation as strained in this context, and prefer to omit this line from the text as a virtual dittograph of the preceding statement.

¹² **tn** *Heb* “by what appears to his eyes”; KJV “after the sight of his eyes”; NIV “by what he sees with his eyes.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “with justice” (so NAB) or “with righteousness” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “make decisions with rectitude”; cf. ASV, NRSV “and decide with equity.”

¹⁵ **tn** Or “land” (NAB, NCV, CEV). It is uncertain if the passage is picturing universal dominion or focusing on the king's rule over his covenant people. The reference to God's “holy mountain” in v. 9 and the description of renewed Israelite conquests in v. 14 suggest the latter, though v. 10 seems to refer to a universal kingdom (see 2:2-4).

¹⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and he will strike the earth with the scepter of his mouth.” Some have suggested that in this context אֶרְצָה (*erets*, “earth”) as an object of judgment seems too broad in scope. The parallelism is tighter if one emends the word to אֲרִיטָה (*arits*, “potentate, tyrant”). The phrase “scepter of his mouth” refers to the royal (note “scepter”) decrees that he proclaims with his mouth. Because these decrees will have authority and power (see v. 2) behind them, they can be described as “striking” the tyrants down. Nevertheless, the MT reading may not need emending. Isaiah refers to the entire “earth” as the object of God's judgment in several places without specifying the wicked as the object of the judgment (Isa 24:17-21; 26:9, 21; 28:22; cf. 13:11).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and by the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked.” The “breath of his lips” refers to his speech, specifically in this context his official decrees that the wicked oppressors are eliminated from his realm. See the preceding note.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “Justice will be the belt [or “undergarment”] on his waist, integrity the belt [or “undergarment”] on his hips.” The point of the metaphor is uncertain. If a belt worn outside the robe is in view, then the point might be that justice/integrity will be readily visible or that these qualities will give support to his rule. If an undergarment is in view, then the idea might be that these characteristics support his rule or that they are basic to everything else.

11:6 A wolf will reside⁴ with a lamb,
and a leopard will lie down with a young
goat;
an ox and a young lion will graze
together,²
as a small child leads them along.
11:7 A cow and a bear will graze together,
their young will lie down together.³
A lion, like an ox, will eat straw.
11:8 A baby⁴ will play
over the hole of a snake;⁵
over the nest⁶ of a serpent
an infant⁷ will put his hand.⁸
11:9 They will no longer injure or destroy
on my entire royal mountain.⁹
For there will be universal submission to
the Lord's sovereignty,
just as the waters completely cover the
sea.¹⁰

Israel is Reclaimed and Reunited

11:10 At that time¹¹ a root from Jesse¹² will
stand like a signal flag for the nations. Nations

^{1 tn} The verb יָגַד (*gur*) normally refers to living as a dependent, resident foreigner in another society.

^{2 tc} The Hebrew text reads, "and an ox, and a young lion, and a fatling together." Since the preceding lines refer to two animals and include a verb, many emend בְּנֵי־רִאֵן (*um'en*), "and the fatling" to an otherwise unattested verb יִמְרֹאֵן (*yim'ren*), "they will graze"; cf. NAB, TEV, CEV. One of the Qumran copies of Isaiah confirms this suggestion (1QIsa). The present translation assumes this change.

^{3 tn} Heb "and a cow and a bear will graze – together – they will lie down, their young." This is a case of pivot pattern; *yakhddav*, ("together") goes with both the preceding and following statements.

^{4 tn} Heb "one sucking," i.e., still being nursed by his mother.

^{5 tn} Or perhaps, "cobra" (cf. NAB, NASB, NIV, NCV); KJV, ASV, NRSV "asp."

^{6 tn} The Hebrew text has the otherwise unattested מִכְרָתָה (*m'k'rat*, "place of light"), i.e., opening of a hole. Some prefer to emend to מִפְרָתָה (*m'fr'at*, "cave, den").

^{7 tn} Heb "one who is weaned" (cf. KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

^{8 tn} Sn The transformation of the animal kingdom depicted here typifies what will occur in human society under the just rule of the ideal king (see vv. 3-5). The categories "predator-prey" (i.e., oppressor-oppressed) will no longer exist.

^{9 tn} Heb "in all my holy mountain." In the most basic sense the Lord's "holy mountain" is the mountain from which he rules over his kingdom (see Ezek 28:14, 16). More specifically it probably refers to Mount Zion/Jerusalem or to the entire land of Israel (see Pss 2:6; 15:1; 43:3; Isa 56:7; 57:13; Ezek 20:40; Ob 16; Zeph 3:11). If the Lord's universal kingdom is in view in this context (see the note on "earth" at v. 4), then the phrase would probably be metonymic here, standing for God's worldwide dominion (see the next line).

^{10 tn} Heb "for the earth will be full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The translation assumes that a universal kingdom is depicted here, but אֶרֶת (*'rets*) could be translated "land" (see the note at v. 4). "Knowledge of the Lord" refers here to a recognition of the Lord's sovereignty which results in a willingness to submit to his authority. See the note at v. 2.

^{11 tn} Or "in that day" (KJV). The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

^{12 sn} See the note at v. 1.

will look to him for guidance,¹³ and his residence will be majestic. **11:11** At that time¹⁴ the sovereign master¹⁵ will again lift his hand¹⁶ to reclaim¹⁷ the remnant of his people¹⁸ from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros,¹⁹ Cush,²⁰ Elam, Shinar,²¹ Hamath, and the seacoasts.²²

11:12 He will lift a signal flag for the nations;

he will gather Israel's dispersed people²³ and assemble Judah's scattered people from the four corners of the earth.

11:13 Ephraim's jealousy will end,²⁴ and Judah's hostility²⁵ will be eliminated. Ephraim will no longer be jealous of

Judah,

and Judah will no longer be hostile toward Ephraim.

11:14 They will swoop down²⁶ on the Philistine hills to the west;²⁷ together they will loot the people of the east.

They will take over Edom and Moab,²⁸ and the Ammonites will be their subjects.

^{13 tn} Heb "a root from Jesse, which stands for a signal flag of the nations, of him nations will inquire" [or "seek"].

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

^{15 tn} The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is אֲדֹנָי ('adonai).

^{16 tc} The Hebrew text reads, "the sovereign master will again, a second time, his hand." The auxiliary verb יָסִיף (*yosif*), which literally means "add," needs a main verb to complete it. Consequently many emend שְׁנִית (*shenit*, "a second time") to an infinitive. Some propose the form תָּשִׁנּוּ (*shannot*, a Piel infinitive construct from שָׁנָה, *shanah*) and relate it semantically to an Arabic cognate meaning "to be high." If the Hebrew text is retained a verb must be supplied. "Second time" would also back to the events of the Exodus (see vv. 15-16).

^{17 tn} Or "acquire"; KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV "recover."

^{18 tn} Heb "the remnant of his people who remain."

^{19 sn} Perhaps a reference to Upper (i.e., southern) Egypt (so NIV, NLT; NCV "South Egypt").

^{20 tn} Or "Ethiopia" (NAB, NRSV, NLT).

^{21 tn} Or "Babylonia" (NIV, NCV, TEV, NLT).

^{22 tn} Or perhaps, "the islands of the sea."

^{23 tn} Or "the banished of Israel," i.e., the exiles.

^{24 tn} Heb "turn aside"; KJV, NASB, NRSV "depart."

^{25 tn} Heb "hostile ones of Judah." Elsewhere when the substantival participle of צָרָר (*tsarar*) takes a pronominal suffix or appears in a construct relationship, the following genitive is objective. (For a list of texts see BDB 865 s.v. III צָרָר.) In this case the phrase "hostile ones of Judah" means "those who are hostile toward Judah," i.e., Judah's enemies. However, the parallel couplet that follows suggests that Judah's hostility toward Ephraim is in view. In this case "hostile ones of Judah" means "hostile ones from Judah." The translation above assumes the latter, giving the immediate context priority over general usage.

^{26 tn} Heb "fly." Ephraim/Judah are compared to a bird of prey.

^{27 tn} Heb "on the shoulder of Philistia toward the sea." This refers to the slopes of the hill country west of Judah. See HALOT 506 s.v. גָּבָהּ.

^{28 tn} Heb "Edom and Moab [will be the place of] the out-stretching of their hand," i.e., included in their area of jurisdiction (see HALOT 648 s.v. נַחַלְתָּם).

11:15 The LORD will divide¹ the gulf² of the Egyptian Sea;³ he will wave his hand over the Euphrates River⁴ and send a strong wind,⁵ he will turn it into seven dried-up streams,⁶ and enable them to walk across in their sandals.

11:16 There will be a highway leading out of Assyria for the remnant of his people,⁷ just as there was for Israel, when⁸ they went up from the land of Egypt.

12:1 At that time⁹ you will say: "I praise you, O LORD, for even though you were angry with me, your anger subsided, and you consoled me."

12:2 Look, God is my deliverer!¹⁰ I will trust in him¹¹ and not fear. For the LORD gives me strength and protects me;¹²

he has become my deliverer.¹³

12:3 Joyfully you will draw water from the springs of deliverance.¹⁴

¹ tn The verb is usually understood as "put under the ban, destroy," or emended to בָּרֵךְ (*kharav*, "dry up"). However, HALOT 354 s.v. II בָּרַךְ proposes a homonymic root meaning "divide."

² tn Heb "tongue" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

³ sn That is, the Red Sea.

⁴ tn Heb "the river"; capitalized in some English versions (e.g., ASV, NASB, NRSV) as a reference to the Euphrates River.

⁵ tn Heb "with the [?] of his wind" [or "breath"]. The Hebrew term בָּאָמָן ('ayam) occurs only here. Some attempt to relate the word to an Arabic root and translate, "scorching [or "hot"] wind." This interpretation fits especially well if one reads "dry up" in the previous line. Others prefer to emend the form to בָּאָמֵן ('otsem, "strong"). See HALOT 817 s.v. בָּאָמֵן.

⁶ tn Heb "seven streams." The Hebrew term נַחַל (*nakhal*, "stream") refers to a wadi, or seasonal stream, which runs during the rainy season, but is otherwise dry. The context (see v. 15b) here favors the translation, "dried up streams." The number seven suggests totality and completeness. Here it indicates that God's provision for escape will be thorough and more than capable of accommodating the returning exiles.

⁷ tn Heb "and there will be a highway for the remnant of his people who remain, from Assyria."

⁸ tn Heb "in the day" (so KJV).

⁹ tn Or "in that day" (KJV).

¹⁰ tn Or "salvation" (KJV, NIV, NRSV).

¹¹ tn The words "in him" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹² tc The Hebrew text has, "for my strength and protection [is] the LORD, the LORD (Heb "Yah, Yahweh)." The word הָיָה (*ve-hvah*) is probably ditto graphic or explanatory here (note that the short form of the name יְהֹוָה, *yah*) precedes, and that the graphically similar יְהִי [*vay'hi*] follows). Exod 15:2, the passage from which the words of v. 2b are taken, has only יְהִי. The word זִמְרָת (*zimrat*) is traditionally understood as meaning "song," in which case one might translate, "for the LORD gives me strength and joy" (i.e., a reason to sing); note that in v. 5 the verb זָמַר (*zamar*, "sing") appears. Many recent commentators, however, have argued that the noun is here instead a homonym, meaning "protection" or "strength." See HALOT 274 s.v. III יְהִי.

¹³ tn Or "salvation" (so many English versions, e.g., KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB "my savior."

¹⁴ tn Or "salvation" (so many English versions, e.g., KJV,

12:4 At that time¹⁵ you will say:

"Praise the LORD!"

Ask him for help!¹⁶

Publicize his mighty acts among the nations!

Make it known that he is unique!¹⁷

12:5 Sing to the LORD, for he has done magnificent things,

let this be known¹⁸ throughout the earth!

12:6 Cry out and shout for joy, O citizens of Zion, for the Holy One of Israel¹⁹ acts mightily²⁰ among you!"

The Lord Will Judge Babylon

13:1²¹ This is a message about Babylon that God revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz.²²

13:2²³ On a bare hill raise a signal flag, shout to them, wave your hand, so they might enter the gates of the princes!

13:3 I have given orders to my chosen soldiers;²⁴

I have summoned the warriors through whom I will vent my anger²⁵ my boasting, arrogant ones.²⁶

13:4²⁷ There is a loud noise on the mountains –

NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); CEV "victory."

²⁸ sn Water is here a metaphor for renewed life; the springs symbolize the restoration of God's favor.

¹⁵ tn Or "in that day" (KJV).

¹⁶ tn Heb "call in his name," i.e., "invoke his name."

¹⁷ tn Heb "bring to remembrance that his name is exalted." The Lord's "name" stands here for his character and reputation.

¹⁸ tc The translation follows the marginal reading (*Qere*), which is a Hophal participle from יָדָה ('yada'), understood here in a gerundive sense.

¹⁹ sn See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

²⁰ tn Or "is great" (TEV). However, the context emphasizes his mighty acts of deliverance (cf. NCV), not some general or vague character quality.

²¹ sn Isa 13-23 contains a series of judgment oracles against various nations. It is likely that Israel, not the nations mentioned, actually heard these oracles. The oracles probably had a twofold purpose. For those leaders who insisted on getting embroiled in international politics, these oracles were a reminder that Judah need not fear foreign nations or seek international alliances for security reasons. For the righteous remnant within the nation, these oracles were a reminder that Israel's God was indeed the sovereign ruler of the earth, worthy of his people's trust.

²² tn Heb "The message [traditionally, "burden"] [about] Babylon which Isaiah son of Amoz saw."

²³ sn The Lord is speaking here (see v. 3).

²⁴ tn Heb "my consecrated ones," i.e., those who have been set apart by God for the special task of carrying out his judgment.

²⁵ tn Heb "my warriors with respect to my anger."

²⁶ tn Heb "the boasting ones of my pride"; cf. ASV, NASB, NRSV "my proudly exulting ones."

²⁷ sn In vv. 4-10 the prophet appears to be speaking, since the Lord is referred to in the third person. However, since the Lord refers to himself in the third person later in this chapter (see v. 13), it is possible that he speaks throughout the chapter.

it sounds like a large army!¹
 There is great commotion among the
 kingdoms² –
 nations are being assembled!
 The LORD who commands armies is mustering
 forces for battle.
13:5 They come from a distant land,
 from the horizon.³
 It is the LORD with his instruments of
 judgment,⁴
 coming to destroy the whole earth.⁵
13:6 Wail, for the LORD's day of judgment⁶ is near;
 it comes with all the destructive power of
 the sovereign Judge.⁷

¹ tn Heb “a sound, a roar [is] on the mountains, like many people.”

² tn Heb “a sound, tumult of kingdoms.”

³ tn Heb “from the end of the sky.”

⁴ tn Or “anger”; cf. KJV, ASV “the weapons of his indignation.”

⁵ tn Or perhaps, “land” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NLT). Even though the heading and subsequent context (see v. 17) indicate Babylon's judgment is in view, the chapter has a cosmic flavor that suggests that the coming judgment is universal in scope. Perhaps Babylon's downfall occurs in conjunction with a wider judgment, or the cosmic style is poetic hyperbole used to emphasize the magnitude and importance of the coming event.

⁶ tn Heb “the day of the LORD” (so KJV, NAB).

⁷ tn Heb “like destruction from the sovereign Judge it comes.” The comparative preposition (צָא, k') has here the rhetorical nuance, “in every way like.” The point is that the destruction unleashed will have all the earmarks of divine judgment. One could paraphrase, “it comes as only destructive divine judgment can.” On this use of the preposition in general, see GKC 376 §118.x.

sn The divine name used here is שָׁדָּא (*shaddai*, “Shaddai”). Shaddai (or El Shaddai) is the sovereign king/judge of the world who grants life/blesses and kills/judges. In Genesis he blesses the patriarchs with fertility and promises numerous descendants. Outside Genesis he both blesses/protects and takes away life/happiness. The patriarchs knew God primarily as El Shaddai (Exod 6:3). While the origin and meaning of this name is uncertain (see discussion below) its significance is clear. The name is used in contexts where God appears as the source of fertility and life. In Gen 17:1-8 he appears to Abram, introduces himself as El Shaddai, and announces his intention to make the patriarch fruitful. In the role of El Shaddai God repeats these words (now elevated to the status of a decree) to Jacob (35:11). Earlier Isaac had pronounced a blessing upon Jacob in which he asked El Shaddai to make Jacob fruitful (28:3). Jacob later prays that his sons will be treated with mercy when they return to Egypt with Benjamin (43:14). The fertility theme is not as apparent here, though one must remember that Jacob viewed Benjamin as the sole remaining son of the favored and once-barren Rachel (cf. 29:31; 30:22-24; 35:16-18). It is quite natural that he would appeal to El Shaddai to preserve Benjamin's life, for it was El Shaddai's miraculous power which made it possible for Rachel to give him sons in the first place. In 48:3 Jacob, prior to blessing Joseph's sons, tells him how El Shaddai appeared to him at Bethel (cf. chapter 28) and promised to make him fruitful. When blessing Joseph on his deathbed Jacob refers to Shaddai (we should probably read “El Shaddai,” along with a few Hebrew MSS, the Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX, and Syriac) as the one who provides abundant blessings, including “blessings of the breast and womb” (49:25). (The direct association of the name with שָׁדָּא [*shadayim*, “breasts”] suggests the name might mean “the one of the breast” [i.e., the one who gives fertility], but the juxtaposition is probably better explained as wordplay. Note the wordplay involving the name

13:7 For this reason all hands hang limp,⁸
 every human heart loses its courage.⁹

13:8 They panic –
 cramps and pain seize hold of them
 like those of a woman who is straining to
 give birth.

They look at one another in astonish-
 ment;

their faces are flushed red.¹⁰

13:9 Look, the LORD's day of judgment¹¹ is
 coming;
 it is a day of cruelty and savage, raging
 anger,¹²
 destroying¹³ the earth¹⁴
 and annihilating its sinners.

13:10 Indeed the stars in the sky and their
 constellations
 no longer give out their light;¹⁵
 the sun is darkened as soon as it rises,
 and the moon does not shine.¹⁶

and the root שָׁדַּע [*shedad*, “destroy”] here in Isa 13:6 and in Joel 1:15.) Outside Genesis the name Shaddai (minus El, “God”) is normally used when God is viewed as the sovereign king who blesses/protects or curses/brings judgment. The name appears in the introduction to two of Balaam's oracles (Num 24:4, 16) of blessing upon Israel. Naomi employs the name when accusing the Lord of treating her bitterly by taking the lives of her husband and sons (Ruth 1:20-21). In Ps 68:14; Isa 13:6; and Joel 1:15 Shaddai judges his enemies through warfare, while Ps 91:1 depicts him as the protector of his people. (In Ezek 1:24 and 10:5 the sound of the cherubs' wings is compared to Shaddai's powerful voice. The reference may be to the mighty divine warrior's battle cry which accompanies his angry judgment.) Last but not least, the name occurs 31 times in the Book of Job. Job and his “friends” assume that Shaddai is the sovereign king of the world (11:17; 37:23a) who is the source of life (33:4b) and is responsible for maintaining justice (8:3; 34:10-12; 37:23b). He provides abundant blessings, including children (22:17-18; 29:4-6), but can also discipline, punish, and destroy (5:17; 6:4; 21:20; 23:16). It is not surprising to see the name so often in this book, where the theme of God's justice is primary and even called into question (24:1; 27:2). The most likely proposal is that the name means “God, the one of the mountain” (an Akkadian cognate means “mountain,” to which Heb. בָּרֶן [*shad*, “breast”] is probably related). For a discussion of proposed derivations see T. N. D. Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 70-71. The name may originally depict God as the sovereign judge who, in Canaanite style, rules from a sacred mountain. Isa 14:13 and Ezek 28:14, 16 associate such a mountain with God, while Ps 48:2 refers to Zion as “Zaphon,” the Canaanite Olympus from which the high god El ruled. (In Isa 14 the Canaanite god El may be in view. Note that Isaiah pictures pagan kings as taunting the king of Babylon, suggesting that pagan mythology may provide the background for the language and imagery.)

⁸ tn Heb “drop”; KJV “be faint”; ASV “be feeble”; NAB “fall helpless.”

⁹ tn Heb “melts” (so NAB).

¹⁰ tn Heb “their faces are faces of flames.” Their faces are flushed with fear and embarrassment.

¹¹ tn Heb “the day of the LORD.”

¹² tn Heb “[with] cruelty, and fury, and rage of anger.” Three synonyms for “anger” are piled up at the end of the line to emphasize the extraordinary degree of divine anger that will be exhibited in this judgment.

¹³ tn Heb “making desolate.”

¹⁴ tn Or “land” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NLT).

¹⁵ tn Heb “do not flash forth their light.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “does not shed forth its light.”

13:11 I will punish the world for its evil,² and wicked people for their sin.
 I will put an end to the pride of the insolent,
 I will bring down the arrogance of tyrants.³

13:12 I will make human beings more scarce than pure gold,
 and people more scarce⁴ than gold from Ophir.

13:13 So I will shake the heavens,⁵ and the earth will shake loose from its foundation,⁶ because of the fury of the LORD who commands armies, in the day he vents his raging anger.⁷

13:14 Like a frightened gazelle⁸ or a sheep with no shepherd, each will turn toward home,⁹ each will run to his homeland.

13:15 Everyone who is caught will be stabbed;
 everyone who is seized¹⁰ will die¹¹ by the sword.

13:16 Their children will be smashed to pieces before their very eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives raped.

13:17 Look, I am stirring up the Medes to attack them;¹² they are not concerned about silver, nor are they interested in gold.¹³

13:18 Their arrows will cut young men to ribbons;¹⁴ they have no compassion on a person's offspring,¹⁵ they will not¹⁶ look with pity on children.

¹ sn The Lord is definitely speaking (again?) at this point. See the note at v. 4.

² tn Or "I will bring disaster on the world." Hebrew רָאֵה (*ra'ah*) could refer to the judgment (i.e., disaster, calamity) or to the evil that prompts it. The structure of the parallel line favors the latter interpretation.

³ tn Or perhaps, "the violent"; cf. NASB, NIV "the ruthless."

⁴ tn The verb is supplied in the translation from the first line. The verb in the first line ("I will make scarce") does double duty in the parallel structure of the verse.

⁵ tn Or "the sky." The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

⁶ tn Heb "from its place" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NCV).

⁷ tn Heb "and in the day of the raging of his anger."

⁸ tn Or "like a gazelle being chased." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

⁹ tn Heb "his people" (cf. KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV) or "his nation" (cf. TEV "their own countries").

¹⁰ tn Heb "carried off," i.e., grabbed from the fleeing crowd. See HALOT 764 s.v. פְּנָס.

¹¹ tn Heb "will fall" (so KJV, NIV, NRSV); NLT "will be run through with a sword."

¹² tn Heb "against them"; NLT "against Babylon."

¹³ sn They cannot be bought off, for they have a lust for bloodshed.

¹⁴ tn Heb "and bows cut to bits young men." "Bows" stands by metonymy for arrows.

¹⁵ tn Heb "the fruit of the womb."

¹⁶ tn Heb "their eye does not." Here "eye" is a metonymy for the whole person.

13:19 Babylon, the most admired¹⁷ of kingdoms,
 the Chaldeans' source of honor and pride,¹⁸ will be destroyed by God just as Sodom and Gomorrah were.¹⁹

13:20 No one will live there again; no one will ever reside there again.²⁰ No bedouin²¹ will camp²² there, no shepherds will rest their flocks²³ there. **13:21** Wild animals will rest there, the ruined²⁴ houses will be full of hyenas.²⁵ Ostriches will live there, wild goats will skip among the ruins.²⁶ **13:22** Wild dogs will yip in her ruined fortresses, jackals will yelp in the once-splendid palaces.²⁷ Her time is almost up,²⁸ her days will not be prolonged.²⁹

¹⁷ tn Or "most beautiful" (NCV, TEV).

¹⁸ tn Heb "the beauty of the pride of the Chaldeans."

¹⁹ sn The Chaldeans were a group of tribes who lived in southern Mesopotamia. The established the so-called neo-Babylonian empire in the late seventh century B.C. Their most famous king, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Judah in 605 B.C. and destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

²⁰ tn Heb "and Babylon...will be like the overthrow by God of Sodom and Gomorrah." On מַהְפֵּךְ (*mahpekhah*, "overthrow") see the note on the word "destruction" in 1:7.

²¹ tn Heb "she will not be inhabited forever, and she will not be dwelt in to generation and generation (i.e., forever)." The Lord declares that Babylon, personified as a woman, will not be inhabited. In other words, her people will be destroyed and the Chaldean empire will come to a permanent end.

²² tn יָהֵל (*yahel*) is probably a corrupted form of יְהָלֵל (*ye'hal*). See GKC 186 §68.k.

²³ tn The words "their flocks" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The Hebrew text does not supply the object here, but see Jer 33:12.

²⁴ tn The word "ruined" is supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁵ tn The precise referent of this word is uncertain. See HALOT 29 s.v. נֶחָת. Various English versions translate as "owls" (e.g., NAB, NASB), "wild dogs" (NCV); "jackals" (NIV); "howling creatures" (NRSV, NLT).

²⁶ tn Heb "will skip there."

²⁷ tc The Hebrew text reads literally, "wild dogs will yip among his widows, and jackals in the palaces of pleasure." The verb "yip" is supplied in the second line; it does double duty in the parallel structure. "His widows" makes little sense in this context; many emend the form (אַלְמֹנָתָיו, 'almnotay) to the graphically similar אַרְמֹנָתָה (*armnoteha*, "her fortresses"), a reading that is assumed in the present translation. The use of "widows" may represent an intentional wordplay on "fortresses," indicating that the fortresses are like dejected widows (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:308, n. 1).

²⁸ tn Heb "near to come is her time."

²⁹ sn When was the prophecy of Babylon's fall fulfilled? Some argue that the prophecy was fulfilled in 689 B.C. when the Assyrians under Sennacherib sacked and desecrated the city (this event is alluded to in 23:13). This may have been an initial phase in the fulfillment of the prophecy, but the reference to the involvement of the Medes (v. 17) and the suggestion that Babylon's demise will bring about the restoration of Israel (14:1-2) indicate that the fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians in 538 B.C. is the primary focus of the prophecy. (After all, the Lord did reveal to Isaiah that the Chaldeans [not the Assyrians] would someday conquer Jerusalem and take the people into exile [see 39:5-7].) However, the vivid picture of destruction in vv. 15-22 raises a problem. The Medes

14:1 The LORD will certainly have compassion on Jacob;¹ he will again choose Israel as his special people² and restore³ them to their land. Resident foreigners will join them and unite with the family⁴ of Jacob. **14:2** Nations will take them and bring them back to their own place. Then the family of Jacob will make foreigners their servants as they settle in the LORD's land.⁵ They will make their captors captives and rule over the ones who oppressed them. **14:3** When the LORD gives you relief from your suffering and anxiety,⁶ and from the hard labor which you were made to perform, **14:4** you will taunt the king of Babylon with these words:⁷

"Look how the oppressor has met his end!
Hostility⁸ has ceased!"

14:5 The LORD has broken the club of the wicked,
the scepter of rulers.

14:6 It⁹ furiously struck down nations
with unceasing blows.¹⁰

It angrily ruled over nations,
oppressing them without restraint.¹¹

14:7 The whole earth rests and is quiet;
they break into song.

and Persians did not destroy the city; in fact Cyrus' takeover of Babylon, though preceded by a military campaign, was relatively peaceful and even welcomed by some Babylonian religious officials. How then does one explain the prophecy's description of the city's violent fall? As noted above, the events of 689 B.C. and 538 B.C. may have been merged in the prophecy. However, it is more likely that the language is stylized and exaggerated for rhetorical effect. See Isa 34:11-15; Jer 50:39-40 (describing Babylon's fall in 538 B.C.); 51:36-37 (describing Babylon's fall in 538 B.C.); Zeph 2:13-15; the extra-biblical Sefire treaty curses; and Ashurbanipal's description of the destruction of Elam in his royal annals. In other words, the events of 538 B.C. essentially, though not necessarily literally, fulfill the prophecy.

1 tn The sentence begins with כִּי (*ki*), which is understood as asseverative ("certainly") in the translation. Another option is to translate, "For the LORD will have compassion." In this case one of the reasons for Babylon's coming demise (13:22b) is the LORD's desire to restore his people.

2 tn The words "as his special people" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

3 tn Or "settle" (NASB, NIV, NCV, NLT).

4 tn Heb "house."

5 tn Heb "and the house of Jacob will take possession of them [i.e., the nations], on the land of the LORD, as male servants and female servants."

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

7 tn Heb "you will lift up this taunt over the king of Babylon, saying."

8 tc The word in the Hebrew text (מַדְרֵה, *madhevah*) is unattested elsewhere and of uncertain meaning. Many (following the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa) assume a *dalet-resh* (ד-ר) confusion and emend the form to מַרְחֵה, *marhevah*, "onslaught". See HALOT 548 s.v. II מַרְחֵה and HALOT 633 s.v. *מַרְבָּה.

9 tn Or perhaps, "he" (cf. KJV; NCV "the king of Babylon"). The present translation understands the referent of the pronoun ("it") to be the "club/scepter" of the preceding line.

10 tn Heb "it was striking down nations in fury [with] a blow without ceasing." The participle ("striking down") suggests repeated or continuous action in past time.

11 tn Heb "it was ruling in anger nations [with] oppression without restraint." The participle ("ruling") suggests repeated or continuous action in past time.

14:8 The evergreens also rejoice over your demise,¹²
as do the cedars of Lebanon, singing,¹³
'Since you fell asleep,¹⁴
no woodsman comes up to chop us
down!'¹⁵

14:9 Sheol¹⁶ below is stirred up about you,
ready to meet you when you arrive.
It rouses¹⁷ the spirits of the dead for you,
all the former leaders of the earth;¹⁸
it makes all the former kings of the na-

tions

rise from their thrones.¹⁹

14:10 All of them respond to you, saying:
'You too have become weak like us!

You have become just like us!'

14:11 Your splendor²⁰ has been brought
down to Sheol,
as well as the sound of your stringed in-

struments.²¹
You lie on a bed of maggots,
with a blanket of worms over you.²²

14:12 Look how you have fallen from the
sky,
O shining one, son of the dawn!²³

12 tn Heb "concerning you."

13 tn The word "singing" is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. Note that the personified trees speak in the second half of the verse.

14 tn Heb "lay down" (in death); cf. NAB "laid to rest."

15 tn Heb "the [wood]cutter does not come up against us."

16 sn Sheol is the proper name of the subterranean world which was regarded as the land of the dead.

17 tn Heb "arousing." The form is probably a Polel infinitive absolute, rather than a third masculine singular perfect, for Sheol is grammatically feminine (note "stirred up"). See GKC 466 §145.t.

18 tn Heb "all the rams of the earth." The animal epithet is used metaphorically here for leaders. See HALOT 903 s.v. *

19 tn Heb "lifting from their thrones all the kings of the nations." הַקְרִים (*haqrim*, a Hiphil perfect third masculine singular) should be emended to an infinitive absolute (הַקְרָם, *haqem*). See the note on "rouses" earlier in the verse.

20 tn Or "pride" (NCV, CEV); KJV, NIV, NRSV "pomp."

21 tn Or "harps" (NAB, NIV, NRSV).

22 tn Heb "under you maggots are spread out, and worms are your cover."

23 tn The Hebrew text has חֵיל בֶּן־שָׁחָר (*hebel ben-shakhar*, "Helel son of Shachar"), which is probably a name for the morning star (Venus) or the crescent moon. See HALOT 245 s.v. חֵיל.

sn What is the background for the imagery in vv. 12-15? This whole section (vv. 4b-21) is directed to the king of Babylon, who is clearly depicted as a human ruler. Other kings of the earth address him in vv. 9ff., he is called "the man" in v. 16, and, according to vv. 19-20, he possesses a physical body. Nevertheless the language of vv. 12-15 has led some to see a dual referent in the taunt song. These verses, which appear to be spoken by other pagan kings to a pagan king (cf. vv. 9-11), contain several titles and motifs that resemble those of Canaanite mythology, including references to Helel son of Shachar, the stars of El, the mountain of assembly, the recesses of Zaphon, and the divine title Most High. Apparently these verses allude to a mythological story about a minor god (Helel son of Shachar) who tried to take over Zaphon, the mountain of the gods. His attempted coup failed and he was hurled down to the underworld. The king of Babylon is taunted for having similar unrealized delusions of grandeur. Some Christians have seen an allusion to the fall of Satan here, but this seems contextually unwarranted (see J. Martin, "Isaiah,"

You have been cut down to the ground,
O conqueror¹ of the nations!²

14:13 You said to yourself,³
“I will climb up to the sky.
Above the stars of El⁴
I will set up my throne.
I will rule on the mountain of assembly
on the remote slopes of Zaphon.⁵

14:14 I will climb up to the tops⁶ of the
clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High!⁷

14:15 But you were brought down⁸ to
Sheol,
to the remote slopes of the Pit.⁹

14:16 Those who see you stare at you,
they look at you carefully, thinking:¹⁰
“Is this the man who shook the earth,
the one who made kingdoms tremble?
14:17 Is this the one who made the world
like a desert,
who ruined its¹¹ cities,
and refused to free his prisoners so they
could return home?”¹²

14:18¹³ As for all the kings of the nations,

BKCOT, 1061).

1 tn Some understand the verb to from קַלְשׁ (khalash, “to weaken”), but HALOT 324 s.v. II קָלֵשׁ proposes a homonym here, meaning “to defeat.”

2 sn In this line the taunting kings hint at the literal identity of the king, after likening him to the god Helel and a tree. The verb כָּרַע (gada, “cut down”) is used of chopping down trees in 9:10 and 10:33.

3 tn Heb “you, you said in your heart.”

4 sn In Canaanite mythology the stars of El were astral deities under the authority of the high god El.

5 sn Zaphon, the Canaanite version of Olympus, was the “mountain of assembly” where the gods met.

6 tn Heb “the high places.” This word often refers to the high places where pagan worship was conducted, but here it probably refers to the “backs” or tops of the clouds. See HALOT 136 s.v. בָּקָר.

7 sn Normally in the OT the title “Most High” belongs to the God of Israel, but in this context, where the mythological overtones are so strong, it probably refers to the Canaanite high god El.

8 tn The prefixed verb form is taken as a preterite. Note the use of perfects in v. 12 to describe the king’s downfall.

9 tn The Hebrew term בָּור (bor, “cistern”) is sometimes used metaphorically to refer to the place of the dead or the entrance to the underworld.

10 tn The word “thinking” is supplied in the translation in order to make it clear that the next line records their thoughts as they gaze at him.

11 tc The pronominal suffix is masculine, even though its antecedent appears to be the grammatically feminine noun “world.” Some have suggested that the form אֲרָאֵב (’arav, plural noun with third masculine singular suffix) should be emended to אֲרָהֵב (areha, plural noun with third feminine singular suffix). This emendation may be unnecessary in light of other examples of lack of agreement a suffix and its antecedent noun.

12 tn Heb “and his prisoners did not let loose to [their] homes.” This really means, “he did not let loose his prisoners and send them back to their homes.” On the elliptical style, see GKC 366 §117.o.

13 sn It is unclear where the quotation of the kings, begun in v. 10b, ends. However, the reference to the “kings of the nations” in v. 18 (see also v. 9) seems to indicate that the quotation has ended at this point and that Israel’s direct taunt (cf. vv. 4b–10a) has resumed. In fact the references to the “kings of the nations” may form a stylistic inclusio or frame around

all of them¹⁴ lie down in splendor,¹⁵
each in his own tomb.¹⁶

14:19 But you have been thrown out of
your grave

like a shoot that is thrown away.¹⁷

You lie among¹⁸ the slain,
among those who have been slashed by

the sword,
among those headed for¹⁹ the stones of

the Pit,²⁰
as if you were a mangled corpse.²¹

14:20 You will not be buried with them,²²
because you destroyed your land
and killed your people.
The offspring of the wicked
will never be mentioned again.

14:21 Prepare to execute²³ his sons
for the sins their ancestors have committed.²⁴

They must not rise up and take possession of the earth,
or fill the surface of the world with cities.²⁵

14:22 “I will rise up against them,”
says the LORD who commands armies.
“I will blot out all remembrance of Baby-

lon and destroy all her people,²⁶
including the offspring she produces,”²⁷
says the LORD.

14:23 “I will turn her into a place that is
overrun with wild animals²⁸

the quotation.

14 tc The phrase “all of them” does not appear in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a.

15 sn This refers to the typically extravagant burial of kings.

16 tn Heb “house” (so KJV, ASV), but in this context a tomb is in view. Note the verb “lie down” in the preceding line and the reference to a “grave” in the next line.

17 tn Heb “like a shoot that is abhorred.” The simile seems a bit odd; apparently it refers to a small shoot that is trimmed from a plant and tossed away. Some prefer to emend נֶגֶשׁ (nesser, “shoot”); some propose נֶפֶל (nefel, “miscarriage”). In this case one might paraphrase: “like a horrible-looking fetus that is delivered when a woman miscarries.”

18 tn Heb “are clothed with.”

19 tn Heb “those going down to.”

20 tn בָּר (bor) literally means “cistern”; cisterns were constructed from stones. On the metaphorical use of “cistern” for the underworld, see the note at v. 15.

21 tn Heb “like a trampled corpse.” Some take this line with what follows.

22 tn Heb “you will not be united with them in burial” (so NASB).

23 tn Or “the place of slaughter for.”

24 tn Heb “for the sin of their fathers.”

25 sn J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:320, n. 10) suggests that the garrison cities of the mighty empire are in view here.

26 tn Heb “I will cut off from Babylon name and remnant”

(ASV, NAB, and NRSV all similar).

27 tn Heb “descendant and child.”

28 tn Heb “I will make her into a possession of wild animals.” It is uncertain what type of animal נִמְגָד (nimged) refers to. Some suggest a rodent (cf. NASB, NRSV “hedgehog”), others an owl (cf. NAB, NIV, TEV).

and covered with pools of stagnant water.
I will get rid of her, just as one sweeps
away dirt with a broom,”¹
says the LORD who commands armies.
14:24 The LORD who commands armies
makes this solemn vow:
“Be sure of this:
Just as I have intended, so it will be;
just as I have planned, it will happen.
14:25 I will break Assyria³ in my land,
I will trample them⁴ underfoot on my
hills.
Their yoke will be removed from my
people,
the burden will be lifted from their shoul-
ders.⁵
14:26 This is the plan I have devised for
the whole earth;
my hand is ready to strike all the na-
tions.”⁶
14:27 Indeed,⁷ the LORD who commands
armies has a plan,
and who can possibly frustrate it?
His hand is ready to strike,
and who can possibly stop it?⁸

The Lord Will Judge the Philistines

14:28 In the year King Ahaz died,⁹ this mes-
sage was revealed:¹⁰

14:29 Don’t be so happy, all you Philis-
tines,
just because the club that beat you has
been broken!¹¹
For a viper will grow out of the serpent’s
root,
and its fruit will be a darting adder.¹²

¹ tn Heb “I will sweep her away with the broom of destruction.”

² sn Having announced the downfall of the Chaldean em-
pire, the Lord appends to this prophecy a solemn reminder
that the Assyrians, the major Mesopotamian power of Isaiah’s
day, would be annihilated, foreshadowing what would subse-
quently happen to Babylon and the other hostile nations.

³ tn Heb “to break Assyria.”

⁴ tn Heb “him.” This is a collective singular referring to the
nation, or a reference to the king of Assyria who by metonymy
stands for the entire nation.

⁵ tn Heb “and his [i.e., Assyria’s] yoke will be removed from
them [the people?], and his [Assyria’s] burden from his [the
nation’s?] shoulder will be removed.” There are no antecedents
in this oracle for the suffixes in the phrases “from them”
and “from his shoulder.” Since the Lord’s land and hills are
referred to in the preceding line and the statement seems to
echo 10:27, it is likely that God’s people are the referents of
the suffixes; the translation uses “my people” to indicate this.

⁶ tn Heb “and this is the hand that is outstretched over all
the nations.”

⁷ tn Or “For” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

⁸ tn Heb “His hand is outstretched and who will turn it
back?”

⁹ sn Perhaps 715 B.C., but the precise date is uncertain.

¹⁰ tn Heb “this oracle came.”

¹¹ sn The identity of this “club” (also referred to as a “ser-
pent” in the next line) is uncertain. It may refer to an Assy-
rian king, or to Ahaz. For discussion see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah*
(NICOT), 1:331-32. The viper/adder referred to in the second
half of the verse is his successor.

¹² tn Heb “flying burning one.” The designation “burning

14:30 The poor will graze in my pastures;¹³
the needy will rest securely.
But I will kill your root by famine;
it will put to death all your survivors.¹⁴
14:31 Wail, O city gate!
Cry out, O city!
Melt with fear,¹⁵ all you Philistines!
For out of the north comes a cloud of
smoke,
and there are no stragglers in its ranks.¹⁶
14:32 How will they respond to the mes-
sengers of this nation?¹⁷
Indeed, the Lord has made Zion secure;
the oppressed among his people will find
safety in her.

The Lord Will Judge Moab

15:1 Here is a message about Moab:
Indeed, in a night it is devastated,
Ar of Moab is destroyed!
Indeed, in a night it is devastated,
Kir of Moab is destroyed!
15:2 They went up to the temple,¹⁸
the people of Dibon went up to the high
places to lament.¹⁹
Because of what happened to Nebo and
Medeba,²⁰ Moab wails.
Every head is shaved bare,
every beard is trimmed off.²¹
15:3 In their streets they wear sackcloth;
on their roofs and in their town squares

one” may allude to the serpent’s appearance or the effect of
its poisonous bite. (See the note at 6:2.) The qualifier “flying”
probably refers to the serpent’s quick, darting movements,
though one might propose a homonym here, meaning “biting.” (See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:332, n. 18.) Some
might think in terms of a mythological flying, fire breathing
dragon (cf. NAB “a flying saraph”; CEV “a flying fiery dragon”),
but this proposal does not make good sense in 30:6, where the
phrase “flying burning one” appears again in a list of desert
animals.

¹³ tc The Hebrew text has, “the firstborn of the poor will
graze.” “Firstborn” may be used here in an idiomatic sense
to indicate the very poorest of the poor. See BDB 114 s.v.
בָּבֶן. The translation above assumes an emendation of
(בְּקַחְיֵהוּ, “firstborn of”) to בְּקַרְבָּן (*bekharay*, “in my pastures”).

¹⁴ tn Heb “your remnant” (so NAB, NRSV).

¹⁵ tn Or “despair” (see HALOT 555 s.v. מִתְּמֻגָּג). The form מִתְּמֻגָּג (*na-mog*) should be taken here as an infinitive absolute functioning
as an imperative. See GKC 199-200 §72.v.

¹⁶ tn Heb “and there is no one going alone in his appointed
places.” The meaning of this line is uncertain. בָּדָד (*boded*, “boded”) appears to be a participle from בָּדַד (*badad*, “be separate”; see BDB 94 s.v. בָּדַד). מִזְבֵּח (*mo’ad*) may mean “assembly” or,
by extension, “multitude” (see HALOT 558 s.v. *מִזְבֵּחַ), but the
referent of the third masculine pronominal suffix attached to
the noun is unclear. It probably refers to the “nation” men-
tioned in the next line.

¹⁷ sn The question forces the Philistines to consider the di-
lemma they will face – surrender and oppression, or battle
and death.

¹⁸ tn Heb “house.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “even Dibon [to] the high places to weep.” The
verb “went up” does double duty in the parallel structure.

²⁰ tn Heb “over [or “for”] Nebo and over [or “for”] Medeba.”

²¹ sn Shaving the head and beard were outward signs of
mourning and grief.

all of them wail,
they fall down weeping.

15:4 The people of¹ Heshbon and Elealeh
cry out,
their voices are heard as far away as Japheth.

For this reason Moab's soldiers shout in distress;
their courage wavers.²

15:5 My heart cries out because of Moab's plight,³

and for the fugitives⁴ stretched out⁵ as far as Zoar and Eglath Shelishiyah.

For they weep as they make their way up the ascent of Luhith;

they loudly lament their demise on the road to Horonaim.⁶

15:6 For the waters of Nimrim are gone,⁷
the grass is dried up,
the vegetation has disappeared,
and there are no plants.

15:7 For this reason what they have made and stored up,

they carry over the Stream of the Poplars.

15:8 Indeed, the cries of distress echo throughout Moabite territory;
their wailing can be heard in Eglaim and Beer Elim.⁸

15:9 Indeed, the waters of Dimon⁹ are full of blood!

Indeed, I will heap even more trouble on Dimon.¹⁰

A lion will attack¹¹ the Moabite fugitives and the people left in the land.

16:1 Send rams as tribute to the ruler of the land,¹²

from Sela in the desert¹³ to the hill of Daughter Zion.

16:2 At the fords of the Arnon¹⁴ the Moabite women are like a bird that flies about when forced from its nest.¹⁵

16:3 "Bring a plan, make a decision!¹⁶

Provide some shade in the middle of the day!¹⁷

Hide the fugitives! Do not betray¹⁸ the one who tries to escape!

16:4 Please let the Moabite fugitives live¹⁹ among you.

Hide them²⁰ from the destroyer!"

Certainly²¹ the one who applies pressure will cease,²²

the destroyer will come to an end,
those who trample will disappear²³ from the earth.

16:5 Then a trustworthy king will be established;

he will rule in a reliable manner,

this one from David's family.²⁴

He will be sure to make just decisions and will be experienced in executing justice.²⁵

¹² **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, "Send [a plural imperative form is used] a ram [to] the ruler of the land." The term כָר (kar, "ram") should be emended to the plural כָרִים (karim). The singular form in the text is probably the result of haplography; note that the next word begins with a mem (ם).

¹³ **tn** The Hebrew text has "toward [across?] the desert."

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

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "like a bird fleeing, thrust away [from] a nest, the daughters of Moab are [at] the fords of Arnon."

¹⁶ **sn** It is unclear who is being addressed in this verse. Perhaps the prophet, playing the role of a panic stricken Moabite refugee, requests the leaders of Judah (the imperatives are plural) to take pity on the fugitives.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "Make your shade like night in the midst of noon-day." "Shade" here symbolizes shelter, while the heat of noonday represents the intense suffering of the Moabites. By comparing the desired shade to night, the speaker visualizes a huge dark shadow cast by a large tree that would provide relief from the sun's heat.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "disclose, uncover."

¹⁹ **tn** That is, "live as resident foreigners."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "Be a hiding place for them."

²¹ **tn** The present translation understands כִי (ki) as assertive, but one could take it as explanatory ("for," KJV, NASB) or temporal ("when," NAB, NRSV). In the latter case, v. 4b would be logically connected to v. 5.

²² **tn** A perfect verbal form is used here and in the next two lines for rhetorical effect; the demise of the oppressor(s) is described as if it had already occurred.

²³ **tc** The Hebrew text has, "they will be finished, the one who tramples, from the earth." The plural verb form נִמְתַּבֵּל, (nimmətbl, "disappear") could be emended to agree with the singular subject רֹמֶס (romes, "the one who tramples") or the participle can be emended to a plural נִמְתַּבְּלִים (nimməbl̑im, "romesim") to agree with the verb. The translation assumes the latter. Haplography of mem (ם) seems likely; note that the word after רֹמֶס begins with a mem.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* "and a throne will be established in faithfulness, and he will sit on it in reliability, in the tent of David."

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "one who judges and seeks justice, and one experienced in fairness." Many understand רֹמֶס (romes) to mean

¹ **tn** The words "the people of" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

² **tc** The Hebrew text has, "For this reason the soldiers of Moab shout, his inner being quivers for him." To achieve tighter parallelism, some emend the first line, changing קָלֻשֶׁת (khalus̑et, "soldiers") to לְלִישָׁה (khaliṣ̑ah, "loins") and יָרִיעָה (yarī'ah, "they shout," from רָעָה, rā'ah) to שָׁרָה (yarāh, "they quiver"), a verb from רָעָה (yara'), which also appears in the next line. One can then translate v. 4b as "For this reason the insides of the Moabites quiver, their whole body shakes" (cf. NAB, NRSV).

³ **tn** *Heb* "for Moab." For rhetorical purposes the speaker (the Lord?, see v. 9) plays the role of a mourner.

⁴ **tn** The vocalization of the Hebrew text suggests "the bars of her gates," but the form should be reported to yield, "her fugitives." See HALOT 156-57 s.v. בְּבָתָר, and BDB 138 s.v. בְּבָתָר.

⁵ **tn** The words "are stretched out" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "For the ascent of Luhith, with weeping they go up it; for [on] the road to Horonaim an outcry over shattering they raise up."

⁷ **tn** *Heb* "are waste places"; cf. NRSV "are a desolation."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "to Eglaim [is] her wailing, and [to] Beer Elim [is] her wailing."

⁹ **tc** The Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a reads "Dibon" instead of "Dimon" in this verse.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "Indeed I will place on Dimon added things." Apparently the Lord is speaking.

¹¹ **tn** The words "will attack" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

16:6 We have heard about Moab's pride,
their great arrogance,
their boasting, pride, and excess.¹

But their boastful claims are empty!¹²
16:7 So Moab wails over its demise³ –
they all wail!

Completely devastated, they moan
about what has happened to the raisin
cakes of Kir Hareseth.⁴

16:8 For the fields of Heshbon are dried
up,
as well as the vines of Sibmah.

The rulers of the nations trample all over
its vines,
which reach Jazer and spread to the des-
ert;

their shoots spread out and cross the sea.
16:9 So I weep along with Jazer⁵
over the vines of Sibmah.

I will saturate you⁶ with my tears, Hesh-
bon and Elealeh,
for the conquering invaders shout trium-
phanty

over your fruit and crops.⁷

16:10 Joy and happiness disappear from
the orchards,
and in the vineyards no one rejoices or
shouts;

no one treads out juice in the wine vats⁸ –
I have brought the joyful shouts to an
end.⁹

16:11 So my heart constantly sighs for
Moab, like the strumming of a harp,¹⁰

¹quick, prompt" (see BDB 555 s.v.), but HALOT 552 s.v. קָדוֹר offers the meaning "skillful, experienced," and translates the phrase in v. 5 "zealous for what is right."

²**tn** Heb "צְבַעֲרָה" ('evrah) often means "anger, fury," but here it ap-
pears to refer to boastful outbursts or excessive claims. See
HALOT 782 s.v. גָּבֵר.

³**tn** Heb "not so his boasting."

³**tn** Heb "So Moab wails for Moab."

⁴**tn** The Hebrew text has, "for the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth you [masculine plural] moan, surely destroyed." The "rai-
sin cakes" could have cultic significance (see Hos 3:1), but
the next verse focuses on agricultural disaster, so here the
raisin cakes are mentioned as an example of the fine foods
that are no longer available (see 2 Sam 6:19; Song 2:5) be-
cause the vines have been destroyed by the invader (see v.
8). Some prefer to take אֲשִׁישָׁה ('ashishe, "raisin cakes of") as
"men of" (see HALOT 95 s.v. שְׂאַלְיָה; cf. NIV). The verb form
תְּהֻגָּה (tehgu, "you moan") is probably the result of ditography
(note that the preceding word ends in tav [ת]) and should be
emended to הָנוּ (a perfect, third plural form), "they moan."

⁵**tn** Heb "So I weep with the weeping of Jazer." Once more
the speaker (the Lord? – see v. 10b) plays the role of a mourn-
er (see 15:5).

⁶**tc** The form אֲרַיְיֶךָ ('arayyavekh) should be emended to
('aravayyekh); the vav [ו] and yod [י] have been acciden-
tally transposed from רַאַת (ravah, "be saturated").

⁷**tn** Heb "for over your fruit and over your harvest shout-
ing has fallen." The translation assumes that the shouting is
that of the conqueror (Jer 51:14). Another possibility is that
the shouting is that of the harvesters (see v. 10b, as well as
Jer 25:30), in which case one might translate, "for the joyful
shouting over the fruit and crops has fallen silent."

⁸**tn** Heb "wine in the vats the treader does not tread."

⁹**sn** The Lord appears to be the speaker here. See 15:9.

¹⁰**tn** Heb "so my intestines sigh for Moab like a harp." The
word מֵאַי ("intestines") is used here of the seat of the
emotions. English idiom requires the word "heart." The point

my inner being sighs¹¹ for Kir Hareseth.¹²

16:12 When the Moabites plead with all
their might at their high places,¹³
and enter their temples to pray, their
prayers will be ineffective!¹⁴

16:13 This is the message the LORD previous-
ly announced about Moab. **16:14** Now the LORD
makes this announcement: "Within exactly three
years¹⁵ Moab's splendor will disappear, along with
all her many people; there will be just a few, insig-
nificant survivors left."¹⁶

The Lord Will Judge Damascus

17:1 Here is a message about Damascus:
"Look, Damascus is no longer a city,
it is a heap of ruins!

17:2 The cities of Aroer are abandoned.¹⁷
They will be used for herds,
which will lie down there in peace.¹⁸

17:3 Fortified cities will disappear from
Ephraim,
and Damascus will lose its kingdom.¹⁹
The survivors in Syria
will end up like the splendor of the
Israelites,"

says the LORD who commands armies.

17:4 "At that time²⁰
Jacob's splendor will be greatly dimin-
ished,²¹

of the comparison to a harp is not entirely clear. Perhaps his
sighs of mourning resemble a harp in sound, or his constant
sighing is like the repetitive strumming of a harp.

¹¹**tn** The verb is supplied in the translation; "sighs" in the
preceding line does double duty in the parallel structure.

¹²**tn** Heb "Kir Heres" (so ASV, NRSV, TEV, CEV), a variant
name for "Kir Hareseth" (see v. 7).

¹³**tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a dis-
course particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future"
in 2:2.

¹⁴**tn** Heb "when he appears, when he grows tired, Moab on
the high places, and enters his temple to pray, he will not pre-
vail." It is possible that "when he grows tired" is an explanatory
gloss for the preceding "when he appears."

¹⁵**tn** Heb "in three years, like the years of a hired worker."
The three years must be reckoned exactly, just as a hired
worker would carefully keep track of the time he had agreed to
work for an employer in exchange for a predetermined wage.

¹⁶**tn** Heb "and the splendor of Moab will be disgraced with
all the great multitude, and a small little remnant will not be
strong."

¹⁷**tn** Three cities are known by this name in the OT: (1) an
Aroer located near the Arnon, (2) an Aroer in Ammon, and (3)
an Aroer of Judah. (See BDB 792-93 s.v. עֲרוֹר, and HALOT
883 s.v. עֲרֹרִי.) There is no mention of an Aroer in Syrian
territory. For this reason some want to emend the text here to
הַרְבָּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ("azuvot 'araya 'adey 'ad, "her cities are per-
manently abandoned"). However, Aroer near the Arnon was
taken by Israel and later conquered by the Syrians. (See Josh
12:2; 13:9, 16; Judg 11:26; 2 Kgs 10:33). This oracle per-
tains to Israel as well as Syria (note v. 3), so it is possible that
this is a reference to Israelite and/or Syrian losses in Trans-
jordan.

¹⁸**tn** Heb "and they lie down and there is no one scaring
[them]."

¹⁹**tn** Heb "and kingship from Damascus"; cf. NASB "And
sovereignty from Damascus."

²⁰**tn** Heb "in that day" (so KJV). The verb that introduces this
verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see
note on "in the future" in 2:2.

²¹**tn** Heb "will be tiny."

and he will become skin and bones.¹
17:5 It will be as when one gathers the grain harvest, and his hand gleans the ear of grain. It will be like one gathering the ears of grain in the Valley of Rephaim.

17:6 There will be some left behind, like when an olive tree is beaten – two or three ripe olives remain toward the very top, four or five on its fruitful branches,” says the LORD God of Israel.

17:7 At that time² men will trust in their Creator;³ they will depend on⁴ the Holy One of Israel.⁵

17:8 They will no longer trust in⁶ the altars their hands made, or depend on the Asherah poles and incense altars their fingers made.⁷

17:9 At that time⁸ their fortified cities will be like the abandoned summits of the Amorites,⁹ which they abandoned because of the Israelites; there will be desolation.

17:10 For you ignore¹⁰ the God who rescues you; you pay no attention to your strong protector.¹¹

So this is what happens: You cultivate beautiful plants and plant exotic vines.¹²

17:11 The day you begin cultivating you do what you can to make it grow;¹³ the morning you begin planting, you do what you can to make it sprout. Yet the harvest will disappear¹⁴ in the day of disease and incurable pain.

17:12 The many nations massing together are as good as dead,¹⁵ those who make a commotion as loud as the roaring of the sea’s waves.¹⁶ The people making such an uproar are as good as dead,¹⁷ those who make an uproar as loud as the roaring of powerful waves.¹⁸

17:13 Though these people make an uproar as loud as the roaring of powerful waves,¹⁹ when he shouts at²⁰ them, they will flee to a distant land, driven before the wind like dead weeds on the hills, or like dead thistles²¹ before a strong gale.

17:14 In the evening there is sudden terror;²² by morning they vanish.²³ This is the fate of those who try to plunder us, the destiny of those who try to loot us!²⁴

^{13 tn} Heb “in the day of your planting you [?].” The precise meaning of the verb תִּשְׁנַגֵּג (*tisshneggi*) is unclear. It is sometimes derived from שָׁנַג (*sug*, “to fence in”; see BDB 691 s.v. II גָּנָב). In this case one could translate “you build a protective fence.” However, the parallelism is tighter if one derives the form from סָגַה/²סָגָה (*saga’/sagah*, “to grow”); see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:351, n. 4. For this verb, see BDB 960 s.v. סָגַה.

^{14 tn} The Hebrew text has, “a heap of harvest.” However, better sense is achieved if נֶדֶד (*nad*, “heap”) is emended to a verb. Options include נָדַד (*nad*, Qal perfect third masculine singular from נָדַד [*nadad*, “flee, depart”]), נָדַר (*nadar*, Qal perfect third masculine singular from נָדַר [*nadar*, “nodded”]), נָדַר (*nadar*, Qal active participle from נָדַד [*nadar*]), and נָדַד (*nadd*, Qal perfect third masculine singular, or participle masculine singular, from נָדַד [*nud*, “wander, flutter”]). See BDB 626 s.v. נָדַד and HALOT 672 s.v. I נָדַד. One could translate literally: “[the harvest] departs,” or “[the harvest] flies away.”

^{15 tn} Heb [to] the massing of the many nations.” The word הָיָה (*hay*) could be translated as a simple interjection here (“ah!”), but since the following verses announce the demise of these nations, it is preferable to take הָיָה as a funeral cry. See the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

^{16 tn} Heb “like the loud noise of the seas, they make a loud noise.”

^{17 tn} Heb “the uproar of the peoples.” The term חֹזֶה (*hozeh*, “woe, ah”) does double duty in the parallel structure of the verse; the words “are as good as dead” are supplied in the translation to reflect this.

^{18 tn} Heb “like the uproar of mighty waters they are in an uproar.”

^{19 tn} Heb “the peoples are in an uproar like the uproar of mighty waters.”

^{20 tn} Or “rebukers.” The verb and related noun are used in theophanies of God’s battle cry which terrifies his enemies. See, for example, Pss 18:15; 76:7; 106:9; Isa 50:2; Nah 1:4, and A. Caquot, *TDOT* 3:49-53.

^{21 tn} Or perhaps “tumbleweed” (NAB, NIV, CEV); KJV “like a rolling thing.”

^{22 tn} Heb “at the time of evening, look, sudden terror.”

^{23 tn} Heb “before morning he is not.”

^{24 tn} Heb “this is the portion of those who plunder us, and

^{1 tn} Heb “and the fatness of his flesh will be made lean.”

^{2 tn} Heb “in that day” (so ASV, NASB, NIV); KJV “At that day.”

^{3 tn} Heb “man will gaze toward his maker.”

^{4 tn} Heb “his eyes will look toward.”

^{5 tn} See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

^{6 tn} Heb “he will not gaze toward.”

^{7 tn} Heb “and that which his fingers made he will not see, the Asherah poles and the incense altars.”

^{8 tn} Heb “in that day” (so KJV).

^{9 tn} The Hebrew text reads literally, “like the abandonment of the wooded height and the top one.” The following relative clause appears to allude back to the Israelite conquest of the land, so it seems preferable to emend הַחֲרוֹשׁ וְהַאֲמֹרִי (*hakhorsh v’ha’emori*, “*ha’emori*”, “[like the abandonment] of the wooded heights of the Amorites”).

^{10 tn} Heb “you have forgotten” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

^{11 tn} Heb “and the rocky cliff of your strength you do not remember.”

^{12 tn} Heb “a vine, a strange one.” The substantival adjective זָר (*zar*) functions here as an appositional genitive. It could refer to a cultic plant of some type, associated with a pagan rite. But it is more likely that it refers to an exotic, or imported, type of vine, one that is foreign (i.e., “strange”) to Israel.

The Lord Will Judge a Distant Land in the South

18:1 The land of buzzing wings is as good as dead,¹
the one beyond the rivers of Cush,
18:2 that sends messengers by sea,
who glide over the water's surface in
boats made of papyrus.
Go, you swift messengers,
to a nation of tall, smooth-skinned
people,²
to a people that are feared far and wide,³
to a nation strong and victorious,⁴
whose land rivers divide.⁵
18:3 All you who live in the world,
who reside on the earth,
you will see a signal flag raised on the
mountains;
you will hear a trumpet being blown.
18:4 For this is what the LORD has told me:
“I will wait⁶ and watch from my place,
like scorching heat produced by the sun-
light,⁷
like a cloud of mist⁸ in the heat⁹ of

the lot of those who loot us.”

1 tn Heb “Woe [to] the land of buzzing wings.” On יְהֹוָה (hoy) (*hoy*, “woe, ah”) see the note on the first phrase of 1:4.

sn The significance of the qualifying phrase “buzzing wings” is uncertain. Some suggest that the designation points to Cush as a land with many insects. Another possibility is that it refers to the swiftness with which this land’s messengers travel (v. 2a); they move over the sea as swiftly as an insect flies through the air. For a discussion of the options, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:359–60.

2 tn The precise meaning of the qualifying terms is uncertain. מַשְׁךְ (m^grushakh) appears to be a Pual participle from the verb מִשְׁךְ (mashakh, “to draw, extend”). Lexicographers theorize that it here refers to people who “stretch out,” as it were, or are tall. See BDB 604 s.v. מַשְׁךְ, and HALOT 645–46 s.v. מַשְׁךְ. מַרְטֵךְ (*morat*) is taken as a Pual participle from מָרַט (*marat*), which can mean “to pull out [hair],” in the Qal, “become bald” in the Niphal, and “be wiped clean” in the Pual. Lexicographers theorize that the word here refers to people with bare, or smooth, skin. See BDB 598–99 s.v. מַרְטֵךְ, and HALOT 634–35 s.v. מַרְטֵךְ. These proposed meanings, which are based on etymological speculation, must be regarded as tentative.

3 tn Heb “from it and onwards.” HALOT 245 s.v. מִלְאָה suggests the translation “far and wide.”

4 tn Once more the precise meaning of the qualifying terms is uncertain. The expression גַּבְעָה (gav-qav) is sometimes related to a proposed Arabic cognate and taken to mean “strength” (see BDB 876 II גַּ). Others, on the basis of Isa 28:10, 13, understand the form as gibberish (literally, “kav, kav”) and take it to be a reference to this nation’s strange, unknown language. The form בְּבִזְבָּחָה (m^gvusah) appears to be derived from בִּזְבָּחָה (*buz*, “to trample”), so lexicographers suggest the meaning “trampling” or “subjugation,” i.e., a nation that subdues others. See BDB 101 s.v. בִּזְבָּחָה and HALOT 541 s.v. בִּזְבָּחָה. These proposals, which are based on etymological speculation, must be regarded as tentative.

5 tn The precise meaning of the verb בָּזַע (*baza*), which occurs only in this oracle (see also v. 7) in the OT, is uncertain. BDB 102 s.v. suggests “divide” on the basis of alleged Aramaic and Arabic cognates; HALOT 117 s.v., citing an alleged Arabic cognate, suggests “wash away.”

6 tn Or “be quiet, inactive”; NIV “will remain quiet.”

7 tn Heb “like the glowing heat because of light.” The precise meaning of the line is uncertain.

8 tn Heb “a cloud of dew,” or “a cloud of light rain.”

9 tc Some medieval Hebrew MSS, with support from the LXX, Syriac Peshitta, and Latin Vulgate, read “the day.”

harvest.”¹⁰

18:5 For before the harvest, when the bud has sprouted,
and the ripening fruit appears,¹¹
he will cut off the unproductive shoots¹²
with pruning knives;
he will prune the tendrils.¹³

18:6 They will all be left¹⁴ for the birds of
the hills
and the wild animals;¹⁵
the birds will eat them during the sum-
mer,
and all the wild animals will eat them
during the winter.

18:7 At that time
tribute will be brought to the LORD who
commands armies,
by a people that are tall and smooth-
skinned,

a people that are feared far and wide,
a nation strong and victorious,
whose land rivers divide.¹⁶

The tribute¹⁷ will be brought to the place
where the LORD who commands armies
has chosen to reside, on Mount Zion.¹⁸

The Lord Will Judge Egypt

19:1 Here is a message about Egypt:
Look, the LORD rides on a swift-moving
cloud

and approaches Egypt.
The idols of Egypt tremble before him;
the Egyptians lose their courage.¹⁹

19:2 “I will provoke civil strife in Egypt,²⁰
brothers will fight with each other,
as will neighbors,
cities, and kingdoms.²¹

19:3 The Egyptians will panic,²²
and I will confuse their strategy.²³
They will seek guidance from the idols
and from the spirits of the dead,

10 sn It is unclear how the comparisons in v. 4b relate to the preceding statement. How is waiting and watching similar to heat or a cloud? For a discussion of interpretive options, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:362.

11 tn Heb “and the unripe, ripening fruit is maturing.”

12 tn On the meaning of צַלְזֵל (zalzel, “shoot [of the vine] without fruit buds”) see HALOT 272 s.v. צַלְזֵל.

13 tn Heb “the tendrils he will remove, he will cut off.”

14 tn Heb “they will be left together” (so NASB).

15 tn Heb “the beasts of the earth” (so KJV, NASB).

16 tn On the interpretive difficulties of this verse, see the notes at v. 2, where the same terminology is used.

17 tn The words “the tribute” are repeated here in the translation for clarity.

18 tn Heb “to the place of the name of the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts], Mount Zion.”

19 tn Heb “and the heart of Egypt melts within it.”

20 tn Heb I will provoke Egypt against Egypt” (NAB similar).

21 tn Heb “and they will fight, a man against his brother, and a man against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom.” Civil strife will extend all the way from the domestic level to the provincial arena.

22 tn Heb “and the spirit of Egypt will be laid waste in its midst.”

23 tn The verb בְּלֻעַ (balu’, “confuse”) is a homonym of the more common בְּלַעַ (balu’, “swallow”); see HALOT 135 s.v. בְּלַעַ.

from the pits used to conjure up underworld spirits, and from the magicians.¹

19:4 I will hand Egypt over to a harsh master;
a powerful king will rule over them,” says the sovereign master,² the LORD who commands armies.

19:5 The water of the sea will be dried up, and the river will dry up and be empty.³

19:6 The canals⁴ will stink;⁵ the streams of Egypt will trickle and then dry up; the bulrushes and reeds will decay,

19:7 along with the plants by the mouth of the river.⁶

All the cultivated land near the river will turn to dust and be blown away.⁷

19:8 The fishermen will mourn and lament,
all those who cast a fishhook into the river,
and those who spread out a net on the water’s surface will grieve.⁸

19:9 Those who make clothes from combed flax will be embarrassed; those who weave will turn pale.⁹

19:10 Those who make cloth¹⁰ will be demoralized;¹¹ all the hired workers will be depressed.¹²

19:11 The officials of Zoan are nothing but fools.¹³

Pharaoh’s wise advisers give stupid advice.

How dare you say to Pharaoh, “I am one of the sages,

¹ **tn** Heb “they will inquire of the idols and of the spirits of the dead and of the ritual pits and of the magicians.” Hebrew נָבָּן (‘ov, “ritual pit”) refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. See the note on “incantations” in 8:19.

² **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (‘adonay).

³ **tn** Heb “will dry up and be dry.” Two synonyms are joined for emphasis.

⁴ **tn** Heb “rivers” (so KJV, ASV); NAB, CEV “streams”; TEV “channels.”

⁵ **tn** The verb form appears as a Hiphil in the Qumran scroll 1QIsaa; the form in MT may be a so-called “mixed form,” reflecting the Hebrew Hiphil stem and the functionally corresponding Aramaic Aphel stem. See HALOT 276 s.v. לְגַנְתָּ.

⁶ **tn** Heb “the plants by the river, by the mouth of the river.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “will dry up, [being] scattered, and it will vanish.”

⁸ **tn** Or perhaps, “will disappear”; cf. TEV “will be useless.”

⁹ **tn** BDB 301 s.v. יְהִוָּה suggests the meaning “white stuff” for קְהֻרִי (khori); the Qumran scroll 1QIsaa has קְהָבָרִי (khaveru), probably a Qal perfect, third plural form of קָהַר, (khur, “be white, pale”). See HALOT 299 s.v. קָהַר. The latter reading is assumed in the translation above.

¹⁰ **tn** Some interpret שָׁתּוֹתֶהָ (shatoteha) as “her foundations,” i.e., leaders, nobles. See BDB 1011 s.v. שָׁתּוֹתֶהָ. Others, on the basis of alleged cognates in Akkadian and Coptic, reposition the form שְׁתִּיכְתָּהָ (she’itteha) and translate “her weavers.” See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:370.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “crushed.” Emotional distress is the focus of the context (see vv. 8-9, 10b).

¹² **tn** Heb “sad of soul”; cf. NIV, NLT “sick at heart.”

¹³ **tn** Or “certainly the officials of Zoan are fools.” נָבָּן (‘akh) can carry the sense, “only, nothing but,” or “certainly, surely.”

one well-versed in the writings of the ancient kings?”¹⁴

19:12 But where, oh where, are your wise men?¹⁵

Let them tell you, let them find out what the LORD who commands armies has planned for Egypt.

19:13 The officials of Zoan are fools, the officials of Memphis¹⁶ are misled; the rulers¹⁷ of her tribes lead Egypt astray.

19:14 The LORD has made them undiscerning,¹⁸

they lead Egypt astray in all she does, so that she is like a drunk sliding around in his own vomit.¹⁹

19:15 Egypt will not be able to do a thing, head or tail, shoots and stalk.²⁰

19:16 At that time²¹ the Egyptians²² will be like women.²³ They will tremble and fear because the LORD who commands armies brandishes his fist against them.²⁴ **19:17** The land of Judah will humiliate Egypt. Everyone who hears about Judah will be afraid because of what the LORD who commands armies is planning to do to them.²⁵

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “A son of wise men am I, a son of ancient kings.” The term בֵּן (ben, “son of”) could refer to literal descent, but many understand the word, at least in the first line, in its idiomatic sense of “member [of a guild].” See HALOT 138 s.v. בֵּן and J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:371. If this is the case, then one can take the word in a figurative sense in the second line as well, the “son of ancient kings” being one devoted to their memory as preserved in their literature.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “Where are they? Where are your wise men?” The juxtaposition of the interrogative pronouns is emphatic. See HALOT 38 s.v. יְהִוָּה.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “Noph” (so KJV); most recent English versions substitute the more familiar “Memphis.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “the cornerstone.” The singular form should be emended to a plural.

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “the Lord has mixed into her midst a spirit of blindness.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “like the going astray of a drunkard in his vomit.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “And there will not be for Egypt a deed, which head and tail, shoot and stalk can do.” In 9:14-15 the phrase “head or tail” refers to leaders and prophets, respectively. This interpretation makes good sense in this context, where both leaders and advisers (probably including prophets and diviners) are mentioned (vv. 11-14). Here, as in 9:14, “shoots and stalk” picture a reed, which symbolizes the leadership of the nation in its entirety.

²¹ **tn** Heb “in that day” (so KJV), likewise at the beginning of vv. 18 and 19.

²² **tn** Heb “Egypt,” which stands by metonymy for the country’s inhabitants.

²³ **sn** As the rest of the verse indicates, the point of the simile is that the Egyptians will be relatively weak physically and will wilt in fear before the Lord’s onslaught.

²⁴ **tn** Heb “and he will tremble and be afraid because of the brandishing of the hand of the Lord who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts], which he brandishes against him.” Since according to the imagery here the Lord’s “hand” is raised as a weapon against the Egyptians, the term “fist” has been used in the translation.

²⁵ **tn** Heb “and the land of Judah will become [a source of] shame to Egypt, everyone to whom one mentions it [i.e., the land of Judah] will fear because of the plan of the Lord who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts] which he is planning against him.”

19:18 At that time five cities⁴ in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD who commands armies. One will be called the City of the Sun.² **19:19** At that time there will be an altar for the LORD in the middle of the land of Egypt, as well as a sacred pillar³ dedicated to the LORD at its border. **19:20** It⁴ will become a visual reminder in the land of Egypt of⁵ the LORD who commands armies. When they cry out to the LORD because of oppressors, he will send them a deliverer and defender⁶ who will rescue them. **19:21** The LORD will reveal himself to the Egyptians, and they⁷ will acknowledge the LORD's authority⁸ at that time.⁹ They will present sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and fulfill them. **19:22** The LORD will strike Egypt, striking and then healing them. They will turn to the LORD and he will listen to their prayers¹⁰ and heal them.

19:23 At that time there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will visit Egypt, and the Egyptians will visit Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together.¹¹ **19:24** At that time Israel will be the third member of the group, along with Egypt and Assyria, and will be a recipient of blessing¹² in the earth.¹³ **19:25** The LORD who commands armies will

1 sn The significance of the number “five” in this context is uncertain. For a discussion of various proposals, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:376–77.

2 tc The Hebrew text has שִׁיר הַהֲרֵךְ (*'ir haherec*, “City of Destruction”; cf. NASB, NIV) but this does not fit the positive emphasis of vv. 18–22. The Qumran scroll 1QIsaa and some medieval Hebrew MSS read שִׁיר הַחֲקָרֶה (*'ir hakheres*, “City of the Sun,” i.e., Heliopolis). This reading also finds support from Symmachus’ Greek version, the Targum, and the Vulgate. See HALOT 257 s.v. שִׁיר and HALOT 355 s.v. חֲקָרֶה.

3 tn This word is sometimes used of a sacred pillar associated with pagan worship, but here it is associated with the worship of the LORD.

4 tn The masculine noun מִזְבֵּחַ (*mizbeakh*, “altar”) in v. 19 is probably the subject of the masculine singular verb הָיָה (*hayah*) rather than the feminine noun מִזְבֵּחַ (*matsveah*, “sacred pillar”), also in v. 19.

5 tn Heb “a sign and a witness to the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts] in the land of Egypt.”

6 tn בַּגְדָּה (*rav*) is a substantival participle (from בִּגְדָּה, *riv*) meaning “one who strives, contends.”

7 tn Heb “Egypt.” For stylistic reasons, to avoid redundancy, the present translation uses the pronoun (“they”) here.

8 tn Heb “will know the LORD.”

9 tn Heb “in that day” (so KJV), likewise at the beginning of vv. 23 and 24.

10 tn Heb “he will be entreated.” The Niphal has a tolerative sense here, “he will allow himself to be entreated.”

11 tn The text could be translated, “and Egypt will serve Assyria” (cf. NAB), but subjugation of one nation to the other does not seem to be a theme in vv. 23–25. Rather the nations are viewed as equals before the LORD (v. 25). Therefore it is better to take נִסְעָה (*et*) in v. 23b as a preposition, “together with,” rather than the accusative sign. The names of the two countries are understood to refer by metonymy to their respective inhabitants.

12 tn Heb “will be a blessing” (so NCV).

13 tn Or “land” (KJV, NAB).

pronounce a blessing over the earth, saying,¹⁴ “Blessed be my people, Egypt, and the work of my hands, Assyria, and my special possession,¹⁵ Israel!”

20:1 The LORD revealed the following message during the year in which King Sargon of Assyria sent his commanding general to Ashdod, and he fought against it and captured it.¹⁶ **20:2** At that time the LORD announced through¹⁷ Isaiah son of Amoz: “Go, remove the sackcloth from your waist and take your sandals off your feet.” He did as instructed and walked around in undergarments¹⁸ and barefoot. **20:3** Later the LORD explained, “In the same way that my servant Isaiah has walked around in undergarments and barefoot for the past three years, as an object lesson and omen pertaining to Egypt and Cush, **20:4** so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, both young and old. They will be in undergarments and barefoot, with the buttocks exposed; the Egyptians will be publicly humiliated.¹⁹ **20:5** Those who put their hope in Cush and took pride in Egypt will be afraid and embarrassed.²⁰ **20:6** At that time²¹ those who live on this coast²² will say, ‘Look what has happened to our source of hope to whom we fled for help, expecting to be rescued from the king of Assyria! How can we escape now?’”

The Lord Will Judge Babylon

21:1 Here is a message about the Desert by the Sea:²³

Like strong winds blowing in the south,²⁴ one invades from the desert,

14 tn Heb “which the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts] will bless [it], saying.” The third masculine singular suffix on the form בָּרוֹךְ (*berakho*) should probably be emended to a third feminine singular suffix בָּרוֹךְהָה (*berakhah*), for its antecedent would appear to be the feminine noun אָרֶץ (*erets*, “earth”) at the end of v. 24.

15 tn Or “my inheritance” (NAB, NASB, NIV).

16 tn Heb “In the year the commanding general came to Ashdod, when Sargon king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and captured it.”

17 tn This probably refers to the Assyrian campaign against Philistia in 712 or 711 B.C.

18 tn Heb “spoke by the hand of.”

19 tn The word used here (אַרְמָה, *'arom*) sometimes means “naked,” but here it appears to mean simply “lightly dressed,” i.e., stripped to one’s undergarments. See HALOT 883 s.v. אַרְמָה. The term also occurs in vv. 3, 4.

20 tn Heb “and they will be afraid and embarrassed because of Cush their hope and Egypt their beauty.”

21 tn Heb “in that day” (so KJV).

22 sn This probably refers to the coastal region of Philistia (cf. TEV).

23 sn The phrase is quite cryptic, at least to the modern reader. Verse 9 seems to indicate that this message pertains to Babylon. Southern Mesopotamia was known as the Sealand in ancient times, because of its proximity to the Persian Gulf. Perhaps the reference to Babylon as a “desert” foreshadows the destruction that would overtake the city, making it like a desolate desert.

24 tn Or “in the Negev” (NASB).

from a land that is feared.

21:2 I have received a distressing message:¹

“The deceiver deceives,
the destroyer destroys.
Attack, you Elamites!

Lay siege, you Medes!

I will put an end to all the groaning!”²

21:3 For this reason my stomach churns;³
cramps overwhelm me
like the contractions of a woman in labor.
I am disturbed⁴ by what I hear,
horrified by what I see.

21:4 My heart palpitates,⁵

I shake in fear;⁶
the twilight I desired

has brought me terror.

21:5 Arrange the table,
lay out⁷ the carpet,
eat and drink!⁸

Get up, you officers,
smear oil on the shields!⁹

21:6 For this is what the sovereign master¹⁰
has told me:

“Go, post a guard!
He must report what he sees.

21:7 When he sees chariots,

teams of horses;¹¹

riders on donkeys,

riders on camels,

he must be alert,

very alert.”

21:8 Then the guard¹² cries out:

“On the watchtower, O sovereign master,¹³
I stand all day long;

at my post

I am stationed every night.

¹ tn Heb “a severe revelation has been related to me.”

² sn This is often interpreted to mean “all the groaning” that Babylon has caused others.

³ tn Heb “my waist is filled with shaking [or ‘anguish’].”

⁴ tn Or perhaps, “bent over [in pain]”; cf. NRSV “I am bowed down.”

⁵ tn Heb “wanders,” perhaps here, “is confused.”

⁶ tn Heb “shuddering terrifies me.”

⁷ tn The precise meaning of the verb in this line is debated. Some prefer to derive the form from the homonymic פָּקַד (tsafoh, “keep watch”) and translate “post a guard” (cf. KJV “watch in the watchtower”; ASV “set the watch”).

⁸ tn The verbal forms in the first three lines are infinitives absolute, which are functioning here as finite verbs. It is uncertain if the forms should have an imperative or indicative/descriptive force here.

⁹ sn Smearing the shields with oil would make them more flexible and effective in battle. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:394.

¹⁰ tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in vv. 8, 16 is אֲדֹנָי (‘adonay).

¹¹ tn Or “a pair of horsemen.”

¹² tn The Hebrew text has, “the lion,” but this makes little sense here. ארֵה (aryeh, “lion”) is probably a corruption of an original הָרָאֵה (haro’eh, “the one who sees”), i.e., the guard mentioned previously in v. 6.

¹³ tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדֹנָי (‘adonay). Some translations take this to refer to the Lord (cf. NAB, NASB, NRSV), while others take it to refer to the guard’s human master (“my lord”; cf. NIV, NLT).

21:9 Look what’s coming!

A charioteer,

a team of horses.”¹⁴

When questioned, he replies,¹⁵

“Babylon has fallen, fallen!

All the idols of her gods lie shattered on
the ground!”

21:10 O my downtrodden people, crushed
like stalks on the threshing floor,¹⁶
what I have heard
from the LORD who commands armies,
the God of Israel,
I have reported to you.

Bad News for Seir

21:11 Here is a message about Dumah:¹⁷

Someone calls to me from Seir,¹⁸

“Watchman, what is left of the night?

Watchman, what is left of the night?”¹⁹

21:12 The watchman replies,
“Morning is coming, but then night.²⁰
If you want to ask, ask;
come back again.”²¹

The Lord Will Judge Arabia

21:13 Here is a message about Arabia:
In the thicket of Arabia you spend the
night,
you Dedanite caravans.

21:14 Bring out some water for the thirsty.
You who live in the land of Tema,
bring some food for the fugitives.

21:15 For they flee from the swords –
from the drawn sword
and from the battle-ready bow
and from the severity of the battle.

21:16 For this is what the sovereign master²² has told me: “Within exactly one year²³ all the splendor of Kedar will come to an end.

¹⁴ tn Or “[with] teams of horses,” or perhaps, “with a pair of horsemen.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “and he answered and said” (so KJV, ASV).

¹⁶ tn Heb “My trampled one, and the son of the threshing floor.”

¹⁷ tn The noun דֻּמָּה (dumah) means “silence,” but here it is a proper name, probably referring to a site in northern Arabia or to the nation of Edom. See BDB 189 s.v. II דֻּמָּה. If Dumah was an area in northern Arabia, it would be of interest to the Edomites because of its strategic position on trade routes which they used. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:398.

¹⁸ tn Seir is another name for Edom. See BDB 973 s.v. שֵׂעִיר.

¹⁹ tn The “night” probably here symbolizes distress and difficult times. See BDB 539 s.v. לְלֵגֶת.

²⁰ tn Dumah will experience some relief, but it will be short-lived as night returns.

²¹ tn The point of the watchman’s final instructions (“if you want to ask, ask; come again”) is unclear. Perhaps they are included to add realism to the dramatic portrayal. The watchman sends the questioner away with the words, “Feel free to come back and ask again.”

²² tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדֹנָי (‘adonay).

²³ tn Heb “in still a year, like the years of a hired worker.” See the note at 16:14.

21:17 Just a handful of archers, the warriors of Kedar, will be left.¹ Indeed,² the LORD God of Israel has spoken.

The Lord Will Judge Jerusalem

22:1 Here is a message about the Valley of Vision:³

What is the reason⁴
that all of you go up to the rooftops?
22:2 The noisy city is full of raucous sounds;
the town is filled with revelry.⁵
Your slain were not cut down by the sword;
they did not die in battle.⁶

22:3⁷ All your leaders ran away together – they fled to a distant place; all your refugees⁸ were captured together – they were captured without a single arrow being shot.⁹

22:4 So I say:
“Don’t look at me!¹⁰
I am weeping bitterly.
Don’t try¹¹ to console me concerning the destruction of my defenseless people.”¹²

22:5 For the sovereign master,¹³ the LORD who commands armies,

¹ tn Heb “and the remnant of the number of the bow, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be few.”

² tn Or “for” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

³ tn The following message pertains to Jerusalem. The significance of referring to the city as *the Valley of Vision* is uncertain. Perhaps the Hinnom Valley is in view, but why it is associated with a prophetic revelatory “vision” is not entirely clear. Maybe the Hinnom Valley is called this because the destruction that will take place there is the focal point of this prophetic message (see v. 5).

⁴ tn Heb “What to you, then?”

⁵ tn Heb “the boisterous town.” The phrase is parallel to “the noisy city” in the preceding line.

⁶ sn Apparently they died from starvation during the siege that preceded the final conquest of the city. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:409.

⁷ tn Verse 3 reads literally, “All your leaders ran away, apart from a bow they were captured, all your found ones were captured together, to a distant place they fled.” J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:403, n. 3) suggests that the lines of the verse are arranged chiastically; lines 1 and 4 go together, while lines 2 and 3 are parallel. To translate the lines in the order they appear in the Hebrew text is misleading to the English reader, who is likely unfamiliar with, or at least insensitive to, chiastic parallelism. Consequently, the translation above arranges the lines as follows: line 1 (Hebrew) = line 1 (in translation); line 2 (Hebrew) = line 4 (in translation); line 3 (Hebrew) = line 3 (in translation); line 4 (Hebrew) = line 2 (in translation).

⁸ tn Heb “all your found ones.” To achieve tighter parallelism (see “your leaders”) some prefer to emend the form to *עֲמִתָּסֵיְךָ* (*ammitsayikh*, “your strong ones”) or to *עֲמִתָּסֵיְךָ* (*ne’ematsayikh*, “your strengthened ones”).

⁹ tn Heb “apart from [i.e., without] a bow they were captured”; cf. NAB, NRSV “without the use of a bow.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “look away from me” (so KJV, ASV, NRSV).

¹¹ tn Heb “don’t hurry” (so NCV).

¹² tn Heb “the daughter of my people.” “Daughter” is here used metaphorically to express the speaker’s emotional attachment to his people, as well as their vulnerability and weakness.

¹³ tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here and in vv. 12, 14, 15 is יְהֹוָה (*adonay*).

has planned a day of panic, defeat, and confusion.¹⁴

In the Valley of Vision¹⁵ people shout¹⁶ and cry out to the hill.¹⁷

22:6 The Elamites picked up the quiver, and came with chariots and horsemen,¹⁸ the men of Kir¹⁹ prepared²⁰ the shield.²¹

22:7 Your very best valleys were full of chariots;²²

horsemen confidently took their positions²³ at the gate.

22:8 They²⁴ removed the defenses²⁵ of Judah.

At that time²⁶ you looked for the weapons in the House of the Forest.²⁷

22:9 You saw the many breaks in the walls of the City of David;²⁸

you stored up water in the lower pool.
22:10 You counted the houses in Jerusalem,²⁹

and demolished houses so you could have material to reinforce the wall.³⁰

¹⁴ tn Heb “For [there is] a day of panic, and trampling, and confusion for the master, the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts].”

¹⁵ tn The traditional accentuation of the Hebrew text suggests that this phrase goes with what precedes.

¹⁶ tn The precise meaning of this statement is unclear. Some take *רַגֶּל* (*gir*) as “wall” and interpret the verb to mean “tear down.” However, tighter parallelism (note the reference to crying for help in the next line) is achieved if one takes both the verb and noun from a root, attested in Ugaritic and Arabic, meaning “make a sound.” See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:404, n. 5.

¹⁷ sn Perhaps “the hill” refers to the temple mount.

¹⁸ tn Heb “[with] the chariots of men, horsemen.”

¹⁹ sn A distant region in the direction of Mesopotamia; see Amos 1:5; 9:7.

²⁰ tn Heb “Kir uncovers” (so NAB, NIV).

²¹ sn The Elamites and men of Kir may here symbolize a fierce army from a distant land. If this oracle anticipates a Babylonian conquest of the city (see 39:5-7), then the Elamites and men of Kir are perhaps viewed here as mercenaries in the Babylonian army. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:410.

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

²³ tn Heb “taking a stand, take their stand.” The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following finite verb. The translation attempts to bring out this emphasis with the adverb “confidently.”

²⁴ tn Heb “he,” i.e., the enemy invader. NASB, by its capitalization of the pronoun, takes this to refer to the LORD.

²⁵ tn Heb “covering.”

²⁶ tn Heb “in that day” (so KJV), likewise at the beginning of v. 12.

²⁷ sn Perhaps this refers to a royal armory, or to Solomon’s “House of the Forest of Lebanon,” where weapons may have been kept (see 1 Kgs 10:16-17).

²⁸ tn Heb “the breaks of the City of David, you saw that they were many.”

²⁹ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

³⁰ tn Heb “you demolished the houses to fortify the wall.”

22:11 You made a reservoir between the two walls
for the water of the old pool –
but you did not trust in¹ the one who made it;²
you did not depend on³ the one who formed it long ago!

22:12 At that time the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, called for weeping and mourning, for shaved heads and sackcloth.⁴

22:13 But look, there is outright celebration!⁵

You say, “Kill the ox and slaughter the sheep,
eat meat and drink wine.
Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”⁶

22:14 The LORD who commands armies told me this:⁷ “Certainly this sin will not be forgiven as long as you live,”⁸ says the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies.

22:15 This is what the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, says: “Go visit this administrator, Shebna, who supervises the palace,⁹ and tell him:¹⁰

22:16 ‘What right do you have to be here?
What relatives do you have buried here?¹¹
Why¹² do you chisel out a tomb for yourself here?

He chisels out his burial site in an elevated place,

he carves out his tomb on a cliff.

22:17 Look, the LORD will throw you far away,¹³ you mere man!¹⁴

¹ tn Heb “look at”; NAB, NRSV “did not look to.”

² tn The antecedent of the third feminine singular suffix here and in the next line is unclear. The closest feminine noun is “pool” in the first half of the verse. Perhaps this “old pool” symbolizes the entire city, which had prospered because of God’s provision and protection through the years.

³ tn Heb “did not see.”

⁴ tn Heb “for baldness and the wearing of sackcloth.” See the note at 15:2.

⁵ tn Heb “happiness and joy.”

⁶ tn The prophet here quotes what the fatalistic people are saying. The introductory “you say” is supplied in the translation for clarification; the concluding verb “we die” makes it clear the people are speaking. The six verbs translated as imperatives are actually infinitives absolute, functioning here as finite verbs.

⁷ tn Heb “it was revealed in my ears [by?] the Lord who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts].”

⁸ tn Heb “Certainly this sin will not be atoned for until you die.” This does not imply that their death will bring atonement; rather it emphasizes that their sin is unpardonable. The statement has the form of an oath.

⁹ tn Heb “who is over the house” (so ASV); NASB “who is in charge of the royal household.”

¹⁰ tn The words “and tell him” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹¹ tn Heb “What to you here? And who to you here?” The point of the second question is not entirely clear. The interpretation reflected in the translation is based on the following context, which suggests that Shebna has no right to think of himself so highly and arrange such an extravagant burial place for himself.

¹² tn Heb “that you chisel out.”

¹³ tn Heb “will throw you with a throwing.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “O man” (so NASB); NAB “mortal man”; NRSV

He will wrap you up tightly.¹⁵

22:18 He will wind you up tightly into a ball
and throw you into a wide, open land.¹⁶
There you will die,
and there with you will be your impressive chariots,¹⁷
which bring disgrace to the house of your master.¹⁸

22:19 I will remove you from¹⁹ your office;
you will be thrown down²⁰ from your position.

22:20 “At that time²¹ I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah. **22:21** I will put your robe on him, tie your belt around him, and transfer your authority to him.²² He will become a protector of²³ the residents of Jerusalem and of the people²⁴ of Judah. **22:22** I will place the key²⁵ to the house of David on his shoulder. When he opens the door, no one can close it; when he closes the door, no one can open it. **22:23** I will fasten him like a peg into a solid place;²⁶ he will bring honor and respect to his father’s family.²⁷ **22:24** His father’s family will gain increasing prominence because of him,²⁸ including the offspring and the offshoots.²⁹ All the small containers, including the bowls and all the jars will hang from this peg.³⁰

“my fellow.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “and the one who wraps you [will] wrap.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “and he will tightly [or “surely”] wind you [with] winding like a ball, to a land broad of hands [i.e., “sides”].”

¹⁷ tn Heb “and there the chariots of your splendor.”

¹⁸ sn Apparently the reference to chariots alludes to Shebna’s excessive pride, which in turn brings disgrace to the royal family.

¹⁹ tn Heb “I will push you away from.”

²⁰ tn Heb “he will throw you down.” The shift from the first to third person is peculiar and abrupt, but certainly not unprecedented in Hebrew poetry. See GKC 462 §144.p. The third person may be indefinite (“one will throw you down”), in which case the passive translation is justified.

²¹ tn Or “in that day.” The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

²² tn Heb “and your dominion I will place in his hand.”

²³ tn Heb “a father to.” The Hebrew term אב (*av*, “father”) is here used metaphorically of one who protects and supports those under his care and authority, like a father does his family. For another example of this metaphorical use of the word, see Job 29:16.

²⁴ tn Heb “house.”

²⁵ sn This may refer to a literal insignia worn by the chief administrator. Even so, it would still symbolize the administrator’s authority to grant or exclude access to the king. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:422.

²⁶ sn The metaphor depicts how secure his position will be.

²⁷ tn Heb “and he will become a glorious throne for the house of his father.”

²⁸ tn Heb “and all the glory of the house of his father they will hang on him.” The Lord returns to the peg metaphor of v. 23a. Eliakim’s secure position of honor will bring benefits and jobs to many others in the family.

²⁹ tn The precise meaning and derivation of this word are uncertain. Cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV “the issue”; CEV “relatives.”

³⁰ tn Heb “all the small vessels, from the vessels that are bowls to all the vessels that are jars.” The picture is that of a single peg holding the weight of all kinds of containers hung from it.

22:25 “At that time,”¹ says the LORD who commands armies, “the peg fastened into a solid place will come loose. It will be cut off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off.”² Indeed,³ the LORD has spoken.

The Lord Will Judge Tyre

23:1 Here is a message about Tyre:

Wail, you large ships,⁴
for the port is too devastated to enter!⁵
From the land of Cyprus⁶ this news is
announced to them.

23:2 Lament,⁷ you residents of the coast,
you merchants of Sidon⁸ who travel over
the sea,
whose agents sail over **23:3** the deep wa-
ters!⁹

Grain from the Shihor region,¹⁰
crops grown near the Nile¹¹ she receives,¹²
she is the trade center¹³ of the nations.

23:4 Be ashamed, O Sidon,
for the sea¹⁴ says this, O fortress of the
sea:

“I have not gone into labor
or given birth;
I have not raised young men
or brought up young women.”¹⁵

^{1 tn} Or “In that day” (KJV).

^{2 sn} Eliakim’s authority, though seemingly secure, will eventually be removed, and with it his family’s prominence.

^{3 tn} Or “for” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

^{4 tn} Heb “ships of Tarshish.” This probably refers to large ships either made in or capable of traveling to the distant western port of Tarshish.

^{5 tc} The Hebrew text reads literally, “for it is destroyed, from a house, from entering.” The translation assumes that the *mem* (ם) on *בֵּית* (*bayit*) was originally an enclitic *mem* suffixed to the preceding verb. This assumption allows one to take *בֵּית* as the subject of the preceding verb. It is used in a metaphorical sense for the port city of Tyre. The preposition *מִן* (מִן) prefixed to *בַּיִת* (*bo'*) indicates negative consequence: “so that no one can enter.” See BDB 583 s.v. מִן 7.b.

^{6 tn} Heb “the Kittim,” a designation for the people of Cyprus. See HALOT 504-05 s.v. קִטִּים.

^{7 tn} Or “keep quiet”; NAB “Silence!”

^{8 map} For location see Map1-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

^{9 tc} The Hebrew text (23:2b-3a) reads literally, “merchant of Sidon, the one who crosses the sea, they filled you, and on the deep waters.” Instead of מִילְאָךְ (*mil'akh*, “they filled you”) the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a reads לִילְאָכָר (*lil'akh*, “your messengers”). The translation assumes an emendation of מִילְאָךְ to מִלְאָךְ to מַלְאָךְ (*mal'akhav*, “his messengers”), taking the vav (ו) on בְּמִלְאָכָר (*beb'mil'akhav*) as improperly placed; instead it should be the final letter of the preceding word.

^{10 tn} Heb “seed of Shihor.” “Shihor” probably refers to the east branch of the Nile. See Jer 2:18 and BDB 1009 s.v. שִׁיחֹר.

^{11 tn} Heb “the harvest of the Nile.”

^{12 tn} Heb “[is] her revenue.”

^{13 tn} Heb “merchandise”; KJV, ASV “a mart of nations”; NLT “the merchandise mart of the world.”

^{14 tn} J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:430-31) sees here a reference to Yam, the Canaanite god of the sea. He interprets the phrase קֶשֶׁת הַיָּם (*qa'shet hayam*, “fortress of the sea”) as a title of Yam, translating “Mighty One of the Sea.” A more traditional view is that the phrase refers to Sidon.

^{15 tn} Or “virgins” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB).

^{sn} The sea is personified here as a lamenting childless woman. The foreboding language anticipates the following announcement of Tyre’s demise, viewed here as a child of the

23:5 When the news reaches Egypt,
they will be shaken by what has hap-
pened to Tyre.¹⁶

23:6 Travel to Tarshish!

Wail, you residents of the coast!

23:7 Is this really your boisterous city,¹⁷
whose origins are in the distant past,¹⁸
and whose feet led her to a distant land to
reside?

23:8 Who planned this for royal Tyre,¹⁹
whose merchants are princes,
whose traders are the dignitaries²⁰ of the
earth?

23:9 The LORD who commands armies
planned it –
to dishonor the pride that comes from all
her beauty,²¹
to humiliate all the dignitaries of the
earth.

23:10 Daughter Tarshish, travel back to
your land, as one crosses the Nile;
there is no longer any marketplace in
Tyre.²²

23:11 The LORD stretched out his hand
over the sea,²³
he shook kingdoms;
he²⁴ gave the order
to destroy Canaan’s fortresses.²⁵

23:12 He said,
“You will no longer celebrate,
oppressed²⁶ virgin daughter Sidon!
Get up, travel to Cyprus,

sea, as it were.

^{16 tn} Heb “they will be in pain at the report of Tyre.”

^{17 tn} Heb “Is this to you, boisterous one?” The pronoun “you” is masculine plural, like the imperatives in v. 6, so it is likely addressed to the Egyptians and residents of the coast. “Boisterous one” is a feminine singular form, probably referring to the personified city of Tyre.

^{18 tn} Heb “in the days of antiquity [is] her beginning.”

^{19 tn} The precise meaning of הַמְנַاطֵּרָה (*hamna'atirah*) is uncertain. The form is a Hiphil participle from מַנְטֵר (*'atar*), a denominative verb derived from מַטֵּר (*'atarah*, “crown, wreath”). The participle may mean “one who wears a crown” or “one who distributes crowns.” In either case, Tyre’s prominence in the international political arena is in view.

^{20 tn} Heb “the honored” (so NASB, NRSV); NIV “renowned.”

^{21 tn} Heb “the pride of all the beauty.”

^{22 tc} This meaning of this verse is unclear. The Hebrew text reads literally, “Cross over your land, like the Nile, daughter of Tarshish, there is no more waistband.” The translation assumes an emendation of מַזְקָה (*mezakh*, “waistband”) to מַחְזָה (*makholz*, “harbor, marketplace”); see Ps 107:30). The term צָבֵר (*avar*, “cross over”) is probably used here of traveling over the water (as in v. 6). The command is addressed to personified Tarshish, who here represents her merchants. The Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a has עֲבֵדִי (*ivri*, “cross over”). In this case one might translate “Cultivate your land, like they do the Nile region” (cf. NIV, CEV). The point would be that the people of Tarshish should turn to agriculture because they will no longer be able to get what they need through the marketplace in Tyre.

^{23 tn} Heb “his hand he stretched out over the sea.”

^{24 tn} Heb “the Lord.” For stylistic reasons the pronoun (“he”) has been used in the translation here.

^{25 tn} Heb “concerning Canaan, to destroy her fortresses.” NIV, NLT translate “Canaan” as “Phoenicia” here.

^{26 tn} Or “violated, raped,” the point being that Daughter Sidon has lost her virginity in the most brutal manner possible.

but you will find no relief there.”¹

23:13 Look at the land of the Chaldeans, these people who have lost their identity!²

The Assyrians have made it a home for wild animals.

They erected their siege towers,³ demolished⁴ its fortresses, and turned it into a heap of ruins.⁵

23:14 Wail, you large ships,⁶ for your fortress is destroyed!

23:15 At that time⁷ Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years,⁸ the typical life span of a king.⁹ At the end of seventy years Tyre will try to attract attention again, like the prostitute in the popular song.¹⁰

23:16 “Take the harp, go through the city, forgotten prostitute! Play it well, play lots of songs, so you’ll be noticed!”¹¹

23:17 At the end of seventy years¹² the LORD will revive¹³ Tyre. She will start making money again by selling her services to all the earth’s kingdoms.¹⁴ **23:18** Her profits and earnings will be set apart for the LORD. They will not be stored up or accumulated, for her profits will be given to those who live in the LORD’s presence and will be used to purchase large quantities of food and beautiful clothes.¹⁵

¹ tn Heb “[to the] Kittim, get up, cross over; even there there will be no rest for you.” On “Kittim” see the note on “Cyprus” at v. 1.

² tn Heb “this people [that] is not.”

³ tn For the meaning of this word, see HALOT 118 s.v. *

⁴ tn Or “laid bare.” For the meaning of this word, see HALOT 889 s.v. נָהַר.

⁵ sn This verse probably refers to the Assyrian destruction of Babylon.

⁶ tn Heb “ships of Tarshish.” See the note at v. 1.

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

⁸ sn The number seventy is probably used in a stereotypical, nonliteral sense here to indicate a long period of time that satisfies completely the demands of God’s judgment.

⁹ tn Heb “like the days of a king.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “At the end of seventy years it will be for Tyre like the song of the prostitute.”

¹¹ tn Heb “so you will be remembered.”

¹² tn The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

¹³ tn Heb “visit [with favor]” (cf. KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); NIV “will deal with.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “and she will return to her [prostitute’s] wages and engage in prostitution with all the kingdoms of the earth on the face of the earth.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “for eating to fullness and for beautiful covering[s].”

sn The point of this verse, which in its blatant nationalism comes precariously close to comparing the LORD to one who controls or manages a prostitute, is that Tyre will become a subject of Israel and her God. Tyre’s commercial profits will be used to enrich the LORD’s people.

The Lord Will Judge the Earth

24:1 Look, the LORD is ready to devastate the earth and leave it in ruins; he will mar its surface and scatter its inhabitants.

24:2 Everyone will suffer – the priest as well as the people,¹⁶ the master as well as the servant,¹⁷ the elegant lady as well as the female attendant,¹⁸

the seller as well as the buyer,¹⁹ the borrower as well as the lender,²⁰ the creditor as well as the debtor.²¹

24:3 The earth will be completely devastated and thoroughly ransacked.

For the LORD has decreed this judgment.²²

24:4 The earth²³ dries up²⁴ and withers; the world shrivels up and withers; the prominent people of the earth²⁵ fade away.

24:5 The earth is defiled by²⁶ its inhabitants,²⁷ for they have violated laws, disregarded the regulation,²⁸ and broken the permanent treaty.²⁹

¹⁶ tn Heb “and it will be like the people, like the priest.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “like the servant, like his master.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “like the female servant, like her mistress.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “like the buyer, like the seller.”

²⁰ tn Heb “like the lender, like the borrower.”

²¹ tn Heb “like the creditor, just as the one to whom he lends.”

²² tn Heb “for the LORD has spoken this word.”

²³ tn Some prefer to read “land” here, but the word pair תֵּבֶן/אָמֵן [erets/level] [see the corresponding term in the parallel line] elsewhere clearly designates the earth/world (see 1 Sam 2:8; 1 Chr 16:30; Job 37:12; Pss 19:4; 24:1; 33:8; 89:11; 90:2; 96:13; 98:9; Prov 8:26, 31; Isa 14:16–17; 34:1; Jer 10:12; 51:15; Lam 4:12). According to L. Stadelmann, תֵּבֶן designates “the habitable part of the world” (*The Hebrew Conception of the World* [AnBib], 130).

²⁴ tn Or “mourns” (BDB 5 s.v. אָנַג). HALOT 6–7 lists the homonyms I אָנַג (“mourn”) and II אָנַב (“dry up”). They propose the second here on the basis of parallelism.

²⁵ tn Heb “the height of the people of the earth.” The translation assumes an emendation of the singular form מְרוֹם (mrō‘om, “height of”) to the plural construct מְרוּמִים (mrū‘om, “high ones of”; note the plural verb at the beginning of the line), and understands the latter as referring to the prominent people of human society.

²⁶ tn Heb “beneath”; cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV “under”; NAB “because of.”

²⁷ sn Isa 26:21 suggests that the earth’s inhabitants defiled the earth by shedding the blood of their fellow human beings. See also Num 35:33–34, which assumes that bloodshed defiles a land.

²⁸ tn Heb “moved past [the?] regulation.”

²⁹ tn Or “everlasting covenant” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “the ancient covenant”; CEV “their agreement that was to last forever.”

sn For a lengthy discussion of the identity of this covenant/treaty, see R. Chisholm, “The ‘Everlasting Covenant’ and the ‘City of Chaos’: Intentional Ambiguity and Irony in Isaiah 24,” *CTR* 6 (1993): 237–53. In this context, where judgment comes upon both the pagan nations and God’s covenant community, the phrase “permanent treaty” is intentionally ambiguous. For the nations this treaty is the Noahic mandate of Gen 9:1–7 with its specific stipulations and central regula-

24:6 So a treaty curse¹ devours the earth; its inhabitants pay for their guilt.² This is why the inhabitants of the earth disappear,³ and are reduced to just a handful of people.⁴

24:7 The new wine dries up, the vines shrivel up, all those who like to celebrate⁵ groan. **24:8** The happy sound⁶ of the tambourines stops, the revelry of those who celebrate comes to a halt, the happy sound of the harp ceases. **24:9** They no longer sing and drink wine;⁷ the beer tastes bitter to those who drink it. **24:10** The ruined town⁸ is shattered; all of the houses are shut up tight.⁹ **24:11** They howl in the streets because of what happened to the wine;¹⁰ all joy turns to sorrow;¹¹

tion (Gen 9:7). By shedding blood, the warlike nations violated this treaty, which promotes population growth and prohibits murder. For Israel, which was also guilty of bloodshed (see Isa 1:15, 21; 4:4), this “permanent treaty” would refer more specifically to the Mosaic Law and its regulations prohibiting murder (Exod 20:13; Num 35:6-34), which are an extension of the Noahic mandate.

1 sn Ancient Near Eastern treaties often had “curses,” or threatened judgments, attached to them. (See Deut 28 for a biblical example of such curses.) The party or parties taking an oath of allegiance acknowledged that disobedience would activate these curses, which typically threatened loss of agricultural fertility as depicted in the following verses.

2 tn The verb נִשְׁאַמֵּן (*asham*, “be guilty”) is here used metonymically to mean “pay, suffer for one’s guilt” (see HALOT 95 s.v. נִשְׁאַמֵּן).

3 tn BDB 359 s.v. קָהָרָה derives the verb קָהָרָה (*kharu*) from קָהָרָה (*kharu*, “burn”), but HALOT 351 s.v. קָהָרָה understands a hapax legomenon קָהָרָה (*kharah*, “to diminish in number,” a homonym of קָהָרָה here, relating it to an alleged Arabic cognate meaning “to decrease.” The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a has קָהָרָה, perhaps understanding the root as קָהָרָה (*khavar*, “grow pale”; see Isa 29:22 and HALOT 299 s.v. I קָהָרָה).

4 tn Heb “and mankind is left small [in number].”

5 tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “all the joyful in heart,” but the context specifies the context as parties and drinking bouts.

6 tn Heb “the joy” (again later in this verse).

7 tn Heb “with a song they do not drink wine.”

8 tn Heb “the city of chaos” (so NAB, NASB, NRSV). Isaiah uses the term תֹּהֻלָּה (*tohlu*) rather frequently of things (like idols) that are empty and worthless (see BDB 1062 s.v.), so the word might characterize the city as rebellious or morally worthless. However, in this context, which focuses on the effects of divine judgment, it probably refers to the ruined or worthless condition in which the city is left (note the use of the word in Isa 34:11). For a discussion of the identity of this city, see R. Chisholm, “The ‘Everlasting Covenant’ and the ‘City of Chaos’: Intentional Ambiguity and Irony in Isaiah 24,” CTR 6 (1993): 237-53. In the context of universal judgment depicted in Isa 24, this city represents all the nations and cities of the world which, like Babylon of old and the powers/cities mentioned in chapters 13-23, rebel against God’s authority. Behind the stereotypical language one can detect various specific manifestations of this symbolic and paradigmatic city, including Babylon, Moab, and Jerusalem, all of which are alluded or referred to in chapters 24-27.

9 tn Heb “every house is closed up from entering.”

10 tn Heb “[there is] an outcry over the wine in the streets.”

11 tn Heb “all joy turns to evening,” the darkness of evening symbolizing distress and sorrow.

celebrations disappear from the earth.¹²

24:12 The city is left in ruins;¹³ the gate is reduced to rubble.¹⁴

24:13 This is what will happen throughout¹⁵ the earth, among the nations.

It will be like when they beat an olive tree,

and just a few olives are left at the end of the harvest.¹⁶

24:14 They¹⁷ lift their voices and shout joyfully; they praise¹⁸ the majesty of the LORD in the west.

24:15 So in the east¹⁹ extol the LORD, along the seacoasts extol²⁰ the fame²¹ of the LORD God of Israel.

24:16 From the ends of the earth we²² hear songs – the Just One is majestic.²³

But I²⁴ say, “I’m wasting away! I’m wasting away! I’m doomed!

Deceivers deceive, deceivers thoroughly deceive!”²⁵

24:17 Terror, pit, and snare are ready to overtake you inhabitants of the earth!²⁶

^{12 tn} In Heb “the joy of the earth disappears.”

^{13 tn} In Heb “and there is left in the city desolation.”

^{14 tn} In Heb “and [into] rubble the gate is crushed.”

^{15 tn} In Heb “in the midst of” (so KJV, ASV, NASB).

^{16 sn} The judgment will severely reduce the earth’s population. See v. 6.

^{17 tn} The remnant of the nations (see v. 13) may be the unspoken subject. If so, then those who have survived the judgment begin to praise God.

^{18 tn} In Heb “they yell out concerning.”

^{19 tn} The Hebrew text reads literally, “in the lights,” interpreted by some to mean “in the region of light,” referring to the east. Some scholars have suggested the emendation of בָּאַרְבָּאִים (*ba’arvaiim*) to בָּאַרְבָּאִים (*be’iyyey hayyam*, “along the seacoasts”), a phrase that is repeated in the next line. In this case, the two lines form synonymous parallelism. If one retains the MT reading (as above), “in the east” and “along the seacoasts” depict the two ends of the earth to refer to all the earth (as a merism).

^{20 tn} The word “extol” is supplied in the translation; the verb in the first line does double duty in the parallelism.

^{21 tn} In Heb “name,” which here stands for God’s reputation achieved by his mighty deeds.

^{22 tn} The identity of the subject is unclear. Apparently in vv. 15-16a an unidentified group responds to the praise they hear in the west by exhorting others to participate.

^{23 tn} In Heb “Beauty belongs to the just one.” These words may summarize the main theme of the songs mentioned in the preceding line.

^{24 tn} The prophet seems to contradict what he hears the group saying. Their words are premature because more destruction is coming.

^{25 tn} In Heb “and [with] deception deceivers deceive.”

^{26 tn} Verse 16b is a classic example of Hebrew wordplay. In the first line (“I’m wasting away...”) four consecutive words end with *hireq yod* (יָ); in the second line all forms are derived from the root בָּגָד (*bagad*). The repetition of sound draws attention to the prophet’s lament.

^{27 tn} In Heb “[are] upon you, O inhabitant of the earth.” The first line of v. 17 provides another classic example of Hebrew wordplay. The names of the three instruments of judgment (פֶּקַד, פְּקַדְתָּךְ, פְּקַדְתָּךְ [*pakhad, fakhat, fakh*]) all begin with the letters פֶּקְדָּה (*peh-khet*) and the first two end in dental consonants (נִתְ/תִּתְ, דִּתְ/תִּתְ, תִּתְ/תִּתְ). Once again the repetition of sound draws attention

24:18 The one who runs away from the sound of the terror will fall into the pit;¹ the one who climbs out of the pit, will be trapped by the snare. For the floodgates of the heavens² are opened up³ and the foundations of the earth shake.

24:19 The earth is broken in pieces, the earth is ripped to shreds, the earth shakes violently.⁴

24:20 The earth will stagger around⁵ like a drunk; it will sway back and forth like a hut in a windstorm.⁶ Its sin will weigh it down, and it will fall and never get up again.

The Lord Will Become King

24:21 At that time⁷ the LORD will punish⁸ the heavenly forces in the heavens⁹ and the earthly kings on the earth.

24:22 They will be imprisoned in a pit,¹⁰ locked up in a prison, and after staying there for a long time,¹¹ they will be punished.¹²

24:23 The full moon will be covered up,¹³

to the statement and contributes to the theme of the inescapability of judgment. As their similar-sounding names suggest, terror, pit, and snare are allies in destroying the objects of divine wrath.

¹ tn The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

² tn Heb “from the height”; KJV “from on high.”

³ sn The language reflects the account of the Noahic Flood (see Gen 7:11).

⁴ tn Once more repetition is used to draw attention to a statement. In the Hebrew text each lines ends with ‘רָאשׁ’ (*‘rets*, “earth”). Each line also uses a Hitpolel verb form from a geminate root preceded by an emphatic infinitive absolute.

⁵ tn Heb “staggering, staggers.” The Hebrew text uses the infinitive absolute before the finite verb for emphasis and sound play.

⁶ tn The words “in a windstorm” are supplied in the translation to clarify the metaphor.

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

⁸ tn Heb “visit [in] judgment.”

⁹ tn Heb “the host of the height in the height.” The “host of the height/heaven” refers to the heavenly luminaries (stars and planets, see, among others, Deut 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4-5; 2 Chr 33:3, 5) that populate the divine/heavenly assembly in mythological and prescientific Israelite thought (see Job 38:7; Isa 14:13).

¹⁰ tn Heb “they will be gathered [in] a gathering [as] a prisoner in a cistern.” It is tempting to eliminate ‘רְכֵבָה’ (*‘asefah*, “gathering”) as ditto graphic or as a gloss, but sound repetition is one of the main characteristics of the style of this section of the chapter.

¹¹ tn Heb “and after a multitude of days.”

¹² tn Heb “visited” (so KJV, ASV). This verse can mean to visit for good or for evil. The translation assumes the latter, based on v. 21a. However, BDB 823 s.v. ‘רַבָּה’ B.Niph.2 suggests the meaning “visit graciously” here, in which case one might translate “they will be released.”

¹³ tn Heb “will be ashamed.”

the bright sun¹⁴ will be darkened,¹⁵ for the LORD who commands armies will rule¹⁶ on Mount Zion in Jerusalem¹⁷ in the presence of his assembly, in majestic splendor.¹⁸

25:1 O LORD, you are my God!¹⁹ I will exalt you in praise, I will extol your fame.²⁰

For you have done extraordinary things, and executed plans made long ago exactly as you decreed.²¹

25:2 Indeed,²² you have made the city²³ into a heap of rubble, the fortified town into a heap of ruins; the fortress of foreigners²⁴ is no longer a city, it will never be rebuilt.

25:3 So a strong nation will extol you; the towns of²⁵ powerful nations will fear you.

25:4 For you are a protector for the poor, a protector for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm, a shade from the heat.

Though the breath of tyrants²⁶ is like a winter rainstorm,²⁷

25:5 like heat²⁸ in a dry land, you humble the boasting foreigners.²⁹

Just as the shadow of a cloud causes the heat to subside,³⁰ so he causes the song of tyrants to cease.³¹

¹⁴ tn Or “glow of the sun.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “will be ashamed” (so NCV).

¹⁶ tn Or “take his throne,” “become king.”

¹⁷ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁸ tn Heb “and before his elders [in] splendor.”

¹⁹ sn The prophet speaks here as one who has observed the coming judgment of the proud.

²⁰ tn Heb “name.” See the note at 24:15.

²¹ tn Heb “plans from long ago [in] faithfulness, trustworthiness.” The feminine noun אֱמֻנָה (*‘emunah*, “faithfulness”) and masculine noun אֶמֶן (*omen*, “trustworthiness”), both of which are derived from the root עֲמָן (*‘aman*), are juxtaposed to emphasize the basic idea conveyed by the synonyms. Here they describe the absolute reliability of the divine plans.

²² tn Or “For” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

²³ tn The Hebrew text has “you have made from the city.” The prefixed *mem* (*ם*) on עִיר (*‘ir*, “city”) was probably originally an ecclesiastic *mem* suffixed to the preceding verb. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:456, n. 3.

²⁴ tc Some with support from the LXX emend זָרִים (*zarim*, “foreigners”) to זָדִים (*zedim*, “the insolent”).

²⁵ tn The Hebrew text has a singular form, but it should be emended to a plural or eliminated altogether. The noun may have been accidentally copied from the preceding verse.

²⁶ tn Or perhaps, “the violent”; NIV, NRSV “the ruthless.”

²⁷ tc The Hebrew text has, “like a rainstorm of a wall,” which might be interpreted to mean, “like a rainstorm battering against a wall.” The translation assumes an emendation of קַרְבָּה (*qir*, “wall”) to קַרְבָּה (*qor*, “cold, winter”; cf. Gen 8:22). See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:457, n. 6, for discussion.

²⁸ tn Or “drought” (TEV).

²⁹ tn Heb “the tumult of foreigners.”

³⁰ tn Heb “[like] heat in the shadow of a cloud.”

³¹ tn The translation assumes that the verb בָּנֵן (*ya’aneh*) is a Hiphil imperfect from בָּנָה (*anah*, “be afflicted, humiliated”).

25:6 The LORD who commands armies will hold a banquet for all the nations on this mountain.¹
 At this banquet there will be plenty of meat and aged wine – tender meat and choicest wine.²

25:7 On this mountain he will swallow up the shroud that is over all the peoples,³ the woven covering that is over all the nations.⁴

25:8 he will swallow up death permanently.⁵

The sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from every face, and remove his people's disgrace from all the earth.

Indeed, the LORD has announced it!⁶

25:9 At that time they will say,⁷ "Look, here⁸ is our God! We waited for him and he delivered us. Here⁹ is the LORD! We waited for him. Let's rejoice and celebrate his deliverance!"

25:10 For the LORD's power will make this mountain secure.¹⁰

Moab will be trampled down where it stands,¹¹ as a heap of straw is trampled down in¹² a manure pile.

25:11 Moab¹³ will spread out its hands in the middle of it,¹⁴

In this context with "song" as object it means to "quiet" (see HALOT 853-54 s.v. נִנְהָ). Some prefer to emend the form to the second person singular, so that it will agree with the second person verb earlier in the verse. BDB 776 s.v. III הַנִּנְהָ Qal.1 understands the form as Qal, with "song" as subject, in which case one might translate "the song of tyrants will be silent." An emendation of the form to a Niphal (נִנְנֵי, ye'aneh) would yield the same translation.

1 sn That is, Mount Zion (see 24:23); cf. TEV; NLT "In Jerusalem."

2 tn Heb "And the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] will make for all the nations on this mountain a banquet of meats, a banquet of wine dregs, meats filled with marrow, dregs that are filtered."

3 tn The Hebrew text reads, "the face of the shroud, the shroud over all the nations." Some emend the second הַלֹּט (halot) to a passive participle הַלְּוָת (hallut, "that is wrapped").

4 sn The point of the imagery is unclear. Perhaps the shroud/covering referred to was associated with death in some way (see v. 8).

5 sn The image of the LORD "swallowing" death would be especially powerful, for death was viewed in Canaanite mythology and culture as a hungry enemy that swallows its victims. See the note at 5:14.

6 tn Heb "has spoken" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

7 tn Heb "and one will say in that day."

8 tn Heb "this [one]."

9 tn Heb "this [one]."

10 tn Heb "for the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain"; TEV "will protect Mount Zion"; NCV "will protect (rest on NLT) Jerusalem."

11 tn Heb "under him," i.e., "in his place."

12 tc The marginal reading (*Qere*) is בְּמַוִּ (bə'mo, "in"). The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has בְּמַיִּ (bə'mi, "in the water of").

13 tn Heb "he"; the referent (Moab) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

14 tn The antecedent of the third masculine singular pronominal suffix is probably the masculine noun בְּתֻבָּה (*matben*, "heap of straw") in v. 10 rather than the feminine noun בְּתֻבָּה

just as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim;

the LORD¹⁵ will bring down Moab's¹⁶ pride as it spreads its hands.¹⁷

25:12 The fortified city (along with the very tops of your¹⁸ walls)¹⁹ he will knock down, he will bring it down, he will throw it down to the dusty ground.²⁰

Judah Will Celebrate

26:1 At that time²¹ this song will be sung in the land of Judah:
 "We have a strong city!
 The LORD's²² deliverance, like walls and a rampart, makes it secure.²³

26:2 Open the gates so a righteous nation can enter – one that remains trustworthy.

26:3 You keep completely safe the people who maintain their faith, for they trust in you.²⁴

26:4 Trust in the LORD from this time forward,²⁵ even in Yah, the LORD, an enduring protector!²⁶

(*madmenah*, "manure pile"), also in v. 10.

15 tn Heb "he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

16 tn Heb "his"; the referent (Moab) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

17 tn The Hebrew text has, "he will bring down his pride along with the [?] of his hands." The meaning of אֲרָבָה ('ar-bah), which occurs only here in the OT, is unknown. Some (see BDB 70 s.v. אֲרָבָה) translate "artifice, cleverness," relating the form to the verbal root אָרַב ('arav, "to lie in wait, ambush"), but this requires some convoluted semantic reasoning. HALOT 83 s.v. אֲרָבָה suggests the meaning "[nimble] movements." The translation above, which attempts to relate the form to the preceding context, is purely speculative.

18 sn Moab is addressed.

19 tn Heb "a fortification, the high point of your walls."

20 tn Heb "he will bring [it] down, he will make [it] touch the ground, even to the dust."

21 tn Heb "In that day" (so KJV).

22 tn Heb "his"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

23 tn Heb "deliverance he makes walls and a rampart."

24 tn Heb "[one of] firm purpose you will keep [in] peace, peace, for in you he possesses trust." The Hebrew term יִצְרָא (yetser) refers to what one devises in the mind; שְׁמֻךָ (samukh) probably functions here like an attributive adjective and carries the nuance "firm." So the phrase literally means, "a firm purpose," but as the object of the verb "keep, guard," it must stand by metonymy for the one(s) who possess a firm purpose. In this context the "righteous nation" (v. 2) is probably in view and the "firm purpose" refers to their unwavering faith in God's vindication (see 25:9). In this context שְׁלָמָם (shalom, "peace"), which is repeated for emphasis, likely refers to national security, not emotional or psychological composure (see vv. 1-2). The passive participle בָּטָעָה (batuakh) expresses a state that results from the subject's action.

25 tn Or "forevermore." For other uses of the phrase עַדְיְעַד ('ade-ad) see Isa 65:18 and Pss 83:17; 92:7.

26 tn The Hebrew text has "for in Yah, the LORD, an everlasting rock." Some have suggested that the phrase בֵּיתְיָה (be'yah, "in Yah") is the result of dittography. A scribe seeing בֵּיתְיָה (ki y'hvah) in his original text would somehow have confused the letters and accidentally inserted בֵּין between the words (bet and kaf [בֵּין] can be confused in later script phases). A number of English versions retain both divine names for em-

26:5 Indeed,¹ the LORD knocks down those who live in a high place,
he brings down an elevated town;
he brings it down to the ground,²
he throws it down to the dust.
26:6 It is trampled underfoot
by the feet of the oppressed,
by the soles of the poor.”

God's People Anticipate Vindication

26:7 The way of the righteous is level,
the path of the righteous that you make is straight.⁴
26:8 Yes, as your judgments unfold,⁵
O LORD, we wait for you.
We desire your fame and reputation to grow.⁶
26:9 I⁷ look for⁸ you during the night,
my spirit within me seeks you at dawn,
for when your judgments come upon the earth,
those who live in the world learn about justice.⁹

phasis (ESV, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, NLT). One of the Qumran texts (1Qlsa^a) confirms the MT reading as well.

¹ tn Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

² tn The translation assumes that יְשַׁפֵּלְנָה (*yashpilennah*) goes with the preceding words “an elevated town,” and that יְשַׁפֵּלָה (*yashpilah*) belongs with the following words, “to the ground.” See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:469, n. 7.

³ sn The literary structure of chap. 26 is not entirely clear. The chapter begins with an eschatological song of praise and ends with a lament and prophetic response (vv. 16–21). It is not certain where the song of praise ends or how vv. 7–15 fit into the structure. Verses 10–11a seem to lament the presence of evil and v. 11b anticipates the arrival of judgment, so it is possible that vv. 7–15 are a prelude to the lament and announcement that conclude the chapter.

⁴ tc The Hebrew text has, “upright, the path of the righteous you make level.” There are three possible ways to translate this line. Some take יְשָׁרָה (*yashar*) as a divine title: “O Upright One” (cf. NASB, NIV, NKJV, NRSV, NLT). Others regard יְשָׁרָה as the result of dittography יְשָׁרָה, יְשָׁרָה, *mesharim yashar ma gal*) and do not include it in the translation. Another possibility is to keep יְשָׁרָה and render the line as “the path of the righteous that you prepare is straight.”

⁵ sn The metaphor of a level/smooth road/path may refer to their morally upright manner of life (see v. 8a), but verse 7b, which attributes the smooth path to the LORD, suggests that the LORD's vindication and blessing may be the reality behind the metaphor here.

⁵ tn The Hebrew text has, “yes, the way of your judgments.” The translation assumes that “way” is related to the verb “we wait” as an adverbial accusative (“in the way of your judgments we wait”). מִשְׁפְּטֶךָ (*mishpatekha*, “your judgments”) could refer to the LORD’s commands, in which case one might translate, “as we obey your commands.” However, in verse 9 the same form refers to divine acts of judgment on evildoers.

⁶ tn Heb “your name and your remembrance [is] the desire of [our?] being.”

⁷ tn Heb “with my soul I.” This is a figure for the speaker himself (“I”).

⁸ tn Or “long for, desire.” The speaker acknowledges that he is eager to see God come in judgment (see vv. 8, 9b).

⁹ tn The translation understands יָדָךְ (*tsedeq*) in the sense of “justice,” but it is possible that it carries the nuance “righteousness,” in which case one might translate, “those who live in the world learn to live in a righteous manner” (cf. NCV).

26:10 If the wicked are shown mercy,
they do not learn about justice.¹⁰
Even in a land where right is rewarded,
they act unjustly;¹¹
they do not see the LORD’s majesty revealed.

26:11 O LORD, you are ready to act,¹²
but they don’t even notice.
They will see and be put to shame by
your angry judgment against human-kind.¹³

yes, fire will consume your enemies.¹⁴

26:12 O LORD, you make us secure,¹⁵
for even all we have accomplished, you
have done for us.¹⁶

26:13 O LORD, our God,
masters other than you have ruled us,
but we praise your name alone.

26:14 The dead do not come back to life,
the spirits of the dead do not rise.¹⁷
That is because¹⁸ you came in judgment¹⁹

and destroyed them,
you wiped out all memory of them.

26:15 You have made the nation larger,²⁰
O LORD,

you have made the nation larger and re-
vealed your splendor,²¹
you have extended all the borders of the
land.

¹⁰ tn As in verse 9b, the translation understands יָדָךְ (*tsedeq*) in the sense of “justice,” but it is possible that it carries the nuance “righteousness,” in which case one might translate, “they do not learn to live in a righteous manner.”

¹¹ tn Heb “in a land of uprightness they act unjustly”; NRSV “they deal perversely.”

¹² tn Heb “O LORD, your hand is lifted up.”

¹³ tn Heb “They will see and be ashamed of zeal of people.” Some take the prefixed verbs as jussives and translate the statement as a prayer, “Let them see and be put to shame.” The meaning of the phrase קִנְאָת־עָם (*qin’at-am*, “zeal of people”) is unclear. The translation assumes that this refers to God’s angry judgment upon people. Another option is to understand the phrase as referring to God’s zealous, protective love of his covenant people. In this case one might translate, “by your zealous devotion to your people.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “yes, fire, your enemies, will consume them.” Many understand the prefixed verb form to be jussive and translate, “let [fire] consume” (cf. NAB, NIV, NRSV). The *mem* suffixed to the verb may be enclitic; if a pronominal suffix, it refers back to “your enemies.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “O LORD, you establish peace for us.”

¹⁶ tc Some suggest emending בְּכָל (*gam kol*, “even all”) to בְּכָלָל (*kigmul*, “according to the deed[s] of”) One might then translate “for according to what our deeds deserve, you have acted on our behalf.” Nevertheless, accepting the MT as it stands, the prophet affirms that Yahweh deserved all the credit for anything Israel had accomplished.

¹⁷ sn In light of what is said in verse 14b, the “dead” here may be the “masters” mentioned in verse 13.

¹⁸ tn The Hebrew term לֹא (*lakhen*) normally indicates a cause-effect relationship between what precedes and follows and is translated, “therefore.” Here, however, it infers the cause from the effect and brings out what is implicit in the previous statement. See BDB 487 s.v.

¹⁹ tn Heb “visited [for harm]” (cf. KJV, ASV); NAB, NRSV “you have punished.”

²⁰ tn Heb “you have added to the nation.” The last line of the verse suggests that geographical expansion is in view. “The nation” is Judah.

²¹ tn Or “brought honor to yourself.”

26:16 O LORD, in distress they looked for you;
they uttered incantations because of your discipline.¹

26:17 As when a pregnant woman gets ready to deliver and strains and cries out because of her labor pains, so were we because of you, O LORD.

26:18 We were pregnant, we strained, we gave birth, as it were, to wind.² We cannot produce deliverance on the earth; people to populate the world are not born.³

26:19⁴ Your dead will come back to life; your corpses will rise up. Wake up and shout joyfully, you who live in the ground!⁵ For you will grow like plants drenched with the morning dew,⁶ and the earth will bring forth its dead spirits.⁷

1 tn The meaning of this verse is unclear. It appears to read literally, “O LORD, in distress they visit you, they pour out [?] an incantation, your discipline to them.” פָּגַד (*pagad*) may here carry the sense of “seek with interest” (cf. Ezek 23:21 and BDB 823 s.v.) or “seek in vain” (cf. Isa 34:16), but it is peculiar for the LORD to be the object of this verb. פְּנַזֵּע (*tsaqun*) may be a Qal perfect third plural form from פְּנַזֵּע (*tsuq*, “pour out, melt”), though the verb is not used of pouring out words in its two other occurrences. Because of the appearance of פְּנַזֵּע (*tsar*, “distress”) in the preceding line, it is tempting to emend the form to a noun and derive it from פְּנַזֵּע (“be in distress”). The term שְׁלָשָׁה (*lakhash*) elsewhere refers to an incantation (Isa 3:3; Jer 8:17; Ecc 10:11) or amulet (Isa 3:20). Perhaps here it refers to ritualistic prayers or to magical incantations used to ward off evil.

2 tn On the use of בִּמְוֹךְ (*kemo*, “like, as”) here, see BDB 455 s.v. Israel’s distress and suffering, likened here to the pains of childbirth, seemed to be for no purpose. A woman in labor endures pain with the hope that a child will be born; in Israel’s case no such positive outcome was apparent. The nation was like a woman who strains to bring forth a child, but can’t push the baby through to daylight. All her effort produces nothing.

3 tn Heb “and the inhabitants of the world do not fall.” The term נָפָל (*nafal*) apparently means here, “be born,” though the Qal form of the verb is not used with this nuance anywhere else in the OT. (The Hiphil appears to be used in the sense of “give birth” in v. 19, however.) The implication of verse 18b seems to be that Israel hoped its suffering would somehow end in deliverance and an increase in population. The phrase “inhabitants of the world” seems to refer to the human race in general, but the next verse, which focuses on Israel’s dead, suggests the referent may be more limited.

4 sn At this point the LORD (or prophet) gives the people an encouraging oracle.

5 tn Heb “dust” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

6 tn Heb “for the dew of lights [is] your dew.” The pronominal suffix on “dew” is masculine singular, like the suffixes on “your dead” and “your corpses” in the first half of the verse. The statement, then, is addressed to collective Israel, the speaker in verse 18. The plural form אֲוֹרֶת (*’oret*) is probably a plural of respect or magnitude, meaning “bright light” (i.e., morning’s light). Dew is a symbol of fertility and life. Here Israel’s “dew,” as it were, will soak the dust of the ground and cause the corpses of the dead to spring up to new life, like plants sprouting up from well-watered soil.

7 tn It is not certain whether the resurrection envisioned here is intended to be literal or figurative. A comparison with 25:8 and Dan 12:2 suggests a literal interpretation, but Ezek 37:1-14 uses resurrection as a metaphor for deliverance from

26:20 Go, my people! Enter your inner rooms!

Close your doors behind you!

Hide for a little while,

until his angry judgment is over!⁸

26:21 For look, the LORD is coming out of the place where he lives,⁹ to punish the sin of those who live on the earth.

The earth will display the blood shed on it; it will no longer cover up its slain.¹⁰

27:1 At that time¹¹ the LORD will punish with his destructive,¹² great, and powerful sword

Leviathan the fast-moving¹³ serpent, Leviathan the squirming serpent; he will kill the sea monster.¹⁴

27:2 When that time comes,¹⁵ sing about a delightful vineyard!¹⁶

27:3 I, the LORD, protect it,¹⁷ I water it regularly.¹⁸

exile and the restoration of the nation (see Isa 27:12-13).

8 tn Heb “until anger passes by.”

9 tn Heb “out of his place” (so KJV, ASV).

10 sn This implies that rampant bloodshed is one of the reasons for divine judgment. See the note at 24:5.

11 tn Heb “in that day” (so KJV).

12 tn Heb “hard, severe”; cf. NAB, NRSV “cruel”; KJV “sore”; NLT “terrible.”

13 tn Heb “fleeing” (so NAB, NASB, NRSV). Some translate “slippery” or “slithering.”

14 tn The description of Leviathan should be compared with the following excerpts from Ugaritic mythological texts: (1) “Was not the dragon (Ugaritic *ttn*, cognate with Hebrew *tannin*, translated “sea monster” here) vanquished and captured? Did I destroy the wriggling (Ugaritic *qltn*, cognate to Hebrew *qallaton*, translated “squirming” here) serpent, the tyrant with seven heads (cf. Ps 74:14).” (See CTA 3 i 38-39.) (2) “for all that you smote Leviathan the slippery (Ugaritic *brh*, cognate to Hebrew בְּרַחַת [*bariakh*, translated “fast-moving” here]) serpent, [and] made an end of the wriggling serpent, the tyrant with seven heads” (See CTA 5 i 1-3.)

15 sn In the Ugaritic mythological texts Leviathan is a sea creature that symbolizes the destructive water of the sea and in turn the forces of chaos that threaten the established order. Isaiah here applies imagery from Canaanite mythology to Yahweh’s eschatological victory over his enemies. Elsewhere in the OT, the battle with the sea motif is applied to Yahweh’s victories over the forces of chaos at creation and in history (cf. Pss 74:13-14; 77:16-20; 89:9-10; Isa 51:9-10). Yahweh’s subjugation of the chaos waters is related to His kingship (cf. Pss 29:3, 10; 93:3-4). Apocalyptic literature employs the imagery as well. The beasts of Dan 7 emerge from the sea, while Rev 13 speaks of a seven-headed beast coming from the sea.

16 tn Heb “in that day” (so KJV).

17 tn Heb “vineyard of delight,” or “vineyard of beauty.” Many medieval MSS read בְּרַחַת הַמִּירֵם (*kerem khemer*, “vineyard of wine”), i.e., “a productive vineyard.”

18 tn Or perhaps, “constantly.” Heb “by moments.”

I guard it night and day,
so no one can harm it.¹

27:4 I am not angry.

I wish I could confront some thorns and
briers!

Then I would march against them² for
battle;

I would set them³ all on fire,

27:5 unless they became my subjects⁴
and made peace with me;
let them make peace with me.⁵

27:6 The time is coming when Jacob will
take root:⁶

Israel will blossom and grow branches.
The produce⁷ will fill the surface of the
world.⁸

27:7 Has the LORD struck down Israel like
he did their oppressors?⁹

Has Israel been killed like their en-
emies?¹⁰

27:8 When you summon her for divorce,
you prosecute her;¹¹

¹ **tn** Heb “lest [someone] visit [harm] upon it, night and day
I guard it.”

² **tn** Heb “it.” The feminine singular suffix apparently refers back to the expression “thorns and briers,” understood in a collective sense. For other examples of a cohortative expressing resolve after a hypothetical statement introduced by בִּתְּנַתֵּן (*bit-natan*, see Judg 9:29; Jer 9:1-2; Ps 55:6).

³ **tn** Heb “it.” The feminine singular suffix apparently refers back to the expression “thorns and briers,” understood in a collective sense.

⁴ **tn** Heb “or let him take hold of my refuge.” The subject of the third masculine singular verb form is uncertain. Apparently the symbolic “thorns and briers” are in view, though in v. 4b a feminine singular pronoun was used to refer to them.

⁵ **tc** The Hebrew text has, “he makes peace with me, peace he makes with me.” Some contend that two alternative readings are preserved here and one should be deleted. The first has the object שלום (*shalom*, “peace”) preceding the verb עשה (*asah*, “make”); the second reverses the order. Another option is to retain both statements, although repetitive, to emphasize the need to make peace with Yahweh.

⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “the coming ones, let Jacob take root” (*habba'im, ha'kavim*, “the coming ones”) should probably be emended to ימים וָאַיִם (*yamim va'im*, “days [are] coming”) or בִּיאָמָה וְהַבָּאָמָה (*biyamim habba'im*, “in the coming days”).

⁷ **tn** Heb “fruit” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

⁸ **sn** This apparently refers to a future population explosion. See 26:18.

⁹ **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “Like the striking down of the one striking him down does he strike him down?” The meaning of the text is unclear, but this may be a rhetorical question, suggesting that Israel has not experienced divine judgment to the same degree as her oppressors. In this case “the one striking down” refers to Israel’s oppressors, while the pronoun “him” refers to Israel. The subject of the final verb (“does he strike down”) would then be God, while the pronoun “him” would again refer to Israel.

¹⁰ **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “Or like the killing of his killed ones is he killed?” If one accepts the interpretation of the parallel line outlined in the previous note, then this line too would contain a rhetorical question suggesting that Israel has not experienced destruction to the same degree as its enemies. In this case “his killed ones” refers to the one who struck Israel down, and Israel would be the subject of the final verb (“is he killed”).

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew text reads literally, “in [?], in sending her away, you oppose her.” The meaning of this line is uncertain. The form בְּסַסְעָה (*b'es-sse'ah*) is taken as an infinitive from בְּסַעַן (*sa'se'ah*) with a prepositional prefix and a third femi-

he drives her away¹² with his strong wind
in the day of the east wind.¹³

27:9 So in this way Jacob’s sin will be

forgiven,¹⁴

and this is how they will show they are
finished sinning.¹⁵

They will make all the stones of the al-
ters¹⁶

like crushed limestone,
and the Asherah poles and the incense
altars will no longer stand.¹⁷

27:10 For the fortified city¹⁸ is left alone;
it is a deserted settlement
and abandoned like the desert.

Calves¹⁹ graze there;
they lie down there
and eat its branches bare.²⁰

nine singular suffix. (The MT does not have a *mappiq* in the final *he* (ה), however). According to HALOT 738 s.v. סַנְקַרְתָּה the verb is a Palpel form from an otherwise unattested root cognate with an Arabic verb meaning “to gather beasts with a call.” Perhaps it means “to call, summon” here, but this is a very tentative proposal. בִּשְׁלַחְתָּה (*b'shalakhah*, “in sending her away”) appears to be a Piel infinitive with a prepositional prefix and a third feminine singular suffix. Since the Piel of שְׁלַח (*shalakh*) can sometimes mean “divorce” (HALOT 1514-15 s.v.) and the following verb יִרְבֶּה (*ri'veh*, “oppose”) can be used in legal contexts, it is possible that divorce proceedings are alluded to here. This may explain why Israel is referred to as feminine in this verse, in contrast to the masculine forms used in vv. 6-7 and 9.

¹² **tn** The Hebrew text has no object expressed, but one can understand a third feminine singular pronominal object and place a *mappiq* in the final *he* (ה) of the form to indicate the suffix.

¹³ **sn** The “east wind” here symbolizes violent divine judgment.

¹⁴ **tn** Or “be atoned for” (NIV); cf. NRSV “be expiated.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “and this [is] all the fruit of removing his sin.” The meaning of the statement is not entirely clear, though “removing his sin” certainly parallels “Jacob’s sin will be removed” in the preceding line. If original, “all the fruit” may refer to the result of the decision to remove sin, but the phrase may be a corruption of לְכַפֵּר (*lekhaper*, “to atone for”), which in turn might be a gloss on נָשֵׁר (*hasir*, “removing”).

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “when he makes the stones of an altar.” The singular “altar” is collective here; pagan altars are in view, as is the last line of the verse indicates. See also 17:8.

¹⁷ **sn** As interpreted and translated above, this verse says that Israel must totally repudiate its pagan religious practices in order to experience God’s forgiveness and restoration. Another option is to understand “in this way” and “this” in v. 9a as referring back to the judgment described in v. 8. In this case קָפֵר (*kafar*, “atone for”) is used in a sarcastic sense; Jacob’s sin is “atoned for” and removed through severe judgment. Following this line of interpretation, one might paraphrase the verse as follows: “So in this way (through judgment) Jacob’s sin will be “atoned for,” and this is the way his sin will be removed, when he (i.e., God) makes all the altar stones like crushed limestone....” This interpretation is more consistent with the tone of judgment in vv. 8 and 10-11.

¹⁸ **sn** The identity of this city is uncertain. The context suggests that an Israelite city, perhaps Samaria or Jerusalem, is in view. For discussions of interpretive options see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:496-97, and Paul L. Redditt, “Once Again, the City in Isaiah 24-27,” HAR 10 (1986), 332.

¹⁹ **tn** The singular form in the text is probably collective.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and destroy her branches.” The city is the antecedent of the third feminine singular pronominal suffix. Apparently the city is here compared to a tree. See also v. 11.

27:11 When its branches get brittle,¹ they break;
women come and use them for kindling.²
For these people lack understanding,³
therefore the one who made them has no
compassion on them;
the one who formed them has no mercy
on them.

27:12 At that time⁴ the LORD will shake the tree,⁵ from the Euphrates River⁶ to the Stream of Egypt. Then you will be gathered up one by one, O Israelites.⁷ **27:13** At that time⁸ a large⁹ trumpet will be blown, and the ones lost¹⁰ in the land of Assyria will come, as well as the refugees in¹¹ the land of Egypt. They will worship the LORD on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.¹²

The Lord Will Judge Samaria

28:1 The splendid crown of Ephraim's drunkards is doomed,¹³
the withering flower, its beautiful splendor,¹⁴
situated¹⁵ at the head of a rich valley,
the crown of those overcome with wine.¹⁶

¹ tn Heb "are dry" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

² tn Heb "women come [and] light it." The city is likened to a dead tree with dried up branches that is only good for firewood.

³ tn Heb "for not a people of understanding [is] he."

⁴ tn Heb "and it will be in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

⁵ tn Heb "the Lord will beat out." The verb is used of beating seeds or grain to separate the husk from the kernel (see Judg 6:11; Ruth 2:17; Isa 28:27), and of beating the olives off the olive tree (Deut 24:20). The latter metaphor may be in view here, where a tree metaphor has been employed in the preceding verses. See also 17:6.

⁶ tn Heb "the river," a frequent designation in the OT for the Euphrates. For clarity most modern English versions substitute the name "Euphrates" for "the river" here.

⁷ tn The Israelites will be freed from exile (likened to beating the olives off the tree) and then gathered (likened to collecting the olives).

⁸ tn Heb "and it will be in that day." The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on "in the future" in 2:2.

⁹ tn Traditionally, "great" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NLT); CEV "loud."

¹⁰ tn Or "the ones perishing."

¹¹ tn Or "the ones driven into."

¹² map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹³ tn Heb "Woe [to] the crown [or 'wreath'] of the splendor [or 'pride'] of the drunkards of Ephraim." The "crown" is Samaria, the capital city of the northern kingdom (Ephraim). Priests and prophets are included among these drunkards in v. 7.

¹⁴ tn Heb "the beauty of his splendor." In the translation the masculine pronoun ("his") has been replaced by "its" because the referent (the "crown") is the city of Samaria.

¹⁵ tn Heb "which [is]."

¹⁶ tn Heb "ones overcome with wine." The words "the crown of" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The syntactical relationship of the final phrase to what precedes is uncertain. הַלְׁעִיטֵי יָמִין (halume yamin, "ones overcome with wine") seems to correspond to שְׁקֹדֶר אֲפֻרְבָּם (shikkore 'efrayim, "drunkards of Ephraim") in line 1. The translation assumes that the phrase "the splendid crown" is to be understood in the final line as well.

28:2 Look, the sovereign master¹⁷ sends a strong, powerful one.¹⁸

With the force of a hailstorm or a destructive windstorm,¹⁹
with the might of a driving, torrential rainstorm,²⁰

he will knock that crown²¹ to the ground with his hand.²²

28:3 The splendid crown of Ephraim's drunkards

will be trampled underfoot.

28:4 The withering flower, its beautiful splendor,
situated at the head of a rich valley,
will be like an early fig before harvest –
as soon as someone notices it,
he grabs it and swallows it.²³

28:5 At that time²⁴ the LORD who commands armies will become a beautiful crown

and a splendid diadem for the remnant of his people.

28:6 He will give discernment to the one who makes judicial decisions,
and strength to those who defend the city from attackers.²⁵

28:7 Even these men²⁶ stagger because of wine,

they stumble around because of beer –
priests and prophets stagger because of beer,

they are confused²⁷ because of wine,
they stumble around because of beer;
they stagger while seeing prophetic vi-

sions,²⁸ they totter while making legal decisions.²⁹

28:8 Indeed, all the tables are covered with vomit;

no place is untouched.³⁰

28:9 Who is the LORD³¹ trying to teach?

¹⁷ tn The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in vv. 16, 22 is אֱדוֹנָי ('adonay).

¹⁸ tn Heb "Look, a strong and powerful [one] belongs to the LORD."

¹⁹ tn Heb "like a rainstorm of hail, a wind of destruction."

²⁰ tn Heb "like a rainstorm of mighty, overflowing waters."

²¹ tn The words "that crown" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The object of the verb is unexpressed in the Hebrew text.

²² tn Or "by [his] power."

²³ tn Heb "which the one seeing sees, while still it is in his hand he swallows it."

²⁴ tn Or "in that day" (KJV).

²⁵ tn Heb "and [he will become] a spirit of justice for the one who sits [i.e., presides] over judgment, // and strength [for] the ones who turn back battle at the city gate." The LORD will provide internal stability and national security.

²⁶ tn Heb "these." The demonstrative pronoun anticipates "priests and prophets" two lines later.

²⁷ tn According to HALOT 135 s.v. בָּלַע, the verb form is derived from בָּלַע (bala, "confuse"), not the more common בְּלִיעַ ("swallow"). See earlier notes at 3:12 and 9:16.

²⁸ tn Heb "in the seeing."

²⁹ tn Heb "[in] giving a decision."

³⁰ tn Heb "vomit, without a place." For the meaning of the phrase בְּלִיעַ בָּלַע (beli maqom, "without a place"), see HALOT 133 s.v. בְּלִיעַ.

³¹ tn Heb "he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in

To whom is he explaining a message?²
 Those just weaned from milk!
 Those just taken from their mother's
 breast!²

28:10 Indeed, they will hear meaningless
 gibberish,
 senseless babbling,
 a syllable here, a syllable there.³

28:11 For with mocking lips and a foreign
 tongue
 he will speak to these people.⁴

28:12 In the past he said to them,⁵
 "This is where security can be found.
 Provide security for the one who is ex-
 hausted!
 This is where rest can be found."⁶
 But they refused to listen.

28:13 So the LORD's word to them will
 sound like
 meaningless gibberish,
 senseless babbling,
 a syllable here, a syllable there.⁷
 As a result, they will fall on their back-
 sides when they try to walk,⁸

the translation for clarity.

1 tn Heb "Who is he teaching knowledge? For whom is he explaining a message?" The translation assumes that the LORD is the subject of the verbs "teaching" and "explaining," and that the prophet is asking the questions. See v. 12. According to some vv. 9-10 record the people's sarcastic response to the Lord's message through Isaiah.

2 tn Heb "from the breasts." The words "their mother's" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The translation assumes that this is the prophet's answer to the questions asked in the first half of the verse. The Lord is trying to instruct people who are "infants" morally and ethically.

3 tn The meaning of this verse has been debated. The text has literally "indeed [or "for"] a little there, a little there" (כִּי לֹא תְּשַׁׂרְפֵּן כִּי תְּשַׁׂרְפֵּן, *ki tsav latsav, tsav latsav, qav lagav, qav laqav*). The present translation assumes that the repetitive syllables are gibberish that resembles baby talk (cf. v. 9b) and mimics what the people will hear when foreign invaders conquer the land (v. 11). In this case זֶרֶר ("z'er, "a little") refers to the short syllabic structure of the babbling (cf. CEV). Some take נָסָע (*tsav*) as a derivative of נָסָע (*tsavah*, "command") and translate the first part of the statement as "command after command, command after command." Proponents of this position (followed by many English versions) also take גָּבָן (*qav*) as a noun meaning "measuring line" (see v. 17), understood here in the abstract sense of "standard" or "rule."

4 sn This verse alludes to the coming Assyrian invasion, when the people will hear a foreign language that sounds like gibberish to them. The Lord is the subject of the verb "will speak," as v. 12 makes clear. He once spoke in meaningful terms, but in the coming judgment he will speak to them, as it were, through the mouth of foreign oppressors. The apparent gibberish they hear will be an outward reminder that God has decreed their defeat.

5 tn Heb "who said to them."

6 sn This message encapsulates the Lord's invitation to his people to find security in his protection and blessing.

7 tn Heb "And the word of the Lord will be to them, 'tsahy latsahy,' etc." See the note at v. 10. In this case the "Lord's word" is not the foreigner's strange sounding words (as in v. 10), but the Lord's repeated appeals to them (like the one quoted in v. 12). As time goes on, the Lord's appeals through the prophets will have no impact on the people; they will regard prophetic preaching as gibberish.

8 tn Heb "as a result they will go and stumble backward." Perhaps an infant falling as it attempts to learn to walk is the background image here (cf. v. 9b). The Hebrew term בָּנָן (*b'man*) could be taken as indicating purpose ("in order

and be injured, ensnared, and captured.⁹

The Lord Will Judge Jerusalem

28:14 Therefore, listen to the LORD's word,
 you who mock,
 you rulers of these people
 who reside in Jerusalem!¹⁰

28:15 For you say,
 "We have made a treaty with death,
 with Sheol¹¹ we have made an agree-
 ment."¹²

When the overwhelming judgment
 sweeps by¹³
 it will not reach us.
 For we have made a lie our refuge,
 we have hidden ourselves in a deceitful
 word."¹⁴

28:16 Therefore, this is what the sovereign
 master, the LORD, says:
 "Look, I am laying¹⁵ a stone in Zion,
 an approved¹⁶ stone,
 set in place as a precious cornerstone for
 the foundation.¹⁷

The one who maintains his faith will not
 panic.¹⁸

that"), rather than simple result. In this case the people's insensitivity to the message is caused by the Lord as a means of expediting their downfall.

9 sn When divine warnings and appeals become gibberish to the spiritually insensitive, they have no guidance and are doomed to destruction.

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

11 sn Sheol is the underworld, land of the dead, according to the OT world view.

12 tn Elsewhere the noun חֹזֶה (*khozeh*) refers to a prophet who sees visions. In v. 18 the related term חֹזֶה (*khazeh*, "vision") is used. The parallelism in both verses (note "treaty") seems to demand a meaning "agreement" for both nouns. Perhaps חֹזֶה and חֹזֶה are used in a metonymic sense in vv. 15 and 18. Another option is to propose a homonymic root. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:514, and HALOT 301 s.v. II חֹזֶה.

13 tn Heb "the overwhelming scourge, when it passes by" (NRSV similar).

14 sn "Lie" and "deceitful word" would not be the terms used by the people. They would likely use the words "promise" and "reliable word," but the prophet substitutes "lie" and "deceitful word" to emphasize that this treaty with death will really prove to be disappointing.

15 tc The Hebrew text has a third person verb form, which does not agree with the first person suffix that precedes. The form should be emended to יָסַד (*yosed*), a Qal active participle used in a present progressive or imminent future sense.

16 tn Traditionally "tested," but the implication is that it has passed the test and stands approved.

17 sn The reality behind the metaphor is not entirely clear from the context. The stone appears to represent someone or something that gives Zion stability. Perhaps the ideal Davidic ruler is in view (see 32:1). Another option is that the image of beginning a building project by laying a precious cornerstone suggests that God is about to transform Zion through judgment and begin a new covenant community that will experience his protection (see 4:3-6; 31:5; 33:20-24; 35:10).

18 tn Heb "will not hurry," i.e., act in panic.

28:17 I will make justice the measuring line,
fairness the plumb line;
hail will sweep away the unreliable refuge,¹
the floodwaters will overwhelm the hiding place.

28:18 Your treaty with death will be dissolved;²
your agreement³ with Sheol will not last.⁴

When the overwhelming judgment sweeps by,⁵
you will be overrun by it.⁶

28:19 Whenever it sweeps by, it will overtake you;
indeed,⁷ every morning it will sweep by,
it will come through during the day and the night.⁸

When this announcement is understood, it will cause nothing but terror.

28:20 For the bed is too short to stretch out on,
and the blanket is too narrow to wrap around oneself.⁹

28:21 For the LORD will rise up, as he did at Mount Perazim,¹⁰
he will rouse himself, as he did in the Valley of Gibeon,¹¹

to accomplish his work,
his peculiar work,
to perform his task,
his strange task.¹²

28:22 So now, do not mock,
or your chains will become heavier!
For I have heard a message about decreed destruction,
from the sovereign master, the LORD who commands armies, against the entire land.¹³

¹ tn Heb “[the] refuge, [the] lie.” See v. 15.

² tn On the meaning of קָפָר (kafar) in this context, see HALOT 494 s.v. I קָפָר and J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:515, n. 9.

³ tn Normally the noun חַזּוֹת (khazut) means “vision.” See the note at v. 15.

⁴ tn Or “will not stand” (NIV, NRSV).

⁵ tn See the note at v. 15.

⁶ tn Heb “you will become a trampling place for it.”

⁷ tn Or “for” (KJV, ASV, NASB, NRSV).

⁸ tn The words “it will come through” are supplied in the translation. The verb “will sweep by” does double duty in the parallel structure.

⁹ tn The bed and blanket probably symbolize their false sense of security. A bed that is too short and a blanket that is too narrow may promise rest and protection from the cold, but in the end they are useless and disappointing. In the same way, their supposed treaty with death will prove useless and disappointing.

¹⁰ sn This probably alludes to David’s victory over the Philistines at Baal Perazim. See 2 Sam 5:20.

¹¹ sn This probably alludes to the LORD’s victory over the Canaanites at Gibeon, during the days of Joshua. See Josh 10:11.

¹² sn God’s judgment of his own people is called “his peculiar work” and “his strange task,” because he must deal with them the way he treated their enemies in the past.

¹³ tn Or “the whole earth” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NCV).

28:23 Pay attention and listen to my message!¹⁴

Be attentive and listen to what I have to say!¹⁵

28:24 Does a farmer just keep on plowing at planting time?¹⁶

Does he keep breaking up and harrowing his ground?

28:25 Once he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter the seed of the caraway plant, sow the seed of the cumin plant, and plant the wheat, barley, and grain in their designated places?¹⁷

28:26 His God instructs him; he teaches him the principles of agriculture.¹⁸

28:27 Certainly¹⁹ caraway seed is not threshed with a sledge, nor is the wheel of a cart rolled over cumin seed.²⁰

Certainly caraway seed is beaten with a stick, and cumin seed with a flail.

28:28 Grain is crushed, though one certainly does not thresh it forever.

The wheel of one’s wagon rolls over it, but his horses do not crush it.

28:29 This also comes from the LORD who commands armies, who gives supernatural guidance and imparts great wisdom.²¹

Ariel is Besieged

29:1 Ariel is as good as dead²² –

¹⁴ tn Heb “to my voice.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “to my word”; cf. KJV, ASV, NRSV “hear my speech.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “All the day does the plowman plow in order to plant?” The phrase “all the day” here has the sense of “continually, always.” See BDB 400 s.v. בָּנָה.

¹⁷ tc The Hebrew text reads literally, “place wheat [?], and barley [?], and grain in its territory.” The term שְׂרוֹת (shorah) is sometimes translated “[in] its place,” but the word is unattested elsewhere. It is probably due to dittography of the immediately following שְׁעִיר (se’orah, “barley”). The meaning of נִשְׁמָן (nisman) is also uncertain. It may be due to dittography of the immediately following קֻסֶּם (kussemet, “grain”).

¹⁸ tn Heb “he teaches him the proper way, his God instructs him.”

¹⁹ tn Or “For” (KJV, ASV, NASB).

²⁰ sn Both of these seeds are too small to use the ordinary threshing techniques.

²¹ sn Verses 23-29 emphasize that God possesses great wisdom and has established a natural order. Evidence of this can be seen in the way farmers utilize divinely imparted wisdom to grow and harvest crops. God’s dealings with his people will exhibit this same kind of wisdom and order. Judgment will be accomplished according to a divinely ordered timetable and, while severe enough, will not be excessive. Judgment must come, just as planting inevitably follows plowing. God will, as it were, thresh his people, but he will not crush them to the point where they will be of no use to him.

²² tn Heb “Woe [to] Ariel.” The meaning of the name “Ariel” is uncertain. The name may mean “altar hearth” (see v. 2) or, if compound, “lion of God.” The name is used here as a title for Mount Zion/Jerusalem (see vv. 7-8).

Ariel, the town David besieged!¹
 Keep observing your annual rituals,
 celebrate your festivals on schedule.²

29:2 I will threaten Ariel,
 and she will mourn intensely
 and become like an altar hearth³ before
 me.

29:3 I will lay siege to you on all sides;⁴
 I will besiege you with troops;⁵
 I will raise siege works against you.

29:4 You will fall;
 while lying on the ground⁶ you will
 speak;
 from the dust where you lie, your words
 will be heard.⁷

Your voice will sound like a spirit speak-
 ing from the underworld;⁸
 from the dust you will chirp as if mutter-
 ing an incantation.⁹

29:5 But the horde of invaders will be like
 fine dust,
 the horde of tyrants¹⁰ like chaff that is
 blown away.

It will happen suddenly, in a flash.

29:6 Judgment will come from the LORD
 who commands armies,¹¹
 accompanied by thunder, earthquake, and
 a loud noise,
 by a strong gale, a windstorm, and a con-
 suming flame of fire.

29:7 It will be like a dream, a night vision.
 There will be a horde from all the nations
 that fight against Ariel,
 those who attack her and her stronghold
 and besiege her.

29:8 It will be like a hungry man dream-
 ing that he is eating,
 only to awaken and find that his stomach
 is empty.¹²

It will be like a thirsty man dreaming that
 he is drinking,
 only to awaken and find that he is still
 weak and his thirst unquenched.¹³

So it will be for the horde from all the
 nations
 that fight against Mount Zion.

God's People Are Spiritually Insensitive

29:9 You will be shocked and amazed!¹⁴
 You are totally blind!¹⁵

They are drunk,¹⁶ but not because of wine;
 they stagger,¹⁷ but not because of beer.

29:10 For the LORD has poured out on you
 a strong urge to sleep deeply.¹⁸

He has shut your eyes (the prophets),
 and covered your heads (the seers).

29:11 To you this entire prophetic revela-
 tion¹⁹ is like words in a sealed scroll. When they
 hand it to one who can read²⁰ and say, "Read
 this," he responds, "I can't, because it is sealed."

29:12 Or when they hand the scroll to one who

¹ tn Heb "the town where David camped." The verb קָנַה ("camp") probably has the nuance "lay siege to" here. See v. 3. Another option is to take the verb in the sense of "lived, settled."

² tn Heb "Add year to year, let your festivals occur in cycles." This is probably a sarcastic exhortation to the people to keep up their religious rituals, which will not prevent the coming judgment. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:527.

³ tn The term אֲרִיאֵל ('ari'el, "Ariel") is the word translated "altar hearth" here. The point of the simile is not entirely clear. Perhaps the image likens Jerusalem's coming crisis to a sacrificial fire.

⁴ tc The Hebrew text has בְּדֹר ("khadur", "like a circle"), i.e., "like an encircling wall." Some emend this phrase to בְּדֹרֶךְ ("dor", "like David"), which is supported by the LXX (see v. 1). However, the rendering in the LXX could have arisen from a confusion of the *dalet* (ד) and *resh* (ר).

⁵ tn The meaning of נַצְבָּא (natsav) is not certain. Because of the parallelism (note "siege works"), some translate "towers." The noun is derived from נַצְבָּא (natsav, "take one's stand") and may refer to the troops stationed outside the city to prevent entrance or departure.

⁶ tn Heb "from the ground" (so NIV, NCV).

⁷ tn Heb "and from the dust your word will be low."

⁸ tn Heb "and your voice will be like a ritual pit from the earth." The Hebrew בָּאָתָּה ('ov, "ritual pit") refers to a pit used by a magician to conjure up underworld spirits. See the note on "incantations" in 8:19. Here the word is used metonymically for the voice that emerges from such a pit.

⁹ tn Heb "and from the dust your word will chirp." The words "as if muttering an incantation" are supplied in the translation for clarification. See the parallelism and 8:19.

¹⁰ tn Or "violent men"; cf. NASB "the ruthless ones."

¹¹ tn Heb "from the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts] there will be visitation." The third feminine singular passive verb form תִּפְעַל (tippeaq, "she/it will be visited") is used here in an impersonal sense. See GKC 459 §144.b.

¹² tn Or "that he [or "his appetite"] is unsatisfied."

¹³ tn Or "that he is faint and that he [or "his appetite"] longs [for water]."

¹⁴ tn The form הַתִּמְהַמֵּה (hitnahmehu) is a Hitpalpel imperative from הַמָּה (mahah, "hesitate"). If it is retained, one might translate "halt and be amazed." The translation assumes an emendation to הַתִּמְהַמֵּה (hitammehu), a Hitpalpel imperative from הַמָּה (tamah, "be amazed"). In this case, the text, like Hab 1:5, combines the Hitpaal and Qal imperative forms of הַמָּה (tamah). A literal translation might be "Shock yourselves and be shocked!" The repetition of sound draws attention to the statement. The imperatives here have the force of an emphatic assertion. On this use of the imperative in Hebrew, see GKC 324 §110.c and IBHS 572 §34.4c.

¹⁵ tn Heb "Blind yourselves and be blind!" The Hitpalpel and Qal imperative forms of שָׁאַל (sha'a, "be blind") are combined to draw attention to the statement. The imperatives have the force of an emphatic assertion.

¹⁶ tc Some prefer to emend the perfect form of the verb to an imperative (e.g., NAB, NCV, NRSV), since the people are addressed in the immediately preceding and following contexts.

¹⁷ tc Some prefer to emend the perfect form of the verb to an imperative (e.g., NAB, NCV, NRSV), since the people are addressed in the immediately preceding and following contexts.

¹⁸ tn Heb "a disposition [or "spirit"] of deep sleep." Through this mixed metaphor (sleep is likened to a liquid which one pours and in turn symbolizes spiritual dullness) the prophet emphasizes that God himself has given the people over to their spiritual insensitivity as a form of judgment.

¹⁹ tn Heb "vision" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

²⁰ tn Heb "one who knows a/the scroll."

can't read¹ and say, "Read this," he says, "I can't read."²

29:13 The sovereign master³ says,
"These people say they are loyal to me;⁴
they say wonderful things about me,⁵
but they are not really loyal to me.⁶
Their worship consists of
nothing but man-made ritual.⁷

29:14 Therefore I will again do an amazing thing for these people –
an absolutely extraordinary deed.⁸
Wise men will have nothing to say,
the sages will have no explanations.⁹

29:15 Those who try to hide their plans
from the LORD are as good as dead,¹⁰
who do their work in secret and boast.¹¹
"Who sees us? Who knows what we're
doing?"¹²

29:16 Your thinking is perverse!¹³
Should the potter be regarded as clay?¹⁴
Should the thing made say¹⁵ about its
maker, "He didn't make me"?
Or should the pottery say about the potter,
"He doesn't understand"?

Changes Are Coming

29:17 In just a very short time¹⁶
Lebanon will turn into an orchard,
and the orchard will be considered a
forest.¹⁷

¹tn Heb "and if the scroll is handed to one who does not know a scroll."

²tn Heb "I do not know a scroll."

³tn The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here is אֲדֹנָי ('adonai).

⁴tn Heb "Because these people draw near to me with their mouth."

⁵tn Heb "and with their lips they honor me."

⁶tn Heb "but their heart is far from me." The heart is viewed here as the seat of the will, from which genuine loyalty derives.

⁷tn Heb "their fear of me is a commandment of men that has been taught."

⁸tn Heb "Therefore I will again do something amazing with these people, an amazing deed, an amazing thing." This probably refers to the amazing transformation predicted in vv. 17-24, which will follow the purifying judgment implied in vv. 15-16.

⁹tn Heb "the wisdom of their wise ones will perish, the discernment of their discerning ones will keep hidden."

¹⁰tn Heb "Woe [to] those who deeply hide counsel from the LORD." This probably alludes to political alliances made without seeking the Lord's guidance. See 30:1-2 and 31:1.

¹¹tn Heb "and their works are in darkness and they say."

¹²tn The rhetorical questions suggest the answer, "no one." They are confident that their deeds are hidden from others, including God.

¹³tn Heb "your overturning." The predicate is suppressed in this exclamation. The idea is, "O your perversity! How great it is!" See GKC 470 §147.c. The people "overturn" all logic by thinking their authority supersedes God's.

¹⁴tn The expected answer to this rhetorical question is "of course not." On the interrogative use of אין ('im), see BDB 50 S.v.

¹⁵tn Heb "that the thing made should say."

¹⁶tn The Hebrew text phrases this as a rhetorical question, "Is it not yet a little, a short [time]?"

¹⁷tn The meaning of this verse is debated, but it seems to depict a reversal in fortunes. The mighty forest of Lebanon

29:18 At that time¹⁸ the deaf will be able to hear words read from a scroll,
and the eyes of the blind will be able to see through deep darkness.¹⁹

29:19 The downtrodden will again rejoice in the LORD;

the poor among humankind will take delight²⁰ in the Holy One of Israel.²¹

29:20 For tyrants will disappear,
those who taunt will vanish,
and all those who love to do wrong will be eliminated²² –

29:21 those who bear false testimony against a person,²³

who entrap the one who arbitrates at the city gate²⁴
and deprive the innocent of justice by making false charges.²⁵

29:22 So this is what the LORD, the one who delivered Abraham, says to the family of Jacob:²⁶

"Jacob will no longer be ashamed;
their faces will no longer show their embarrassment.²⁷

29:23 For when they see their children, whom I will produce among them,²⁸ they will honor²⁹ my name.

They will honor the Holy One of Jacob,³⁰ they will respect³¹ the God of Israel.

29:24 Those who stray morally will gain understanding,³²
those who complain will acquire insight.³³

(symbolic of the proud and powerful, see 2:13; 10:34) will be changed into a common orchard, while the common orchard (symbolic of the oppressed and lowly) will grow into a great forest. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:538.

¹⁸tn Or "In that day" (KJV).

¹⁹tn Heb "and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see."

²⁰sn Perhaps this depicts the spiritual transformation of the once spiritually insensitive nation (see vv. 10-12, cf. also 6:9-10).

²¹tn Or "will rejoice" (NIV, NCV, NLT).

²²sn See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

²³tn Heb "and all the watchers of wrong will be cut off."

²⁴tn Heb "the ones who make a man a sinner with a word." The Hiphil of נִזְבַּת (khata') here has a delocutive sense: "declare a man sinful/guilty."

²⁵tn Legal disputes were resolved at the city gate, where the town elders met. See Amos 5:10.

²⁶tn Heb "and deprive by emptiness the innocent."

²⁷tn Heb "So this is what the LORD says to the house of Jacob, the one who ransomed Abraham." The relative pronoun must refer back to "the LORD," not to the immediately preceding "Jacob." It is uncertain to what event in Abraham's experience this refers. Perhaps the name "Abraham" stands here by metonymy for his descendants through Jacob. If so, the Exodus is in view.

²⁸tn Heb "and his face will no longer be pale."

²⁹tn Heb "for when he sees his children, the work of my hands in his midst."

³⁰tn Or "treat as holy" (also in the following line); NASB, NRSV "will sanctify."

³¹tn Holy One of Jacob is similar to the phrase "Holy One of Israel" common throughout Isaiah; see the sn at Isa 1:4.

³²tn Or "fear," in the sense of "stand in awe of."

³³tn Heb "and the ones who stray in spirit will know understanding."

³³tn Heb "will learn instruction"; cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT

Egypt Will Prove Unreliable

30:1 “The rebellious⁴ children are as good as dead,”² says the LORD, “those who make plans without consulting me,³ who form alliances without consulting my Spirit,⁴ and thereby compound their sin.⁵

30:2 They travel down to Egypt without seeking my will,⁶ seeking Pharaoh’s protection, and looking for safety in Egypt’s protective shade.⁷

30:3 But Pharaoh’s protection will bring you nothing but shame, and the safety of Egypt’s protective shade nothing but humiliation.

30:4 Though his⁸ officials are in Zoan and his messengers arrive at Hanes,⁹ **30:5** all will be put to shame¹⁰ because of a nation that cannot help them, who cannot give them aid or help, but only shame and disgrace.”

30:6 This is a message¹¹ about the animals in the Negev:
Through a land of distress and danger, inhabited by lionesses and roaring lions,¹²

“will accept instruction.”

1 tn Or “stubborn” (NCV); cf. NIV “obstinate.”
2 tn Heb “Woe [to] rebellious children.”
3 tn Heb “making a plan, but not from me.”
4 tn Heb “and pouring out a libation, but not [from] my spirit.” This translation assumes that the verb נָסַךְ (*nasakh*) means “pour out,” and that the cognate noun מִסְכָּה (*massekha*) means “libation.” In this case “pouring out a libation” alludes to a ceremony that formally ratifies an alliance. Another option is to understand the verb נָסַךְ as a homonym meaning “weave,” and the cognate noun מִסְכָּה as a homonym meaning “covering.” In this case forming an alliance is likened to weaving a garment.

5 tn Heb “consequently adding sin to sin.”

6 tn Heb “those who go to descend to Egypt, but [of] my mouth they do not inquire.”

7 tn Heb “to seek protection in the protection of Pharaoh, and to seek refuge in the shade of Egypt.”

8 sn This probably refers to Judah’s officials and messengers.

9 tn Zoan was located in the Egyptian delta in the north; Hanes was located somewhere in southern region of lower Egypt, south of Memphis; the exact location is debated.

10 tn The present translation follows the marginal (Qere) reading of the Hebrew text; the consonantal text (*Kethib*) has “made to stink, decay.”

11 tn Traditionally, “burden” (so KJV, ASV); NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “oracle.”

12 tc Heb “[a land of] a lioness and a lion, from them.” Some emend מֵהֶם (*mehem*, “from them”) to מֵהֶם (*nehem*), an otherwise unattested Hiphil participle from בָּהַמָּה (*hamam*, “move noisily”). Perhaps it would be better to take the initial *mem* (ם) as enclitic and emend the form to בָּהַמָּה (*homeh*), a Qal active participle from בָּהַמָּה (*hamah*, “to make a noise”); cf. J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:542, n. 9.

by snakes and darting adders,¹³ they transport¹⁴ their wealth on the backs of donkeys, their riches on the humps of camels, to a nation that cannot help them.¹⁵

30:7 Egypt is totally incapable of helping.¹⁶ For this reason I call her ‘Proud one¹⁷ who is silenced.’¹⁸

30:8 Now go, write it¹⁹ down on a tablet in their presence,²⁰ inscribe it on a scroll, so that it might be preserved for a future time as an enduring witness.²¹

30:9 For these are rebellious people – they are lying children, children unwilling to obey the LORD’s law.²²

30:10 They²³ say to the visionaries, “See no more visions!” and to the seers, “Don’t relate messages to us about what is right!²⁴ Tell us nice things, relate deceptive messages.²⁵

30:11 Turn aside from the way, stray off the path.²⁶ Remove from our presence the Holy One of Israel.”²⁷

30:12 For this reason this is what the Holy One of Israel says:

13 tn Heb “flying burning ones.” See the note at 14:29.

14 tn Or “carry” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

15 sn This verse describes messengers from Judah transporting wealth to Egypt in order to buy Pharaoh’s protection through a treaty.

16 tn Heb “As for Egypt, with vanity and emptiness they help.”

17 tn Heb “Rahab” (רָהָב, *rahab*), which also appears as a name for Egypt in Ps 87:4. The epithet is also used in the OT for a mythical sea monster symbolic of chaos. See the note at 51:9. A number of English versions use the name “Rahab” (e.g., ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV) while others attempt some sort of translation (cf. CEV “a helpless monster”; TEV, NLT “the Harmless Dragon”).

18 tn The MT reads “Rahab, they, sitting.” The translation above assumes an emendation of הָמָת שְׁבָת (*hem shavat*) to הָמָת שְׁבָת (*hammashbat*), a Hophal participle with prefixed definite article, meaning “the one who is made to cease,” i.e., “destroyed,” or “silenced.” See HALOT 444-45 s.v. שָׁבַת.

19 tn The referent of the third feminine singular pronominal suffix is uncertain. Perhaps it refers to the preceding message, which accuses the people of rejecting the Lord’s help in favor of an alliance with Egypt.

20 tn Heb “with them.” On the use of the preposition here, see BDB 86 s.v. לִפְנֵי.

21 sn Recording the message will enable the prophet to use it in the future as evidence that God warned his people of impending judgment and clearly spelled out the nation’s guilt. An official record of the message will also serve as proof of the prophet’s authority as God’s spokesman.

22 tn Or perhaps, “instruction” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); NCV, TEV “teachings.”

23 tn Heb “who” (so NASB, NRSV). A new sentence was started here in the translation for stylistic reasons.

24 tn Heb “Do not see for us right things.”

25 tn Heb “Tell us smooth things, see deceptive things.”

26 sn The imagery refers to the way or path of truth, as revealed by God to the prophet.

27 tn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

“You have rejected this message,¹
you trust instead in your ability to op-
press and trick,²
and rely on that kind of behavior.³

30:13 So this sin will become your down-
fall.

You will be like a high wall
that bulges and cracks and is ready to
collapse;

it crumbles suddenly, in a flash.⁴

30:14 It shatters in pieces like a clay jar,
so shattered to bits that none of it can be
salvaged.⁵

Among its fragments one cannot find a
shard large enough⁶
to scoop a hot coal from a fire⁷
or to skim off water from a cistern.”⁸

30:15 For this is what the master, the
LORD, the Holy One of Israel says:
“If you repented and patiently waited for
me, you would be delivered;⁹
if you calmly trusted in me you would
find strength,¹⁰
but you are unwilling.

30:16 You say, ‘No, we will flee on
horses,’

so you will indeed flee.

You say, ‘We will ride on fast horses,’
so your pursuers will be fast.

30:17 One thousand will scurry at the
battle cry of one enemy soldier;¹¹
at the battle cry of five enemy soldiers
you will all run away,¹²
until the remaining few are as isolated¹³
as a flagpole on a mountaintop
or a signal flag on a hill.”

¹ tn The sentence actually begins with the word “because.” In the Hebrew text vv. 12-13 are one long sentence.

² tn Heb “and you trust in oppression and cunning.”

³ tn Heb “and you lean on it”; NAB “and depend on it.”

⁴ tn The verse reads literally, “So this sin will become for you like a breach ready to fall, bulging on a high wall, the breaking of which comes suddenly, in a flash.” Their sin produces guilt and will result in judgment. Like a wall that collapses their fall will be swift and sudden.

⁵ tn Heb “Its shattering is like the shattering of a jug of [i.e., “made by”] potters, [so] shattered one cannot save [any of it].”

⁶ tn The words “large enough” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁷ tn Heb “to remove fire from the place of kindling.”

⁸ tn On the meaning of גַּבְעָה (geveh, “cistern”) see HALOT 170 s.v.

⁹ tn Heb “in returning and in quietness you will be delivered.” Many English versions render the last phrase “shall be saved” or something similar (e.g., NAB, NASB, NRSV).

¹⁰ tn Heb “in quietness and in trust is your strength” (NASB and NRSV both similar).

¹¹ tn Heb “One thousand from before [or “because of”] one battle cry.” עֲדָה (gô’arah) is often defined as “threat,” but in war contexts it likely refers to a shout or battle cry. See Ps 76:6.

¹² tn Heb “from before [or “because of”] the battle cry of five you will flee.

¹³ tn Heb “until you are left” (so NAB, NASB, NRSV).

The Lord Will Not Abandon His People

30:18 For this reason the LORD is ready to
show you mercy;
he sits on his throne, ready to have com-
passion on you.¹⁴

Indeed, the LORD is a just God;
all who wait for him in faith will be
blessed.¹⁵

30:19 For people will live in Zion;
in Jerusalem¹⁶ you will weep no more.¹⁷
When he hears your cry of despair, he
will indeed show you mercy;

when he hears it, he will respond to you.¹⁸

30:20 The sovereign master¹⁹ will give you
distress to eat
and suffering to drink;²⁰
but your teachers will no longer be hid-
den;

your eyes will see them.²¹

30:21 You²² will hear a word spoken be-
hind you, saying,
“This is the correct²³ way, walk in it,”
whether you are heading to the right or
the left.

30:22 You will desecrate your silver-plated
idols²⁴

and your gold-plated images.²⁵

You will throw them away as if they were
a menstrual rag,
saying to them, “Get out!”

30:23 He will water the seed you plant in
the ground,

¹⁴ tn Heb “Therefore the LORD waits to show you mercy, and therefore he is exalted to have compassion on you.” The logical connection between this verse and what precedes is problematic. The point seems to be that Judah’s impending doom does not bring God joy. Rather the prospect of their suffering stirs within him a willingness to show mercy and compassion, if they are willing to seek him on his terms.

¹⁵ tn Heb “Blessed are all who wait for him.”

¹⁶ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

¹⁷ tn Heb “For people in Zion will live, in Jerusalem, you will weep no more.” The phrase “in Jerusalem” could be taken with what precedes. Some prefer to emend בָּשָׁבֵךְ (yeshve, “will live,” a Qal imperfect) to בָּשֵׁב (yoshev, a Qal active participle) and translate “For [you] people in Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “he will indeed show you mercy at the sound of your crying out; when he hears, he will answer you.”

¹⁹ tn The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדֹנָא (‘adonai).

²⁰ tn Heb “and the Master will give to you bread – distress, and water – oppression.”

²¹ tn Heb “but your teachers will no longer be hidden, your eyes will be seeing your teachers.” The translation assumes that the form מִירְקָה (morekha) is a plural participle, referring to spiritual leaders such as prophets and priests. Another possibility is that the form is actually singular (see GKC 273-74 §93.ss) or a plural of respect, referring to God as the master teacher. See HALOT 560-61 s.v. III יְרֻחָה. For discussion of the views, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:560.

²² tn Heb “your ears” (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

²³ tn The word “correct” is supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁴ tn Heb “the platings of your silver idols.”

²⁵ tn Heb “the covering of your gold image.”

and the ground will produce crops in abundance.¹
 At that time² your cattle will graze in wide pastures.
30:24 The oxen and donkeys used in plowing³
 will eat seasoned feed winnowed with a shovel and pitchfork.⁴
30:25 On every high mountain and every high hill there will be streams flowing with water, at the time of⁵ great slaughter when the fortified towers collapse.
30:26 The light of the full moon will be like the sun's glare and the sun's glare will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days,⁶ when the LORD binds up his people's fractured bones⁷ and heals their severe wound.⁸
30:27 Look, the name⁹ of the LORD comes from a distant place in raging anger and awesome splendor.¹⁰ He speaks angrily and his word is like destructive fire.¹¹

¹ tn Heb “and he will give rain for your seed which you plant in the ground, and food [will be] the produce of the ground, and it will be rich and abundant.”

² tn Or “in that day” (KJV).

³ tn Heb “the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground.”

⁴ sn Crops will be so abundant that even the work animals will eat well.

⁵ tn Or “in the day of” (KJV).

⁶ sn Light here symbolizes restoration of divine blessing and prosperity. The number “seven” is used symbolically to indicate intensity. The exact meaning of the phrase “the light of seven days” is uncertain; it probably means “seven times brighter” (see the parallel line).

⁷ tn Heb “the fracture of his people” (so NASB).

⁸ sn The Lord is here compared to a physician setting a broken bone in a bandage or cast.

⁹ tn Heb “the injury of his wound.” The joining of synonyms emphasizes the severity of the wound. Another option is to translate, “the wound of his blow.” In this case the pronominal suffix might refer to the Lord, not the people, yielding the translation, “the wound which he inflicted.”

¹⁰ sn The “name” of the Lord sometimes stands by metonymy for the Lord himself, see Exod 23:21; Lev 24:11; Pss 54:1 (54:3 HT); 124:8. In Isa 30:27 the point is that he reveals that aspect of his character which his name suggests – he comes as Yahweh (“he is present”), the ever present helper of his people who annihilates their enemies and delivers them. The name “Yahweh” originated in a context where God assured a fearful Moses that he would be with him as he confronted Pharaoh and delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt. See Exod 3.

¹¹ tn Heb “his anger burns, and heaviness of elevation.” The meaning of the phrase “heaviness of elevation” is unclear, for מִשְׁאָה (masa'ah, “elevation”) occurs only here. Some understand the term as referring to a cloud (elevated above the earth’s surface), in which case one might translate, “and in heavy clouds” (cf. NAB “with lowering clouds”). Others relate the noun to נִשְׁאָה (masa’, “burden”) and interpret it as a reference to judgment. In this case one might translate, “and with severe judgment.” The present translation assumes that the noun refers to his glory and that “heaviness” emphasizes its degree.

¹² tn Heb “his lips are full of anger, and his tongue is like consuming fire.” The Lord’s lips and tongue are used metonymically for his word (or perhaps his battle cry; see v. 31).

30:28 His battle cry overwhelms like a flooding river¹² that reaches one’s neck. He shakes the nations in a sieve that isolates the chaff;¹³ he puts a bit into the mouth of the nations and leads them to destruction.¹⁴

30:29 You will sing as you do in the evening when you are celebrating a festival.

You will be happy like one who plays a flute as he goes to the mountain of the LORD,

the Rock who shelters Israel.¹⁵

30:30 The LORD will give a mighty shout¹⁶ and intervene in power,¹⁷ with furious anger and flaming, destructive fire,¹⁸ with a driving rainstorm and hailstones.

30:31 Indeed, the LORD’s shout will shatter Assyria;¹⁹ he will beat them with a club.

30:32 Every blow from his punishing cudgel,²⁰ with which the LORD will beat them,²¹ will be accompanied by music from the²²

tambourine and harp, and he will attack them with his weapons.²³

¹² tn Heb “his breath is like a flooding river.” This might picture the Lord breathing heavily as he runs down his enemy, but in light of the preceding verse, which mentions his lips and tongue, “breath” probably stands metonymically for the word or battle cry that he expels from his mouth as he shouts. In Isa 34:16 and Ps 33:6 the Lord’s “breath” is associated with his command.

¹³ tn Heb “shaking nations in a sieve of worthlessness.” It is not certain exactly how נֶסֶת (neset, “emptiness, worthlessness”) modifies “sieve.” A sieve is used to separate grain from chaff and isolate what is worthless so that it might be discarded. Perhaps the nations are likened to such chaff; God’s judgment will sift them out for destruction.

¹⁴ tn Heb “and a bit that leads astray [is] in the jaws of the peoples.” Here the nations are likened to horses that can be controlled by a bit placed in its mouth. In this case the Lord uses his sovereign control over the “horse” to lead it to its demise.

¹⁵ tn Heb “[you will have] joy of heart, like the one going with a flute to enter the mountain of the Lord to the Rock of Israel.” The image here is not a foundational rock, but a rocky cliff where people could hide for protection (for example, the fortress of Masada).

¹⁶ tn Heb “the Lord will cause the splendor of his voice to be heard.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “and reveal the lowering of his arm.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “and a flame of consuming fire.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “Indeed by the voice of the Lord Assyria will be shattered.”

²⁰ tc The Hebrew text has “every blow from a founded [i.e., “appointed”?] cudgel.” The translation above, with support from a few medieval Hebrew MSS, assumes an emendation of מַסְדָּה (musadah, “founded”) to מַעֲסָרָה (musaroh, “his discipline”).

²¹ tn Heb “which the Lord lays on him.”

²² tn Heb “will be with” (KJV similar).

²³ tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “and with battles of brandishing [weapons?]; he will fight against him.” Some prefer to emend בְּמִלְחָמֹת (uv'milchamot, “and with battles of”) to בְּמִלְחָמֹת וְבְבָרְחוֹת (uv'milchamot, “and with dancing”). Note the immediately preceding references to musical instruments.

30:33 For¹ the burial place is already prepared;² it has been made deep and wide for the king.³ The firewood is piled high on it.⁴ The LORD's breath, like a stream flowing with brimstone, will ignite it.

Egypt Will Disappoint

31:1 Those who go down to Egypt for help are as good as dead,⁵ those who rely on war horses, and trust in Egypt's many chariots⁶ and in their many, many horsemen.⁷ But they do not rely on the Holy One of Israel⁸ and do not seek help from the LORD.

31:2 Yet he too is wise⁹ and he will bring disaster; he does not retract his decree.¹⁰ He will attack the wicked nation,¹¹ and the nation that helps¹² those who commit sin.¹³

31:3 The Egyptians are mere humans, not God; their horses are made of flesh, not spirit. The LORD will strike with¹⁴ his hand; the one who helps will stumble and the one being helped will fall. Together they will perish.¹⁵

^{1 tn} Or "indeed."

^{2 tc} The Hebrew text reads literally, "for arranged from before [or "yesterday"] is [?]." The meaning of תָּפְתֵחַ (*tap'teh*), which occurs only here, is unknown. The translation above (as with most English versions) assumes an emendation to תָּפֶת (*tofet*, "Topheth"; cf. NASB, NIV, NLT) and places the final *he* (ה) on the beginning of the next word as an interrogative particle. Topheth was a place near Jerusalem used as a burial ground (see Jer 7:32; 19:11).

^{3 tn} The Hebrew text reads literally, "Also it is made ready for the king, one makes it deep and wide." If one takes the final *he* (ה) on תָּפְתֵחַ (*tap'teh*) and prefixes it to בָּ (gam) as an interrogative particle (see the preceding note), one can translate, "Is it also made ready for the king?" In this case the question is rhetorical and expects an emphatic affirmative answer, "Of course it is!"

^{4 tn} Heb "its pile of wood, fire and wood one makes abundant."

^{5 sn} Apparently this alludes to some type of funeral rite.

^{5 tn} Heb "Woe [to] those who go down to Egypt for help."

^{6 tn} Heb "and trust in chariots for they are many."

^{7 tn} Heb "and in horsemen for they are very strong [or "numerous"]."'

^{8 sn} See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

^{9 sn} This statement appears to have a sarcastic tone. The royal advisers who are advocating an alliance with Egypt think they are wise, but the LORD possesses wisdom as well and will thwart their efforts.

^{10 tn} Heb "and he does not turn aside [i.e., "retract"] his words"; NIV "does not take back his words."

^{11 tn} Heb "and he will arise against the house of the wicked."

^{12 sn} That is, Egypt.

^{13 tn} Heb "and against the help of the doers of sin."

^{14 tn} Heb "will extend"; KJV, ASV, NASB, NCV "stretch out."

^{15 tn} Heb "together all of them will come to an end."

The Lord Will Defend Zion

31:4 Indeed, this is what the LORD says to me:
"The LORD will be like a growling lion,¹⁶ like a young lion growling over its prey.¹⁷ Though a whole group of shepherds gathers against it, it is not afraid of their shouts or intimidated by their yelling.¹⁸ In this same way the LORD who commands armies will descend to do battle on Mount Zion and on its hill.¹⁹

31:5 Just as birds hover over a nest,²⁰ so the LORD who commands armies will protect Jerusalem.²¹ He will protect and deliver it; as he passes over²² he will rescue it.

31:6 You Israelites! Return to the one against whom you have so blatantly rebelled!²³ **31:7** For at that time²⁴ everyone will get rid of²⁵ the silver and gold idols your hands sinfully made.²⁵

31:8 Assyria will fall by a sword, but not one human-made;²⁶ a sword not made by humankind will destroy them.²⁷

^{16 tn} Heb "As a lion growls, a young lion over its prey." In the Hebrew text the opening comparison is completed later in the verse ("so the LORD will come down..."), after a parenthesis describing how fearless the lion is. The present translation divides the verse into three sentences for English stylistic reasons.

^{17 tn} Heb "Though there is summoned against it fullness of shepherds, by their voice it is not terrified, and to their noise it does not respond."

^{18 tn} Some prefer to translate the phrase לִצְבָּא עַל (*litsbo' al*) as "fight against," but the following context pictures the LORD defending, not attacking, Zion.

^{19 tn} Heb "just as birds fly." The words "over a nest" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

^{20 map} For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

^{21 tn} The only other occurrence of this verb is in Exod 12:13, 23, 27, where the LORD "passes over" (i.e., "spares") the Israelite households as he comes to judge their Egyptian oppressors. The noun פֶּסַח (*pesakh*, "Passover") is derived from the verb. The use of the verb in Isa 31:5 is probably an intentional echo of the Exodus event. As in the days of Moses the LORD will spare his people as he comes to judge their enemies.

^{22 tn} Heb "Return to the one [against] whom the sons of Israel made deep rebellion." The syntax is awkward here. A preposition is omitted by ellipsis after the verb (see GKC 446 §138.f, n. 2), and there is a shift from direct address (note the second plural imperative "return") to the third person (note "they made deep"). For other examples of abrupt shifts in person in poetic style, see GKC 462 §144.p.

^{23 tn} Or "in that day" (KJV).

^{24 tn} Heb "reject" (so NIV); NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT "throw away."

^{25 tn} Heb "the idols of their idols of silver and their idols of gold which your hands made for yourselves [in] sin." נַחֲתָה (*khata'*, "sin") is understood as an adverbial accusative of manner. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:573, n. 4.

^{26 tn} Heb "Assyria will fall by a sword, not of a man."

^{27 tn} Heb "and a sword not of humankind will devour him."

They will run away from this sword¹
and their young men will be forced to do
hard labor.

31:9 They will surrender their stronghold²
because of fear;³
their officers will be afraid of the LORD's
battle flag.”⁴

This is what the LORD says –
the one whose fire is in Zion,
whose firepot is in Jerusalem.⁵

Justice and Wisdom Will Prevail

32:1 Look, a king will promote fairness,⁶
officials will promote justice.⁷

32:2 Each of them⁸ will be like a shelter
from the wind
and a refuge from a rainstorm;
like streams of water in a dry region
and like the shade of a large cliff in a
parched land.

32:3 Eyes⁹ will no longer be blind¹⁰
and ears¹¹ will be attentive.

32:4 The mind that acts rashly will pos-
sess discernment¹²
and the tongue that stutters will speak
with ease and clarity.

32:5 A fool will no longer be called honor-
able;
a deceiver will no longer be called prin-
cipated.

32:6 For a fool speaks disgraceful things;¹³
his mind plans out sinful deeds.¹⁴
He commits godless deeds¹⁵
and says misleading things about the
LORD;
he gives the hungry nothing to satisfy
their appetite¹⁶
and gives the thirsty nothing to drink.¹⁷

¹ tn Heb “he will flee for himself from before a sword.”
² tn Heb “rocky cliff” (cf. ASV, NASB “rock”), viewed meta-
phorically as a place of defense and security.

³ tn Heb “His rocky cliff, because of fear, will pass away [i.e.,
“perish”].”

⁴ tn Heb “and they will be afraid of the flag, his officers.”

⁵ sn The “fire” and “firepot” here symbolize divine judg-
ment, which is heating up like a fire in Jerusalem, waiting to
be used against the Assyrians when they attack the city.

⁶ tn Heb “will reign according to fairness.”

⁷ tn Heb “will rule according to justice.”

⁸ tn Heb “a man,” but שָׁנִי ('ish) probably refers here to
“each” of the officials mentioned in the previous verse.

⁹ tn Heb “Eyes that see.”

¹⁰ tn The Hebrew text as vocalized reads literally “will not
gaze,” but this is contradictory to the context. The verb form
should be revocalized אֲשַׁׁוֹנָה (tesh'oh'nah) from עַזָּה (sha'a),
“be blinded”; see Isa 6:10; 29:9.

¹¹ tn Heb “ears that hear.”

¹² tn Heb “the heart of rashness will understand knowl-
edge”; cf. NAB “The flighty will become wise and capable.”

¹³ tn Or “foolishness,” in a moral-ethical sense. See 9:17.

¹⁴ tn Heb “and his heart commits sin”; KJV, ASV “his heart
will work iniquity”; NASB “inclines toward wickedness.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “in order to do [or “so that he does”] what is god-
less [or “defiled”].”

¹⁶ tn Heb “so that he leaves empty the appetite [or “des-
ire”] of the hungry.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “and the drink of the thirsty he causes to fail.”

32:7 A deceiver’s methods are evil;¹⁸

he dreams up evil plans¹⁹

to ruin the poor with lies,

even when the needy are in the right.²⁰

32:8 An honorable man makes honorable

plans;

his honorable character gives him secu-
rity.²¹

The Lord Will Give True Security

32:9 You complacent²² women,
get up and listen to me!

You carefree²³ daughters,
pay attention to what I say!

32:10 In a year’s time²⁴

you carefree ones will shake with fear,
for the grape²⁵ harvest will fail,
and the fruit harvest will not arrive.

32:11 Tremble, you complacent ones!
Shake with fear, you carefree ones!
Strip off your clothes and expose your-
selves –

put sackcloth on your waist!²⁶

32:12 Mourn over the field,²⁷
over the delightful fields
and the fruitful vine!

32:13 Mourn²⁸ over the land of my people,

¹⁸ tn Heb “as for a deceiver, his implements [or “weapons”]
are evil.”

¹⁹ tn Or “he plans evil things”; NIV “he makes up evil
schemes.”

²⁰ tn Heb “to ruin the poor with words of falsehood, even
when the needy speak what is just.”

²¹ tn Heb “and he upon honorable things stands.”

²² tn Or “self-assured”; NASB, NRSV “who are at ease.”

²³ tn Or “self-confident”; NAB “overconfident.”

²⁴ tn Heb “days upon a year.”

²⁵ tn Or perhaps, “olive.” See 24:13.

²⁶ tn The imperative forms in v. 11 are problematic. The first (תְּדַבֵּר, *khirdu*, “tremble”) is masculine plural in form, though spoken to a feminine plural addressee (אֲנָתֶךָ, *sha'anannot*, “complacent ones”). The four imperative forms that follow (תְּגַזֵּב, *r'gazah*, “shake with fear”; תְּפַשֵּׁת, *p'reshotah*, “strip off your clothes”; תְּעַרְבֵּת, *'orah*, “expose yourselves”; and קְהַגּוֹרָה, *khagorah*, “put on”) all appear to be lengthened (so-called “emphatic”) masculine singular forms, even though they too appear to be spoken to a feminine plural addressee. GKC 131-32 §48.i suggests emending *תְּדַבֵּר* (*khirdu*) to *תְּדַבֵּר* (*kharadah*) and understanding all five imperatives as feminine plural “aramaized” forms.

²⁷ tc The Hebrew text has “over mourning breasts.” The reference to “breasts” would make sense in light of v. 11, which refers to the practice of women baring their breasts as a sign of sorrow (see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT, 1:585]). However, one expects the preposition לְ (‘al) to introduce the source or reason for mourning (see vv. 12b-13a) and the participle בְּפָרְדָּם (*sofedim*, “mourning”) seems odd modifying “breasts.” The translation above assumes a twofold emendation: (1)

(*shadayim*, “breasts”) is emended to בְּסָדָיִם (*sadayim*, “field”), a term that also appears in Isa 56:9). The final *mem* (ם) would be elenctic in this case, not a plural indicator. (The Hebrew noun שָׂדֵה (*sadeh*, “field”) forms its plural with an הַ [-or] ending). (2) The plural participle is emended to בְּפָרְדָּם (*sefodah*), a lengthened imperative form, meaning “mourn.”

For an overview of various suggestions that have been made for this difficult line, see Oswalt, 586, n. 12).

²⁸ tn “Mourn” is supplied in the translation for stylistic rea-
sons. In the Hebrew text vv. 12-13 are one long sentence.

which is overgrown with thorns and briers,
and over all the once-happy houses¹
in the city filled with revelry.²

32:14 For the fortress is neglected;
the once-crowded³ city is abandoned.
Hill⁴ and watchtower
are permanently uninhabited.⁵
Wild donkeys love to go there,
and flocks graze there.⁶

32:15 This desolation will continue until new life is poured out on us from heaven.⁷

Then the desert will become an orchard and the orchard will be considered a forest.⁸

32:16 Justice will settle down in the desert and fairness will live in the orchard.⁹

32:17 Fairness will produce peace¹⁰ and result in lasting security.¹¹

32:18 My people will live in peaceful settlements,
in secure homes,
and in safe, quiet places.¹²

32:19 Even if the forest is destroyed¹³

¹ tn Heb “indeed, over all the houses of joy.” It is not certain if this refers to individual homes or to places where parties and celebrations were held.

² sn This same phrase is used in 22:2.

³ tn Or “noisy” (NAB, NIV, NCV).

⁴ tn Hebrew text has בַּיִת פְּשָׁרוֹת (b'ayt p'sharot) (n^ead m^earot), probably refers here to a specific area within the city of Jerusalem. See HALOT 861 s.v. II בַּיִת.

⁵ tn The Hebrew text has בַּיִת בְּגַד פְּשָׁרוֹת (n^ead m^earot). The force of בְּגַד, which usually means “behind, through, round about,” or “for the benefit of,” is uncertain here. HALOT 616 s.v. פְּשָׁרוֹת takes בְּגַד (m^earot) as a homonym of “cave” and define it here as “cleared field.” Despite these lexical problems, the general point of the statement seems clear – the city will be uninhabited.

⁶ tn Heb “the joy of wild donkeys, a pasture for flocks.”

⁷ tn Heb “until a spirit is emptied out on us from on high.” The words “this desolation will continue” are supplied in the translation for clarification and stylistic purposes. The verb שָׁרֵךְ (sh'rekh), used here in the Niphil, normally means “lay bare, expose.” The term רַעֲקֵה (ruakh, “spirit”) is often understood here as a reference to the divine spirit (cf. 44:3 and NASB, NIV, CEV, NLT), but it appears here without an article (cf. NRSV “a spirit”), pronominal suffix, or a genitive (such as “of the Lord”). The translation assumes that it carries an impersonal nuance “vivacity, vigor” in this context.

⁸ sn The same statement appears in 29:17b, where, in conjunction with the preceding line, it appears to picture a reversal. Here it seems to depict supernatural growth. The desert will blossom into an orchard, and the trees of the orchard will multiply and grow tall, becoming a forest.

⁹ tn This new era of divine blessing will also include a moral/ethical transformation, as justice and fairness fill the land and replace the social injustice so prevalent in Isaiah's time.

¹⁰ tn Heb “and the product of fairness will be peace.”

¹¹ tn Heb “and the work of fairness [will be] calmness and security forever.”

¹² tn Or “in safe resting places”; NAB, NRSV “quiet resting places.”

¹³ tn Heb “and [?] when the forest descends.” The form עֲוָרָד (uvavad) is often understood as an otherwise unattested denominative verb meaning “to hail” (HALOT 154 s.v. I כָּרָד). In this case one might translate, “and it hails when the forest is destroyed” (cf. KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV). Perhaps the text alludes to a powerful wind and hail storm that knocks down limbs and trees. Some prefer to emend the form to קָרָד (q'rad), “and it descends,” which provides better, though not perfect, sym-

and the city is annihilated,¹⁴

32:20 you will be blessed,
you who plant seed by all the banks of the streams,¹⁵
you who let your ox and donkey graze.¹⁶

The Lord Will Restore Zion

33:1 The destroyer is as good as dead,¹⁷
you who have not been destroyed!

The deceitful one is as good as dead,¹⁸
the one whom others have not deceived!
When you are through destroying, you
will be destroyed;

when you finish¹⁹ deceiving, others will
deceive you!

33:2 LORD, be merciful to us! We wait for
you.

Give us strength each morning!²⁰

Deliver us when distress comes.²¹

33:3 The nations run away when they hear
a loud noise,²²
the nations scatter when you spring into
action!²³

33:4 Your plunder²⁴ disappears as if locusts were eating it;²⁵
they swarm over it like locusts!²⁶

metry with the parallel line (cf. NAB). Perhaps וְבַיִת should be dismissed as dittographic. In this case the statement (“when the forest descends”) lacks a finite verb and seems incomplete, but perhaps it is subordinate to v. 20.

¹⁴ tn Heb “and in humiliation the city is laid low.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “by all the waters.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “who set free the foot of the ox and donkey”; NIV “letting your cattle and donkeys range free.”

¹⁷ tn This verse seems to anticipate a time when fertile land is available to cultivate and crops are so abundant that the farm animals can be allowed to graze freely.

¹⁸ tn Heb “[to] the destroyer.”

¹⁹ sn In this context “the destroyer” appears to refer collectively to the hostile nations (vv. 3–4). Assyria would probably have been primary in the minds of the prophet and his audience.

²⁰ tn Heb “and the deceitful one”; NAB, NIV “O traitor”; NRSV “you treacherous one.” In the parallel structure זֶה (zeh, “woe [to]”) does double duty.

²¹ tn The form in the Hebrew text appears to derive from an otherwise unattested verb נָלַח (nahal). The translation follows the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa¹ in reading בְּכָלְחָדָק (kalah), a Piel infinitival form from the verbal root בָּקַח (kalah), meaning “finish.”

²² tn Heb “Be their arm each morning.” “Arm” is a symbol for strength. The mem suffixed to the noun has been traditionally understood as a third person suffix, but this is contrary to the context, where the people speak of themselves in the first person. The mem (ם) is probably enclitic with ellipsis of the pronoun, which can be supplied from the context. See J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:589, n. 1.

²³ tn Heb “[Be] also our deliverance in the time of distress.”

²⁴ tn Heb “at the sound of tumult the nations run away.”

²⁵ tn Heb “because of your exaltation the nations scatter.”

²⁶ tn The pronoun is plural; the statement is addressed to the nations who have stockpiled plunder from their conquests of others.

²⁷ tn Heb “and your plunder is gathered, the gathering of the locust.”

²⁸ tn Heb “like a swarm of locusts swarming on it.”

33:5 The LORD is exalted,¹ indeed,² he lives in heaven;³ he fills Zion with justice and fairness.
33:6 He is your constant source of stability;⁴ he abundantly provides safety and great wisdom;⁵ he gives all this to those who fear him.⁶
33:7 Look, ambassadors⁷ cry out in the streets; messengers sent to make peace⁸ weep bitterly.
33:8 Highways are empty,⁹ there are no travelers.¹⁰ Treaties are broken,¹¹ witnesses are despised,¹² human life is treated with disrespect.¹³
33:9 The land¹⁴ dries up¹⁵ and withers away; the forest of Lebanon shrivels up¹⁶ and decays. Sharon¹⁷ is like the desert;¹⁸ Bashan and Carmel¹⁹ are parched.²⁰
33:10 “Now I will rise up,” says the LORD. “Now I will exalt myself; now I will magnify myself.”²¹

¹ tn Or “elevated”; NCV, NLT “is very great.”

² tn Or “for” (KJV, NASB, NIV).

³ tn Heb “on high” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); CEV “in the heavens.”

⁴ tn Heb “and he is the stability of your times.”

⁵ tn Heb “a rich store of deliverance, wisdom, and knowledge.”

⁶ tn Heb “the fear of the LORD, it is his treasure.”

⁷ tn The meaning of the Hebrew word is unknown. Proposals include “heroes” (cf. KJV, ASV “valiant ones”; NASB, NIV “brave men”); “priests,” “residents [of Jerusalem].” The present translation assumes that the term is synonymous with “messengers of peace,” with which it corresponds in the parallel structure of the verse.

⁸ tn Heb “messengers of peace,” apparently those responsible for negotiating the agreements that have been broken (see v. 8).

⁹ tn Or “desolate” (NAB, NASB); NIV, NRSV, NLT “deserted.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “the one passing by on the road ceases.”

¹¹ tn Heb “one breaks a treaty”; NAB “Covenants are broken.”

¹² tc The Hebrew text reads literally, “he despises cities.” The term שָׁמִים (*’arim*, “cities”) is probably a corruption of an original שְׁרִים (*’edim*, “[legal] witnesses”), a reading that is preserved in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a. Confusion of *dalet* (ד) and *resh* (ר) is a well-attested scribal error.

¹³ tn Heb “he does not regard human beings.”

¹⁴ tn Or “earth” (KJV); NAB “the country.”

¹⁵ tn Or “mourns” (BDB 5 s.v. אֲבַל). HALOT 6-7 lists homonyms אֲבַל (“mourn”) and אֲבַלֵּנָה (“dry up”). They propose the second here on the basis of parallelism. See 24:4.

¹⁶ tn Heb “Lebanon is ashamed.” The Hiphil is exhibitive, expressing the idea, “exhibits shame.” In this context the statement alludes to the withering of vegetation.

¹⁷ tn Sharon was a fertile plain along the Mediterranean coast. See 35:2.

¹⁸ tn Or “the Arabah” (NIV). See 35:1.

¹⁹ tn Both of these areas were known for their trees and vegetation. See 2:13; 35:2.

²⁰ tn Heb “shake off [their leaves]” (so ASV, NRSV); NAB “are stripped bare.”

²¹ tn Or “lift myself up” (KJV); NLT “show my power and might.”

33:11 You conceive straw,²² you give birth to chaff; your breath is a fire that destroys you.²³

33:12 The nations will be burned to ashes;²⁴ like thorn bushes that have been cut down, they will be set on fire.
33:13 You who are far away, listen to what I have done! You who are close by, recognize my strength!”

33:14 Sinners are afraid in Zion; panic²⁵ grips the godless.²⁶ They say,²⁷ ‘Who among us can coexist with destructive fire? Who among us can coexist with unquenchable²⁸ fire?’

33:15 The one who lives²⁹ uprightly³⁰ and speaks honestly; the one who refuses to profit from oppressive measures and rejects a bribe;³¹ the one who does not plot violent crimes³² and does not seek to harm others³³ –

33:16 This is the person who will live in a secure place;³⁴ he will find safety in the rocky, mountain strongholds;³⁵ he will have food and a constant supply of water.
33:17 You will see a king in his splendor;³⁶ you will see a wide land.³⁷
33:18 Your mind will recall the terror you experienced,³⁸ and you will ask yourselves,³⁹ “Where is the scribe?”

²² tn The second person verb and pronominal forms in this verse are plural. The hostile nations are the addressed, as the next verse makes clear.

²³ sn The hostile nations’ plans to destroy God’s people will come to nothing; their hostility will end up being self-destructive.

²⁴ tn Heb “will be a burning to lime.” See Amos 2:1.

²⁵ tn Or “trembling” (ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “shake with fear.”

²⁶ tn Or “the defiled”; TEV “The sinful people of Zion”; NLT “The sinners in Jerusalem.”

²⁷ tn The words “they say” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁸ tn Or “perpetual”; or “everlasting” (KJV, ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV).

²⁹ tn Heb “walks” (so NASB, NIV).

³⁰ tn Or, possibly, “justly”; NAB “who practices virtue.”

³¹ tn Heb “[who] shakes off his hands from grabbing hold of a bribe.”

³² tn Heb “[who] shuts his ear from listening to bloodshed.”

³³ tn Heb “[who] closes his eyes from seeing evil.”

³⁴ tn Heb “he [in] exalted places will live.”

³⁵ tn Heb “mountain strongholds, cliffs [will be] his elevated place.”

³⁶ tn Heb “your eyes will see a king in his beauty”; NIV, NRSV “the king.”

³⁷ tn Heb “a land of distances,” i.e., an extensive land.

³⁸ tn Heb “your heart will meditate on terror.”

³⁹ tn The words “and you will ask yourselves” are supplied in the translation for clarification and stylistic reasons.

Where is the one who weighs the money?
Where is the one who counts the tow-
ers?"¹

33:19 You will no longer see a defiant²
people

whose language you do not comprehend,³
whose derisive speech you do not under-
stand.⁴

33:20 Look at Zion, the city where we
hold religious festivals!

You⁵ will see Jerusalem,⁶
a peaceful settlement,⁷
a tent that stays put;⁷
its stakes will never be pulled up;
none of its ropes will snap in two.

33:21 Instead the LORD will rule there as
our mighty king.⁸

Rivers and wide streams will flow
through it;⁹

no war galley will enter;¹⁰
no large ships will sail through.¹¹

33:22 For the LORD, our ruler,
the LORD, our commander,
the LORD, our king –
he will deliver us.

33:23 Though at this time your ropes are
slack,¹²

the mast is not secured,¹³
and the sail¹⁴ is not unfurled,
at that time you will divide up a great
quantity of loot,¹⁵
even the lame will drag off plunder.¹⁶

¹ **sn** The people refer to various Assyrian officials who were responsible for determining the amount of taxation or tribute Judah must pay to the Assyrian king.

² **tn** The Hebrew form נָאַז (*no'az*) is a Niphal participle derived from נָאַז (*ya'az*, an otherwise unattested verb) or from נָאַז ("be strong," unattested elsewhere in the Niphal). Some prefer to emend the form to נָאַז (*lo'ez*) which occurs in Ps 114:1 with the meaning "speak a foreign language." See HALOT 809 s.v. נָאַז, 533 s.v. נָאַז. In this case, one might translate "people who speak a foreign language."

³ **tn** *Heb* "a people too deep of lip to hear." The phrase "deep of lip" must be an idiom meaning "lips that speak words that are unfathomable [i.e., incomprehensible]."

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "derision of tongue there is no understanding." The Niphal of נָאַז (*la'ag*) occurs only here. In the Qal and Hiphil the verb means "to deride, mock." A related noun is used in 28:11.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "your eyes" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

⁶ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁷ **tn** Or "that does not travel"; NASB "which shall not be folded."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "But there [as] a mighty one [will be] the LORD for us."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "a place of rivers, streams wide of hands [i.e., on both sides]."

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "a ship of rowing will not go into it."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "and a mighty ship will not pass through it."

¹² **tn** The words "though at this time" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The first half of the verse is addressed to Judah and contrasts the nation's present weakness with its future prosperity. Judah is compared to a ship that is incapable of sailing.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* "they do not fasten the base of their mast." On יָקֵן (*ken*, "base") see BDB 487 s.v. יָקֵן and HALOT 483 s.v. יָקֵן.

¹⁴ **tn** Or perhaps, "flag."

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "then there will be divided up loot of plunder [in] abundance."

¹⁶ **sn** Judah's victory over its enemies will be so thorough

33:24 No resident of Zion¹⁷ will say, "I am ill";
the people who live there will have their
sin forgiven.

The Lord Will Judge Edom

34:1 Come near, you nations, and listen!
Pay attention, you people!
The earth and everything it contains must
listen,

the world and everything that lives in it.¹⁸

34:2 For the LORD is angry at all the na-
tions
and furious with all their armies.
He will annihilate them and slaughter
them.

34:3 Their slain will be left unburied,¹⁹
their corpses will stink,²⁰
the hills will soak up their blood.²¹

34:4 All the stars in the sky will fade
away,²²
the sky will roll up like a scroll;
all its stars will wither,

like a leaf withers and falls from a vine
or a fig withers and falls from a tree.²³

34:5 He says,²⁴ "Indeed, my sword has
slaughtered heavenly powers.²⁵

Look, it now descends on Edom,²⁶
on the people I will annihilate in judg-
ment."

there will be more than enough plunder for everyone, even slow-moving lame men who would normally get left out in the rush to gather the loot.

¹⁷ **tn** The words "of Zion" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the world and its offspring"; NASB "the world and all that springs from it."

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "will be cast aside"; NASB, NIV "thrown out."

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "[as for] their corpses, their stench will arise."

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "hills will dissolve from their blood."

²² **tc** *Heb* "and all the host of heaven will rot." The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a inserts "and the valleys will be split open," but this reading may be influenced by Mic 1:4. On the other hand, the statement, if original, could have been omitted by homoiarcton, a scribe's eye jumping from the conjunction prefixed to "the valleys" to the conjunction prefixed to the verb "rot."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "like the withering of a leaf from a vine, and like the withering from a fig tree."

²⁴ **tn** The words "he says" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The LORD speaks at this point.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "indeed [or "for"] my sword is drenched in the heavens." The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a has רִבְרִיב ("[my sword] appeared [in the heavens]"), but this is apparently an attempt to make sense out of a difficult metaphor. Cf. NIV "My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens."

²⁶ *In v. 4 the "host of the heaven" refers to the heavenly luminaries (stars and planets, see, among others, Deut 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs 17:16; 21:3, 5; 23:4-5; 2 Chr 33:3, 5) that populate the divine/heavenly assembly in mythological and prescientific Israelite thought (see Job 38:7; Isa 14:13). As in 24:21, they are viewed here as opposing God and being defeated in battle.*

²⁶ **sn** Edom is mentioned here as epitomizing the hostile nations that oppose God.

34:6 The LORD's sword is dripping with blood,
it is covered¹ with fat;
it drips² with the blood of young rams
and goats
and is covered³ with the fat of rams'
kidneys.
For the LORD is holding a sacrifice⁴ in Bozrah,⁵
a bloody⁶ slaughter in the land of Edom.
34:7 Wild oxen will be slaughtered⁷ along with them,
as well as strong bulls.⁸
Their land is drenched with blood,
their soil is covered with fat.
34:8 For the LORD has planned a day of revenge,⁹
a time when he will repay Edom for her hostility toward Zion.¹⁰
34:9 Edom's¹¹ streams will be turned into pitch
and her soil into brimstone;
her land will become burning pitch.
34:10 Night and day it will burn;¹²
its smoke will ascend continually.
Generation after generation it will be a wasteland
and no one will ever pass through it again.
34:11 Owls and wild animals¹³ will live there,¹⁴
all kinds of wild birds¹⁵ will settle in it.
The LORD¹⁶ will stretch out over her the measuring line of ruin

¹ tn The verb is a rare Hotpaal passive form. See GKC 150 §54.h.

² tn The words "it drips" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

³ tn The words "and is covered" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴ tn Heb "for there is a sacrifice to the LORD."

⁵ sn The Lord's judgment of Edom is compared to a bloody sacrificial scene.

⁶ tn Heb "great" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

⁷ tn Heb "will go down"; NAB "shall be struck down."

⁸ tn Heb "and bulls along with strong ones." Perhaps this refers to the leaders.

⁹ tn Heb "for a day of vengeance [is] for the LORD."

¹⁰ tn Heb "a year of repayment for the strife of Zion." The translation assumes that בָּבֶן (*riv*) refers to Edom's hostility toward Zion. Another option is to understand בָּבֶן (*riv*) as referring to the Lord's taking up Zion's cause. In this case one might translate, "a time when he will repay Edom and vindicate Zion."

¹¹ tn Heb "her"; the referent (Edom) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹² tn Heb "it will not be extinguished."

¹³ tn פְּנַזֵּן (*qa'at*) refers to some type of bird (cf. Lev 11:18; Deut 14:17) that was typically found near ruins (see Zeph 2:14). קִפְּרָה (*qippod*) may also refer to a type of bird (NAB "hoot owl"; NIV "screech owl"; TEV "ravens"), but some have suggested a rodent may be in view (cf. NCV "small animals"; ASV "porcupine"; NASB, NRSV "hedgehog").

¹⁴ tn Heb "will possess it" (so NIV).

¹⁵ tn The Hebrew text has נֶשֶׁךְ וְעַרְבָּה (*yanesh v'orev*). Both the נֶשֶׁךְ ("owl"; see Lev 11:17; Deut 14:16) and עַרְבָּה ("raven"; Lev 11:15; Deut 14:14) were types of wild birds.

¹⁶ tn Heb "he"; the referent (the Lord) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

and the plumb line¹⁷ of destruction.¹⁸
34:12 Her nobles will have nothing left to call a kingdom
and all her officials will disappear.¹⁹
34:13 Her fortresses will be overgrown with thorns;
thickets and weeds will grow²⁰ in her fortified cities.
Jackals will settle there;
ostriches will live there.²¹
34:14 Wild animals and wild dogs will congregate there;²²
wild goats will bleat to one another.²³
Yes, nocturnal animals²⁴ will rest there and make for themselves a nest.²⁵
34:15 Owls²⁶ will make nests and lay eggs²⁷ there;
they will hatch them and protect them.²⁸
Yes, hawks²⁹ will gather there, each with its mate.

34:16 Carefully read the scroll of the LORD!³⁰
Not one of these creatures will be missing,³¹
none will lack a mate.³²

¹⁷ tn Heb "stones," i.e., the stones used in a plumb bob.

¹⁸ sn The metaphor in v. 11b emphasizes that God has carefully planned Edom's demise.

¹⁹ tn Heb "will be nothing"; NCV, TEV, NLT "will all be gone."

²⁰ tn The words "will grow" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²¹ tc Heb "and she will be a settlement for wild dogs, a dwelling place for ostriches." The translation assumes an emendation of צַחַר (*khatsir*, "grass") to חַצֵּר (*khatser*, "settlement"). One of the Qumran scrolls of Isaiah (1QIsa^a) supports this emendation (cf. HALOT 344 s.v. חַצֵּר).

²² tn Heb "will meet" (so NIV); NLT "will mingle there."

²³ tn Heb "and a goat will call to its neighbor."

²⁴ tn The precise meaning of לִילִית (*lilit*) is unclear, though in this context the word certainly refers to some type of wild animal or bird. The word appears to be related to הַלָּה (*laylah*, "night"). Some interpret it as the name of a female night demon, on the basis of an apparent Akkadian cognate used as the name of a demon. Later Jewish legends also identified Lilith as a demon. Cf. NRSV "Lilith."

²⁵ tn Heb "and will find for themselves a resting place."

²⁶ tn Hebrew קְפָּרָה (*qippoz*) occurs only here; the precise meaning of the word is uncertain.

²⁷ tn For this proposed meaning for Hebrew מְלַט (*malat*), see HALOT 589 s.v. לְמַלֵּט.

²⁸ tn Heb "and brood [over them] in her shadow."

²⁹ tn The precise meaning of נִיָּה (*dayyah*) is uncertain, though the term appears to refer to some type of bird of prey, perhaps a vulture.

³⁰ tn Heb "Seek from upon the scroll of the Lord and read."

³¹ sn It is uncertain what particular scroll is referred to here. Perhaps the phrase simply refers to this prophecy and is an admonition to pay close attention to the details of the message.

³² tn Heb "one from these will not be missing." הַנְּהָרָה (*hen-nah*, "these") is feminine plural in the Hebrew text. It may refer only to the birds mentioned in v. 15b or may include all of the creatures listed in vv. 14b-15 (all of which are identified with feminine nouns).

³³ tn Heb "each its mate they will not lack."

For the LORD has issued the decree,¹
and his own spirit gathers them.²
34:17 He assigns them their allotment;³
he measures out their assigned place.⁴
They will live there⁵ permanently;
they will settle in it through successive
generations.

The Land and Its People Are Transformed

35:1 Let the desert and dry region be happy;⁶
let the wilderness⁷ rejoice and bloom like a lily!
35:2 Let it richly bloom;⁸
let it rejoice and shout with delight!⁹
It is given the grandeur¹⁰ of Lebanon,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the grandeur of the LORD,
the splendor of our God.
35:3 Strengthen the hands that have gone limp,
steady the knees that shake!¹¹
35:4 Tell those who panic,¹²
“Be strong! Do not fear!
Look, your God comes to avenge!
With divine retribution he comes to deliver you.”¹³

¹ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “for a mouth, it has commanded.” The Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a and a few medieval MSS have יְמִינָה (pihu, “his mouth [has commanded]”), while a few other medieval MSS read יְמִינָה בַּפָּה (pi y^ehvah, “the mouth of the Lord [has commanded]”).

² **tn** Heb “and his spirit, he gathers them.” The pronominal suffix (“them”) is feminine plural, referring to the birds mentioned in v. 15b or to all of the creatures listed in vv. 14b-15 (all of which are identified with feminine nouns).

³ **tn** Heb “and he causes the lot to fall for them.” Once again the pronominal suffix (“them”) is feminine plural, referring to the birds mentioned in v. 15b or to all of the creatures listed in vv. 14b-15 (all of which are identified with feminine nouns).

⁴ **tn** Heb “and his hand divides for them with a measuring line.” The pronominal suffix (“them”) now switches to masculine plural, referring to all the animals and birds mentioned in vv. 11-15, some of which were identified with masculine nouns. This signals closure for this portion of the speech, which began in v. 11. The following couplet (v. 17b) forms an inclusio with v. 11a through verbal repetition.

⁵ **tn** Heb “will possess it” (so NIV); NCV “they will own that land forever.”

⁶ **tn** The final *mem* (ם) on the verb יָשַׁׁבְתִּים (y^esusum) is ditographic (note the initial *mem* on the following noun מִדְבָּר [midbar]). The ambiguous verbal form is translated as a jussive because it is parallel to the jussive form בְּגִיאֵל (tagel). The jussive is used rhetorically here, not as a literal command or prayer.

⁷ **tn** Or “Arabah” (NASB); NAB, NIV, TEV “desert.”

⁸ **tn** The ambiguous verb form מִדְבָּרִךְ (tifrahk) is translated as a jussive because it is parallel to the jussive form בְּגִיאֵל (tagel).

⁹ **tn** Heb “and let it rejoice, yes [with] rejoicing and shouting.” גִּילָת (gilat) may be an archaic feminine nominal form (see GKC 421 §130.b).

¹⁰ **tn** Or “glory” (KJV, NIV, NRSV); also a second time later in this verse.

¹¹ **tn** Heb “staggering knees”; KJV, ASV, NRSV “feeble knees”; NIV “knees that give way.”

¹² **tn** Heb “Say to the hasty of heart,” i.e., those whose hearts beat quickly from fear.

¹³ **tn** The jussive form מִשְׁׁעָנֵבֶן (v^eyosha akhem), which is subordinate to the preceding imperfect with vav conjunctive, indicates purpose.

35:5 Then blind eyes will open,
deaf ears will hear.

35:6 Then the lame will leap like a deer,
the mute tongue will shout for joy;
for water will flow¹⁴ in the desert,
streams in the wilderness.¹⁵

35:7 The dry soil will become a pool of water,

the parched ground springs of water.
Where jackals once lived and sprawled out,

grass, reeds, and papyrus will grow.

35:8 A thoroughfare will be there –
it will be called the Way of Holiness.¹⁶
The unclean will not travel on it;
it is reserved for those authorized to use it.¹⁷

fools¹⁸ will not stray into it.

35:9 No lions will be there,
no ferocious wild animals will be on it¹⁹ –
they will not be found there.

Those delivered from bondage will travel on it,

35:10 those whom the LORD has ransomed will return that way.²⁰

They will enter Zion with a happy shout.
Unending joy will crown them,²¹
happiness and joy will overwhelm²² them;

grief and suffering will disappear.²³

Sennacherib Invades Judah

36:1 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah’s reign,²⁴ King Sennacherib of Assyria marched up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. **36:2** The king of

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “burst forth” (so NAB); KJV “break out.”

¹⁵ **tn** Or “Arabah” (NASB); KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT “desert.”

¹⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “and there will be there a road and a way, and the Way of Holiness it will be called.” דֶּרֶךְ (v^ederekh, “and a/the way”) is accidentally duplicated; the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a does not reflect the repetition of the phrase.

¹⁷ **tn** The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. The text reads literally “and it is for them, the one who walks [on the] way.” In this context those authorized to use the Way of Holiness would be morally upright people who are the recipients of God’s deliverance, in contrast to the morally impure and foolish who are excluded from the new covenant community.

¹⁸ **tn** In this context “fools” are those who are morally corrupt, not those with limited intellectual capacity.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “will go up on it”; TEV “will pass that way.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and the redeemed will walk, the ransomed of the Lord will return.”

²¹ **tn** Heb “[will be] on their head[s].” “Joy” may be likened here to a crown (cf. 2 Sam 1:10). The statement may also be an ironic twist on the idiom “earth/dust on the head” (cf. 2 Sam 1:2; 13:19; 15:32; Job 2:12), referring to a mourning practice.

²² **tn** Heb “will overtake” (NIV); NLT “they will be overcome with.”

²³ **tn** Heb “grief and groaning will flee”; KJV “sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

²⁴ **tn** The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

Assyria sent his chief adviser¹ from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem,² along with a large army. The chief adviser³ stood at the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.⁴ 36:3 Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went out to meet him.

36:4 The chief adviser said to them, “Tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: “What is your source of confidence?”⁵ 36:5 Your claim to have a strategy and military strength is just empty talk.⁶ In whom are you trusting, that you would dare to rebel against me? 36:6 Look, you must be trusting in Egypt, that splintered reed staff. If someone leans on it for support, it punctures his hand and wounds him. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt does to all who trust in him! 36:7 Perhaps you will tell me, ‘We are trusting in the LORD our God.’ But Hezekiah is the one who eliminated his high places and altars and then told the people of Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You must worship at this altar.’ 36:8 Now make a deal with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, provided you can find enough riders for them. 36:9 Certainly you will not refuse one of my master’s minor officials and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen.⁷ 36:10 Furthermore it was by the command of the LORD that I marched up against this land to destroy it. The LORD told me, ‘March up against this land and destroy it!’”⁸

36:11 Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the chief adviser, “Speak to your servants in Ar-

amaic,⁹ for we understand it. Don’t speak with us in the Judahite dialect¹⁰ in the hearing of the people who are on the wall.” **36:12** But the chief adviser said, “My master did not send me to speak these words only to your master and to you.¹¹ His message is also for the men who sit on the wall, for they will eat their own excrement and drink their own urine along with you!”¹²

36:13 The chief adviser then stood there and called out loudly in the Judahite dialect,¹³ “Listen to the message of the great king, the king of Assyria. **36:14** This is what the king says: ‘Don’t let Hezekiah mislead you, for he is not able to rescue you!’ **36:15** Don’t let Hezekiah talk you into trusting in the LORD by saying, “The LORD will certainly rescue us; this city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.” **36:16** Don’t listen to Hezekiah! For this is what the king of Assyria says, ‘Send me a token of your submission and surrender to me.¹⁴ Then each of you may eat from his own vine and fig tree and drink water from his own cistern, **36:17** until I come and take you to a land just like your own – a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards. **36:18** Hezekiah is misleading you when he says, “The LORD will rescue us.” Has any of the gods of the nations rescued his land from the power of the king of Assyria?¹⁵ **36:19** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim?¹⁶ Indeed, did any gods rescue Samaria¹⁷ from my power?¹⁸ **36:20** Who among all the gods of these lands have rescued their lands from my power? So how can the LORD rescue Jerusalem from my power?”¹⁹ **36:21** They were silent and did not

^{1 sn} For a discussion of this title see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 229-30.

^{2 map} For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

^{3 tn} Heb “he”; the referent (the chief adviser) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

^{4 tn} Heb “the field of the washer”; traditionally “the fuller’s field” (so KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

^{5 tn} Heb “What is this object of trust in which you are trusting?”

^{6 tn} Heb “you say only a word of lips, counsel and might for battle.” Sennacherib’s message appears to be in broken Hebrew at this point. The phrase “word of lips” refers to mere or empty talk in Prov 14:23.

^{7 tn} Heb “How can you turn back the face of an official [from among] the least of my master’s servants and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen?” In vv. 8-9 the chief adviser develops further the argument begun in v. 6. His reasoning seems to be as follows: “In your weakened condition you obviously need military strength. Agree to the king’s terms and I will personally give you more horses than you are capable of outfitting. If I, a mere minor official, am capable of giving you such military might, just think what power the king has. There is no way the Egyptians can match our strength. It makes much better sense to deal with us.”

^{8 sn} In v. 10 the chief adviser develops further the argument begun in v. 7. He claims that Hezekiah has offended the LORD and that the LORD has commissioned Assyria as his instrument of discipline and judgment.

^{9 sn} Aramaic was the diplomatic language of the Assyrian empire.

^{10 tn} Or “in Hebrew” (NIV, NCV, NLT); NAB, NASB “in Judean.”

^{11 tn} Heb “To your master and to you did my master send me to speak these words?” The rhetorical question expects a negative answer.

^{12 tn} Heb “[Is it] not [also] to the men...?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Yes, it is.”

^{13 sn} The chief adviser alludes to the horrible reality of siege warfare, when the starving people in the besieged city would resort to eating and drinking anything to stay alive.

^{14 tn} The Hebrew text includes “and he said.”

^{14 tn} Heb “make with me a blessing and come out to me.”

^{15 tn} Heb “Have the gods of the nations rescued, each his land, from the hand of the king of Assyria?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “Of course not!”

^{16 tn} The rhetorical questions in v. 34a suggest the answer, “Nowhere, they seem to have disappeared in the face of Assyria’s might.”

^{17 map} For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

^{18 tn} Heb “that they rescued Samaria from my hand?” But this gives the impression that the gods of Sepharvaim were responsible for protecting Samaria, which is obviously not the case. The implied subject of the plural verb “rescued” must be the generic “gods of the nations/lands” (vv. 18, 20).

^{19 tn} Heb “that the LORD might rescue Jerusalem from my hand?” The logic runs as follows: Since no god has ever been able to withstand the Assyrian onslaught, how can the people of Jerusalem possibly think the LORD will rescue them?

respond, for the king had ordered, “Don’t respond to him.”

36:22 Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn in grief¹ and reported to him what the chief adviser had said. **37:1** When King Hezekiah heard this,² he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went to the LORD’s temple. **37:2** Eliakim the palace supervisor, Shebna the scribe, and the leading priests,³ clothed in sack-cloth, sent this message to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz: **37:3** “This is what Hezekiah says:⁴ ‘This is a day of distress, insults,⁵ and humiliation,⁶ as when a baby is ready to leave the birth canal, but the mother lacks the strength to push it through.⁷ **37:4** Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all these things the chief adviser has spoken on behalf of his master, the king of Assyria, who sent him to taunt the living God.⁸ When the LORD your God hears, perhaps he will punish him for the things he has said.⁹ So pray for this remnant that remains.’”¹⁰

37:5 When King Hezekiah’s servants came to Isaiah, **37:6** Isaiah said to them, “Tell your master this: ‘This is what the LORD says: ‘Don’t be afraid because of the things you have heard – these insults the king of Assyria’s servants have hurled against me.’”¹¹ **37:7** Look, I will take control of his mind;¹² he will receive a report and return to his own land. I will cut him down¹³ with a sword in his own land.’”¹⁴

37:8 When the chief adviser heard the king of Assyria had departed from Lachish, he left and went to Libnah, where the king was cam-

¹ **tn** Heb “with their clothes torn”; the words “in grief” have been supplied in the translation to indicate that this was done as a sign of grief and mourning.

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

³ **tn** Heb “elders of the priests” (so KJV, NAB, NASB); NCV “the older priests”; NRSV, TEV, CEV “the senior priests.”

⁴ **tn** In the Hebrew text this verse begins with “they said to him” (cf. NRSV).

⁵ **tn** Or “rebuke” (KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV), or “correction.”

⁶ **tn** Or “contempt”; NAB, NIV, NRSV “disgrace.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “when sons come to the cervical opening and there is no strength to give birth.”

⁸ **tn** Heb “all the words of the chief adviser whom his master, the king of Assyria, sent to taunt the living God.”

⁹ **tn** Heb “and rebuke the words which the LORD your God hears.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “and lift up a prayer on behalf of the remnant that is found.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “by which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me.”

¹² **tn** Heb “I will put in him a spirit.” The precise sense of רוח (ruakh, “spirit”) is uncertain in this context. It may refer to a spiritual being who will take control of his mind (see 1 Kgs 22:19), or it could refer to a disposition of concern and fear. In either case the LORD’s sovereignty over the king is apparent.

¹³ **tn** Heb “cause him to fall” (so KJV, ASV, NAB), that is, “kill him.”

paigning.¹⁴ **37:9** The king¹⁵ heard that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia¹⁶ was marching out to fight him.¹⁷ He again sent¹⁸ messengers to Hezekiah, ordering them: **37:10** “Tell King Hezekiah of Judah this: ‘Don’t let your God in whom you trust mislead you when he says, “Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.”’ **37:11** Certainly you have heard how the kings of Assyria have annihilated all lands.¹⁹ Do you really think you will be rescued?²⁰ **37:12** Were the nations whom my predecessors²¹ destroyed – the nations of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Telassar – rescued by their gods?²² **37:13** Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the kings of Lair,²³ Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?”

37:14 Hezekiah took the letter²⁴ from the messengers and read it.²⁵ Then Hezekiah went up to the LORD’s temple and spread it out before the LORD. **37:15** Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: **37:16** “O LORD who commands armies, O God of Israel, who is enthroned on the cherubim!²⁶ You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the sky²⁷ and the earth. **37:17** Pay attention, LORD, and hear! Open your eyes, LORD, and observe! Listen to this entire message Sennacherib sent and how he taunts the

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “and the chief adviser returned and he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he heard that he had departed from Lachish.”

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (the king) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “Cush” (so NASB); NIV, NCV “the Cushite king of Egypt.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “heard concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, ‘He has come out to fight with you.’”

¹⁸ **tn** The Hebrew text has, “and he heard and he sent,” but the parallel in 2 Kgs 19:9 has שָׁבֵךְ וַיִּשְׁלַח (vayashav vayish-lakh, “and he returned and he sent”), i.e., “he again sent.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, annihilating them.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and will you be rescued?” The rhetorical question expects the answer, “No, of course not!”

²¹ **tn** Heb “fathers” (so KJV, NAB, NASB); NIV “forefathers”; NCV “ancestors.”

²² **tn** Heb “Did the gods of the nations whom my fathers destroyed rescue them – Gozan and Haran, and Rezeph and the sons of Eden who are in Telassar?”

²³ **sn** Lair was a city located in northeastern Babylon. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 235.

²⁴ **tc** The Hebrew text has the plural, “letters.” The final mem (ם) may be dittographic (note the initial mem on the form that immediately follows). Some Greek and Aramaic witnesses have the singular. If so, one still has to deal with the yod that is part of the plural ending. J. N. Oswalt refers to various commentators who have suggested ways to understand the plural form (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:652).

²⁵ **tn** In the parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:14 the verb has the plural suffix, “them,” but this probably reflects a later harmonization to the preceding textual corruption (of “letter” to “letters”).

²⁶ **sn** Cherubim (singular “cherub”) refers to the images of winged angelic creatures that were above the ark of the covenant.

²⁷ **tn** Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמָיִם (shamayim) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

living God!¹ **37:18** It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all the nations² and their lands. **37:19** They have burned the gods of the nations,³ for they are not really gods, but only the product of human hands manufactured from wood and stone. That is why the Assyrians could destroy them.⁴ **37:20** Now, O LORD our God, rescue us from his power, so all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the LORD.⁵

37:21 Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD God of Israel says: ‘Because you prayed to me concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria,⁶ **37:22** this is what the LORD says about him:⁷

“The virgin daughter Zion⁸
despises you – she makes fun of you;
daughter Jerusalem
shakes her head after you.⁹

37:23 Whom have you taunted and hurled insults at?

At whom have you shouted
and looked so arrogantly?¹⁰

At the Holy One of Israel!¹¹

37:24 Through your messengers you taunted the sovereign master,¹²
‘With my many chariots I climbed up the high mountains,
the slopes of Lebanon.

I cut down its tall cedars
and its best evergreens.

I invaded its most remote regions,¹³
its thickest woods.

37:25 I dug wells
and drank water.¹⁴

¹ **tn** Heb “Hear all the words of Sennacherib which he sent to taunt the living God.”

² **tn** The Hebrew text here has “all the lands,” but the parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:17 has “the nations.”

³ **tn** Heb “and they put their gods in the fire.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “so they destroyed them” (NASB similar).

⁵ **tn** The parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:19 reads, “that you, LORD, are the only God.”

⁶ **tn** The parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:20 reads, “That which you prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard.” The verb “I have heard” does not appear in Isa 37:21, where נָשַׁר (*asher*) probably has a causal sense: “because.”

⁷ **tn** Heb “this is the word which the LORD has spoken about him.”

⁸ **sn** Zion (Jerusalem) is pictured here as a young, vulnerable daughter whose purity is being threatened by the would-be Assyrian rapist. The personification hints at the reality which the young girls of the city would face if the Assyrians conquer it.

⁹ **sn** Shaking the head was a mocking gesture of derision.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “and lifted your eyes on high?” Cf. NIV “lifted your eyes in pride”; NRSV “haughtily lifted your eyes.”

¹¹ **sn** See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

¹² **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here is אֲדֹנָי (*adonay*).

¹³ **tn** Heb “the height of its extremity”; ASV “its farthest height.”

¹⁴ **tc** The Hebrew text has simply, “I dug and drank water.” But the parallel text in 2 Kgs 19:24 has “foreign waters.” בָּרֶם (*zarim*, “foreign”) may have accidentally dropped out of the Isaianic text by homoioteleuton (cf. NCV, NIV, NLT). Note that the preceding word, מַיִם (*mayim*, “water”) also ends in *mem* (ם). The Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a has “foreign waters” for this

With the soles of my feet I dried up
all the rivers of Egypt.’

37:26¹⁵ Certainly you must have heard!¹⁶
Long ago I worked it out,
in ancient times I planned¹⁷ it,
and now I am bringing it to pass.

The plan is this:
Fortified cities will crash
into heaps of ruins.¹⁸

37:27 Their residents are powerless;¹⁹
they are terrified and ashamed.

They are as short-lived as plants in the field
or green vegetation.²⁰

They are as short-lived as grass on the rooftops²¹

when it is scorched by the east wind.²²

37:28 I know where you live
and everything you do

and how you rage against me.²³

37:29 Because you rage against me
and the uproar you create has reached my ears,²⁴

line. However, in several other passages the 1Qlsa^a scroll harmonizes with 2 Kgs 19 against the MT (Isa 36:5; 37:9, 20). Since the addition of “foreign” to this text in Isaiah by a later scribe would be more likely than its deletion, the MT reading should be accepted.

¹⁵ **tn** Having quoted the Assyrian king’s arrogant words in vv. 23–24, the LORD now speaks to the king.

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “Have you not heard?” The rhetorical question expresses the Lord’s amazement that anyone might be ignorant of what he is about to say.

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “formed” (so KJV, ASV).

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “and it is to cause to crash into heaps of ruins fortified cities.” The subject of the third feminine singular verb נָתַן (*nəthān*) is the implied plan, referred to in the preceding lines with third feminine singular pronominal suffixes.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “short of hand”; KJV, ASV “of small power”; NASB “short of strength.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “they are plants in the field and green vegetation.” The metaphor emphasizes how short-lived these seemingly powerful cities really were. See Ps 90:5–6; Isa 40:6–8, 24.

²¹ **tn** Heb “[they are] grass on the rooftops.” See the preceding note.

²² **tc** The Hebrew text has “scorched before the standing grain” (perhaps meaning “before it reaches maturity”), but it is preferable to emend קָנָה (*qanah*, “standing grain”) to קָדִים (*qadim*, “east wind”) with the support of 1Q Isa^a; cf. J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:657, n. 8.

²³ **tc** Heb “your going out and your coming in and how you have raged against me.” Several scholars have suggested that this line is probably dittographic (note the beginning of the next line). However, most English translations include the statement in question at the end of v. 28 and the beginning of v. 29. Interestingly, the LXX does not have this clause at the end of v. 28 and the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a does not have it at the beginning of v. 29. In light of this ambiguous manuscript evidence, it appears best to retain the clause in both verses.

²⁴ **tc** Heb “and your complacency comes up into my ears.” The parallelism is improved if שְׁאָנְחָה (*sha'anankha*, “your complacency”) is emended to שְׁאָנְקָה (*she'anakha*, “your uproar”). See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 237–38. However, the LXX seems to support the MT and Sennacherib’s cavalier dismissal of Yahweh depicts an arrogant complacency (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 1:658, n. 10).

I will put my hook in your nose,¹
and my bridle between your lips,
and I will lead you back
the way you came.”

37:30² “This will be your reminder that I have spoken the truth:³ This year you will eat what grows wild,⁴ and next year⁵ what grows on its own. But the year after that⁶ you will plant seed and harvest crops; you will plant vines and consume their produce.⁷ **37:31** Those who remain in Judah will take root in the ground and bear fruit.⁸

37:32 “For a remnant will leave Jerusalem;
survivors will come out of Mount Zion.
The intense devotion of the LORD who commands armies⁹ will accomplish this.
37:33 So this is what the LORD says about the king of Assyria:
‘He will not enter this city,
nor will he shoot an arrow here.¹⁰
He will not attack it with his shielded warriors,¹¹
nor will he build siege works against it.
37:34 He will go back the way he came – he will not enter this city,’ says the LORD.
37:35 I will shield this city and rescue it for the sake of my reputation and because of my promise to David my servant.”¹²

37:36 The LORD’s messenger¹³ went out and killed 185,000 troops¹⁴ in the Assyrian camp. When they¹⁵ got up early the next morning, there

^{1 sn} The word-picture has a parallel in Assyrian sculpture. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 238.

^{2 tn} At this point the word concerning the king of Assyria (vv. 22-29) ends and the LORD again addresses Hezekiah and the people directly (see v. 21).

^{3 tn} Heb “and this is your sign.” In this case the מִזְרָח (*ot*, “sign”) is a future reminder of God’s intervention designated before the actual intervention takes place. For similar ‘signs’ see Exod 3:12 and Isa 7:14-25.

^{4 tn} This refers to crops that grew up on their own (that is, without cultivation) from the seed planted in past years.

^{5 tn} Heb “and in the second year” (so ASV).

^{6 tn} Heb “in the third year” (so KJV, NAB).

^{7 tn} The four plural imperative verb forms in v. 30b are used rhetorically. The LORD commands the people to plant, harvest, etc. to emphasize the certainty of restored peace and prosperity.

^{8 tn} Heb “The remnant of the house of Judah that is left will add roots below and produce fruit above.”

^{9 tn} Heb “the zeal of the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the Lord of hosts].” In this context the LORD’s “zeal” refers to his intense devotion to and love for his people which prompts him to protect and restore them.

^{10 tn} Heb “there” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV). In terms of English style “here” is expected in collocation with “this” in the previous line.

^{11 tn} Heb “[with] a shield” (so ASV, NASB, NRSV).

^{12 tn} Heb “for my sake and for the sake of David my servant.”

^{13 tn} Traditionally, “the angel of the Lord” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

^{14 tn} The word “troops” is supplied in the translation for smoothness and clarity.

^{15 tn} This refers to the Israelites and/or the rest of the As-

were all the corpses!¹⁶ **37:37** So King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and went on his way. He went home and stayed in Nineveh.¹⁷ **37:38** One day,¹⁸ as he was worshiping¹⁹ in the temple of his god Nisroch,²⁰ his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword.²¹ They ran away to the land of Ararat; his son Esarhaddon replaced him as king.

The Lord Hears Hezekiah’s Prayer

38:1 In those days Hezekiah was stricken with a terminal illness.²² The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz visited him and told him, “This is what the LORD says, ‘Give instructions to your household, for you are about to die; you will not get well.’” **38:2** Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, **38:3** “Please, LORD. Remember how I have served you²³ faithfully and with wholehearted devotion,²⁴ and how I have carried out your will.”²⁵ Then Hezekiah wept bitterly.²⁶

38:4 The LORD told Isaiah,²⁷ **38:5** “Go and tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the LORD God of your ancestor²⁸ David says: ‘I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I will add fifteen years to your life, **38:6** and rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will shield this city.’’’’’’ **38:21²⁹** Isaiah ordered, “Let them take a fig cake and apply it to the ulcerated sore and he will get well.” **38:22** Hezekiah said, “What is the confirming sign that I will go up to

syrian army.

^{16 tn} Heb “look, all of them were dead bodies”; NLT “they found corpses everywhere.”

^{17 tn} Heb “and Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went and returned and lived in Nineveh.”

^{18 tn} The assassination of King Sennacherib probably took place in 681 B.C.

^{19 tn} The verb that introduces this verse serves as a discourse particle and is untranslated; see note on “in the future” in 2:2.

^{20 sn} No such Mesopotamian god is presently known. Perhaps the name *Nisroch* is a corruption of *Nusku*.

^{21 tn} Extra-biblical sources also mention the assassination of Sennacherib, though they refer to only one assassin. See M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 239-40.

^{22 tn} Heb “was sick to the point of dying”; NRSV “became sick and was at the point of death.”

^{23 tn} Heb “walked before you.” For a helpful discussion of the background and meaning of this Hebrew idiom, see M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 254.

^{24 tn} Heb “and with a complete heart”; KJV, ASV “with a perfect heart.”

^{25 tn} Heb “and that which is good in your eyes I have done.”

^{26 tn} Heb “wept with great weeping”; NCV “cried loudly”; TEV “began to cry bitterly.”

^{27 tn} Heb “and the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying.”

^{28 tn} Heb “father” (so KJV, NAB, NIV).

^{29 tc} If original to Isaiah 38, vv. 21-22 have obviously been misplaced in the course of the text’s transmission, and would most naturally be placed here, between Isa 38:6 and 38:7. See 2 Kgs 20:7-8, where these verses are placed at this point in the narrative, not at the end. Another possibility is that these verses were not in the original account, and a scribe, familiar with the 2 Kgs version of the story, appended vv. 21-22 to the end of the account in Isaiah 38.

the LORD's temple?" 38:7 Isaiah replied,¹ "This is your sign from the LORD confirming that the LORD will do what he has said: 38:8 Look, I will make the shadow go back ten steps on the stairs of Ahaz."² And then the shadow went back ten steps.³

Hezekiah's Song of Thanks

38:9 This is the prayer of King Hezekiah of Judah when he was sick and then recovered from his illness:

38:10 "I thought,⁴

'In the middle of my life⁵ I must walk through the gates of Sheol,
I am deprived⁶ of the rest of my years.'

38:11 "I thought,

'I will no longer see the LORD⁷ in the land of the living,
I will no longer look on humankind with the inhabitants of the world.'⁸

38:12 My dwelling place⁹ is removed and taken away¹⁰ from me like a shepherd's tent.

I rolled up my life like a weaver rolls cloth,¹¹
from the loom he cuts me off.¹²

¹ tn The words "Isaiah replied" are supplied in the translation for clarification. In the present form of the Hebrew text v. 7 is joined directly to v. 6, but vv. 21-22, if original to Isaiah 38, must be inserted here. See 2 Kgs 20:7-8.

² tn Heb "the shadow on the steps which [the sun] had gone down, on the steps of Ahaz, with the sun, back ten steps."

³ tn These steps probably functioned as a type of sundial. See HALOT 614 s.v. מִלְּזָה and M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB), 256.

⁴ tn Heb "and the sun returned ten steps on the steps which it had gone down."

⁴ tn Or "I said" (KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

⁵ tn The precise meaning of the phrase בְּרֵמִי יָמִין (*bider mi yamin*, "in the [?] of my days") is uncertain. According to HALOT 226 s.v. לִימַן this word is a *hapax legomenon* meaning "half." Others derive the form from לִימִי (*dami*, "quiet, rest, peacefulness").

⁶ tn The precise meaning of the verb is uncertain. The Pual of בָּקַר (*paqad*) occurs only here and in Exod 38:21, where it appears to mean "passed in review" or "mustered." Perhaps the idea is, "I have been called away for the remainder of my years." To bring out the sense more clearly, one can translate, "I am deprived of the rest of my years."

⁷ tn The Hebrew text has יְהִי יְהִי (*yah yah*, the abbreviated form of יְהִי יְהִי [*yahvah* repeated]), but this is probably a corruption of יְהִי.

⁸ tc The Hebrew text has קָהָל (*khadel*), which appears to be derived from a verbal root meaning "to cease, refrain." But the form has probably suffered an error of transmission; the original form (attested in a few medieval Hebrew MSS) was likely קָהָל (*kheled*, "world").

⁹ tn According to HALOT 217 s.v. דָּוֶר this noun is a *hapax legomenon* meaning "dwelling place," derived from a verbal root meaning "live" (see Ps 84:10). For an interpretation that understands the form as the well-attested noun meaning "generation," see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:679, n. 4.

¹⁰ tn The verb form appears to be a Niphal from גָּלַל (*gallah*), which normally means "uncovered, revealed" in the Niphal. Because of the following reference to a shepherd's tent, some prefer to emend the form to גָּלַל, a Niphal from גָּלָל (*galal*, "roll") and translate "is rolled [or "folded"] up."

¹¹ tn Heb "I rolled up, like a weaver, my life" (so ASV).

¹² sn For a discussion of the imagery employed here, see J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* (NICOT), 1:684.

You turn day into night and end my life.¹³
38:13 I cry out¹⁴ until morning;
like a lion he shatters all my bones;
you turn day into night and end my life.¹⁵
38:14 Like a swallow or a thrush I chirp,
I coo¹⁶ like a dove;
my eyes grow tired from looking up to
the sky.¹⁷

O sovereign master,¹⁸ I am oppressed;
help me!¹⁹

38:15 What can I say?

He has decreed and acted.²⁰

I will walk slowly all my years because I
am overcome with grief.²¹

38:16 O sovereign master, your decrees
can give men life;

may years of life be restored to me.²²

Restore my health²³ and preserve my life.

38:17 "Look, the grief I experienced was
for my benefit.²⁴

You delivered me²⁵ from the Pit of
oblivion.²⁶

For you removed all my sins from your
sight.²⁷

38:18 Indeed²⁸ Sheol does not give you
thanks;
death does not²⁹ praise you.

¹³ tn Heb "from day to night you bring me to an end."

¹⁴ tn The verb form in the Hebrew text is a Piel from שָׁבַח (*shavah*). There are two homonyms שָׁבַת, one meaning in the Piel "level, smooth out," the other "set, place." Neither fits in v. 13. It is likely that the original reading was שִׁבְעָת (*shiva'ti*, "I cry out") from the verbal root שָׁבַע (*shava'*), which occurs exclusively in the Piel.

¹⁵ tn Heb "from day to night you bring me to an end."

¹⁶ tn Or "moan" (ASV, NAB, NASB, NRSV); KJV, CEV
"mourn."

¹⁷ tn Heb "my eyes become weak, toward the height."

¹⁸ tn The Hebrew term translated "sovereign master" here and in v. 16 is אֲדֹנָי ('adonay).

¹⁹ tn Heb "stand surely for me." Hezekiah seems to be picturing himself as a debtor who is being exploited; he asks that the Lord might relieve his debt and deliver him from the oppressive creditor.

²⁰ tn Heb "and he has spoken and he has acted."

²¹ tn Heb "because of the bitterness of my soul."

²² tn The translation offered here is purely speculative. The text as it stands is meaningless and probably corrupt. It reads literally, "O lord, on account of them [the suffix is masculine plural], they live, and to all in them [the suffix is feminine plural], life of my spirit."

²³ tn The prefixed verbal form could be taken as indicative, "you restore my health," but the following imperative form suggests it be understood as an imperfect of request.

²⁴ tn Heb "Look, for peace bitterness was to me bitter"; NAB "thus is my bitterness transformed into peace."

²⁵ tc The Hebrew text reads, "you loved my soul," but this does not fit syntactically with the following prepositional phrase. תְּחַשֵּׁת (*khashshat*, "you loved"), may reflect an aural error; most emend the form to תְּחַסֵּךְ (*khasakht*, "you held back").

²⁶ tn בְּלִי (*beli*) most often appears as a negation, meaning "without," suggesting the meaning "nothingness, oblivion," here. Some translate "decay" or "destruction."

²⁷ tn Heb "for you threw behind your back all my sins."

²⁸ tn Or "For" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

²⁹ tn The negative particle is understood by ellipsis in this line. See GKC 483 §152.z.

Those who descend into the Pit do not anticipate your faithfulness.

38:19 The living person, the living person, he gives you thanks, as I do today.

A father tells his sons about your faithfulness.

38:20 The LORD is about to deliver me,¹ and we will celebrate with music² for the rest of our lives in the LORD's temple.³

Messengers from Babylon Visit Hezekiah

39:1 At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been ill and had recovered. **39:2** Hezekiah welcomed⁴ them and showed them his storehouse with its silver, gold, spices, and high-quality olive oil, as well as his whole armory and everything in his treasures. Hezekiah showed them everything in his palace and in his whole kingdom.⁵ **39:3** Isaiah the prophet visited King Hezekiah and asked him, “What did these men say? Where do they come from?” Hezekiah replied, “They come from the distant land of Babylon.” **39:4** Isaiah⁶ asked, “What have they seen in your palace?” Hezekiah replied, “They have seen everything in my palace. I showed them everything in my treasures.” **39:5** Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Listen to the word of the LORD who commands armies: **39:6** ‘Look, a time is coming when everything in your palace and the things your ancestors⁷ have accumulated to this day will be carried away to Babylon; nothing will be left,’ says the LORD. **39:7** ‘Some of your very own descendants whom you father⁸ will be taken away and will be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’” **39:8** Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “The LORD's word which you have announced is appropriate.”⁹ Then he thought,¹⁰

“For¹¹ there will be peace and stability during my lifetime.”

The Lord Returns to Jerusalem

40:1 “Comfort, comfort my people,” says your¹² God.

40:2 “Speak kindly to¹³ Jerusalem,¹⁴ and tell her that her time of warfare is over,¹⁵ that her punishment is completed.¹⁶ For the LORD has made her pay double¹⁷ for all her sins.”

40:3 A voice cries out, “In the wilderness clear a way for the LORD; construct in the desert a road for our God. **40:4** Every valley must be elevated, and every mountain and hill leveled. The rough terrain will become a level plain,

the rugged landscape a wide valley.

40:5 The splendor¹⁸ of the LORD will be revealed, and all people¹⁹ will see it at the same time.

For²⁰ the LORD has decreed it.”²¹

40:6 A voice says, “Cry out!”

Another asks,²² “What should I cry out?” The first voice responds:²³ “All people are like grass,²⁴ and all their promises²⁵ are like the

¹ tn Or “surely”; cf. CEV “At least.”

² tn The pronominal suffix is second masculine plural. The identity of the addressee is uncertain: (1) God's people may be addressed, or (2) the unidentified heralds commanded to comfort Jerusalem.

³ tn Heb “speak to the heart of Jerusalem.” Jerusalem is personified as a woman.

⁴ tn map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

⁵ tn Heb “that she is filled [with] her warfare.” Some understand נִשְׁׂאָה (*tsayah*, “warfare”) as meaning “hard service” or “compulsory labor” in this context.

⁶ tn Heb “that her punishment is accepted [as satisfactory].”

⁷ tn Heb “for she has received from the hand of the LORD double.” The principle of the double portion in punishment is also seen in Jer 16:18; 17:18 and Rev 18:6. For examples of the double portion in Israelite law, see Exod 22:4, 7, 9 (double restitution by a thief) and Deut 21:17 (double inheritance portion for the firstborn).

⁸ tn Or “glory.” The LORD's “glory” is his theophanic radiance and royal splendor (see Isa 6:3; 24:23; 35:2; 60:1; 66:18-19).

⁹ tn Heb “flesh” (so KJV, ASV, NASB); NAB, NIV “mankind”; TEV “the whole human race.”

¹⁰ tn Or “indeed.”

¹¹ tn Heb “the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹² tn Heb “and he says.” Apparently a second “voice” responds to the command of the first “voice.”

¹³ tn The words “the first voice responds” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The first voice tells the second one what to declare.

¹⁴ tn Heb “all flesh is grass.” The point of the metaphor is explained in v. 7.

¹⁵ tn Heb “and all his loyalty.” The antecedent of the third masculine suffix is בָּשָׂר (*basar*, “flesh”), which refers collectively to mankind. The LXX, apparently understanding the antecedent as “grass,” reads “glory,” but קַהֲסֵד (*khesed*) rarely, if ever, has this nuance. The normal meaning of קַהֲסֵד (“faithful-

¹ tn The infinitive construct is used here to indicate that an action is imminent. See GKC 348-49 §114.i, and IBHS 610 §36.2.3g.

² tn Heb “and music [or perhaps, “stringed instruments”] we will play.”

³ tn Heb “all the days of our lives in the house of the LORD.”

⁴ tn Note that vv. 21-22 have been placed between vv. 6-7, where they logically belong. See 2 Kgs 20:7-8.

⁵ tn Heb “was happy with”; NAB, NASB “was pleased”; NIV “received the envoys gladly.”

⁶ tn Heb “he”; the referent (Isaiah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁷ tn Heb “fathers” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV).

⁸ tn Heb “Some of your sons, who go out from you, whom you father.”

⁹ tn Heb “good” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “favorable.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “and he said.” The verb אָמַר (*amar*, “say”) is sometimes used of what one thinks (that is, says to oneself).

flowers in the field.
40:7 The grass dries up,
 the flowers wither,
 when the wind sent by the LORD¹ blows
 on them.
 Surely humanity² is like grass.
40:8 The grass dries up,
 the flowers wither,
 but the decree of our God is forever reli-
 able.³
40:9 Go up on a high mountain, O herald
 Zion!
 Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem!⁴
 Shout, don't be afraid!
 Say to the towns of Judah,
 "Here is your God!"
40:10 Look, the sovereign LORD comes as
 a victorious warrior;⁵
 his military power establishes his rule.⁶
 Look, his reward is with him;
 his prize goes before him.⁷
40:11 Like a shepherd he tends his flock;
 he gathers up the lambs with his arm;
 he carries them close to his heart;⁸
 he leads the ewes along.

The Lord is Incomparable

40:12 Who has measured out the waters⁹
 in the hollow of his hand,
 or carefully¹⁰ measured the sky,¹¹
 or carefully weighed¹² the soil of the
 earth,
 or weighed the mountains in a balance,
 or the hills on scales?¹³
40:13 Who comprehends¹⁴ the mind¹⁵ of the
 LORD,
 or gives him instruction as his coun-
 selor?¹⁶
40:14 From whom does he receive direc-
 tions?¹⁷
 Who¹⁸ teaches him the correct way to do
 things,¹⁹
 or imparts knowledge to him,
 or instructs him in skillful design?²⁰
40:15 Look, the nations are like a drop in
 a bucket;
 they are regarded as dust on the scales.
 He lifts²¹ the coastlands²² as if they were
 dust.

ness, loyalty, devotion") fits very well in the argument. Human beings and their faithfulness (verbal expressions of faithfulness are specifically in view; cf. NRSV "constancy") are short-lived and unreliable, in stark contrast to the decrees and promises of the eternal God.

1 tn The Hebrew text has רוח יהוה (*ruakh yehvah*), which in this context probably does not refer to the LORD's personal Spirit. The phrase is better translated "the breath of the Lord," or "the wind of [i.e., sent by] the Lord." The LORD's sovereign control over nature, including the hot desert winds that dry up vegetation, is in view here (cf. Ps 147:18; Isa 59:19).

2 tn Heb "the people" (so KJV, ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

3 tn Heb "but the word of our God stands forever." In this context the divine "word" specifically refers to his decreed promise assuring Jerusalem that her suffering is over and his glorious return imminent (vv. 1-5).

4 tn The second feminine singular imperatives are addressed to personified Zion/Jerusalem, who is here told to ascend a high hill and proclaim the good news of the Lord's return to the other towns of Judah. Isa 41:27 and 52:7 speak of a herald sent to Zion, but the masculine singular form מברשׁ (*m'vasser*) is used in these verses, in contrast to the feminine singular form מברשתָ (*m'vasseret*) employed in 40:9, where Zion is addressed as a herald.

5 tn Heb "comes as a strong one"; ASV "will come as a mighty one." The preposition בְּ (bet) here carries the nuance "in the capacity of." It indicates that the LORD possesses the quality expressed by the noun. See GKC 379 §119.i and HALOT 104 s.v. בְּ.

6 tn Heb "his arm rules for him" (so NIV, NRSV). The Lord's "arm" symbolizes his military power (see Isa 51:9-10; 63:5).

7 tn As the LORD returns to Jerusalem as a victorious warrior, he brings with him the spoils of victory, called here his "reward" and "prize." These terms might also be translated "wages" and "recompense." Verse 11 indicates that his rescued people, likened to a flock of sheep, are his reward.

8 tn Heb "in his bosom" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV), an expression which reflects closeness and protective care.

^{9 tn} The Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a has מים בם ("waters of the sea"), a reading followed by NAB.

^{10 tn} Heb "with a span." A "span" was the distance between the ends of the thumb and the little finger of the spread hand" (BDB 285 s.v. גָּמֵן).

^{11 tn} Or "the heavens." The Hebrew term שמיים (*shamayim*) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

^{12 tn} Heb "or weighed by a third part [of a measure]."

^{13 tn} The implied answer to the rhetorical questions of v. 12 is "no one but the LORD. The LORD, and no other, created the world. Like a merchant weighing out silver or commodities on a scale, the LORD established the various components of the physical universe in precise proportions.

^{14 tn} Perhaps the verb is used metonymically here in the sense of "advises" (note the following line).

^{15 tn} In this context רוח (*ruakh*) likely refers to the LORD's "mind," or mental faculties, rather than his personal Spirit (see BDB 925 s.v.).

^{16 tn} Heb "or [as] the man of his counsel causes him to know?"

^{17 tn} Heb "With whom did he consult, so that he gave discernment to him?"

^{18 tn} Heb "and taught him." The vav (ו) consecutive with prefixed verbal form continues the previous line. The translation employs an interrogative pronoun for stylistic reasons.

^{19 tn} The phrase אורה משפט (*'orakh mishpat*) could be translated "path of justice" (so NASB, NRSV), but in this context, where creative ability and skill is in view, the phrase is better understood in the sense of "the way that is proper or fitting" (see BDB 1049 s.v. מִשְׁפָט 6); cf. NIV, NCV "the right way."

^{20 tn} Heb "or the way of understanding causes him to know?"

^{21 tn} The implied answer to the rhetorical questions in vv. 13-14 is, "No one." In contrast to Marduk, the creator-god of Mesopotamian myths who receives help from the god of wisdom, the LORD neither needs nor receives any such advice or help. See R. Whybray, *Heavenly Counsellor* (SOTSMS), 64-77.

^{22 tn} Or "weighs" (NIV); NLT "picks up."

^{23 tn} Or "islands" (NASB, NIV, NLT).

40:16 Not even Lebanon could supply enough firewood for a sacrifice;¹ its wild animals would not provide enough burnt offerings.²

40:17 All the nations are insignificant before him; they are regarded as absolutely nothing.³

40:18 To whom can you compare God? To what image can you liken him?

40:19 A craftsman casts⁴ an idol; a metalsmith overlays it with gold and forges silver chains for it.

40:20 To make a contribution one selects wood that will not rot;⁵ he then seeks a skilled craftsman to make⁶ an idol that will not fall over.

40:21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told to you since the very beginning? Have you not understood from the time the earth's foundations were made?

40:22 He is the one who sits on the earth's horizon;⁷ its inhabitants are like grasshoppers before him.⁸ He is the one who stretches out the sky like a thin curtain,⁹ and spreads it out¹⁰ like a pitched tent.¹¹

40:23 He is the one who reduces rulers to nothing; he makes the earth's leaders insignificant.

¹ tn The words "for a sacrifice" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

² tn The point is that not even the Lebanon forest could supply enough wood and animals for an adequate sacrifice to the Lord.

³ tn Heb "[as derived] from nothing and unformed."

⁴ tn Heb "pours out"; KJV "melteeth."

⁵ tn The first two words of the verse הַמְשֻׁקֵּן תְּרִמְתָּה (hamsukan t'rumah) are problematic. Some take שֻׁקֵּן as an otherwise unattested Pual participle from שֹׁקֵן (sakhan, "be poor") and translate "the one who is impoverished." תְּרִמְתָּה (t'rumah, "contribution") can then be taken as an adverbial accusative, "with respect to a contribution," and the entire line translated, "the one who is too impoverished for such a contribution [i.e., the metal idol of v. 19?] selects wood that will not rot." However, שֻׁקֵּן probably is the name of a tree used in idol manufacturing (cognate with Akkadian *musukkanu*, cf. H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* [SBLLDS], 133). שֻׁקֵּן may be a scribal interpretive addition attempting to specify עֲשֵׂה ('ets) or עַזְזֵה may be a scribal attempt to categorize שֻׁקֵּן. How an idol constitutes a תְּרִמְתָּה ("contribution") is not entirely clear.

⁶ tn Or "set up" (ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); KJV, NASB "to prepare."

⁷ tn Heb "the circle of the earth" (so KJV, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

⁸ tn The words "before him" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁹ tn The otherwise unattested noun דָּק (daq), translated here "thin curtain," is apparently derived from the verbal root דָּקַד ("crush") from which is derived the adjective דָּקָה (daq, "thin"; see HALOT 229 s.v. דָּקָה). The nuance "curtain" is implied from the parallelism (see "tent" in the next line).

¹⁰ tn The meaning of the otherwise unattested verb מַתְחַקֵּה (matakh, "spread out") is determined from the parallelism (note the corresponding verb "stretch out" in the previous line) and supported by later Hebrew and Aramaic cognates. See HALOT 654 s.v. מַתְחַקֵּה.

¹¹ tn Heb "like a tent [in which] to live"; NAB, NASB "like a tent to dwell (live NIV, NRSV) in."

40:24 Indeed, they are barely planted; yes, they are barely sown; yes, they barely take root in the earth, and then he blows on them, causing them to dry up, and the wind carries them away like straw.

40:25 "To whom can you compare me? Whom do I resemble?" says the Holy One.¹²

40:26 Look up at the sky!¹³ Who created all these heavenly lights?¹⁴ He is the one who leads out their ranks;¹⁵ he calls them all by name.

Because of his absolute power and awe-some strength, not one of them is missing.

40:27 Why do you say, Jacob, Why do you say, Israel, "The Lord is not aware of what is happening to me."¹⁶

My God is not concerned with my vindication"?¹⁷

40:28 Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The Lord is an eternal God, the Creator of the whole earth.¹⁸

He does not get tired or weary; there is no limit to his wisdom.¹⁹

40:29 He gives strength to those who are tired; to the ones who lack power, he gives renewed energy.

40:30 Even youths get tired and weary; even strong young men clumsily stumble.²⁰

40:31 But those who wait for the Lord's help²¹ find renewed strength;

¹² sn See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

¹³ tn Heb "Lift on high your eyes and see."

¹⁴ tn The words "heavenly lights" are supplied in the translation for clarification. See the following lines.

¹⁵ tn Heb "the one who brings out by number their host." The stars are here likened to a huge army that the Lord leads out. Perhaps the next line pictures God calling roll. If so, the final line may be indicating that none of them dares "go AWOL." ("AWOL" is a military acronym for "absent without leave.")

¹⁶ tn Heb "my way is hidden from the Lord" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁷ tn Heb "and from my God my justice passes away"; NRSV "my right is disregarded by my God."

¹⁸ tn Heb "the ends of the earth," but this is a merism, where the earth's extremities stand for its entirety, i.e., the extremities and everything in between them.

¹⁹ sn Exiled Israel's complaint (v. 27) implies that God might be limited in some way. Perhaps he, like so many of the pagan gods, has died. Or perhaps his jurisdiction is limited to Judah and does not include Babylon. Maybe he is unable to devise an adequate plan to rescue his people, or is unable to execute it. But v. 28 affirms that he is not limited temporally or spatially nor is his power and wisdom restricted in any way. He can and will deliver his people, if they respond in hopeful faith (v. 31a).

²⁰ tn Heb "stumbling they stumble." The verbal idea is emphasized by the infinitive absolute.

²¹ tn The words "for the Lord's help" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

they rise up as if they had eagles' wings,¹
they run without growing weary,
they walk without getting tired.

The Lord Challenges the Nations

41:1 Listen to me in silence, you coastlands!²
Let the nations find renewed strength!
Let them approach and then speak;
let us come together for debate!³

41:2 Who stirs up this one from the east?⁴
Who⁵ officially commissions him for service?⁶
He hands nations over to him,⁷
and enables him to subdue⁸ kings.
He makes them like dust with his sword,
like windblown straw with his bow.⁹

41:3 He pursues them and passes by unharmed;¹⁰
he advances with great speed.¹¹

41:4 Who acts and carries out decrees?¹²
Who¹³ summons the successive generations from the beginning?

I, the LORD, am present at the very beginning,
and at the very end – I am the one.¹⁴

41:5 The coastlands¹⁵ see and are afraid;
the whole earth¹⁶ trembles;

¹ tn Heb “they rise up [on] wings like eagles” (TEV similar).

² tn Or “islands” (KJV, NIV, CEV); TEV “distant lands”; NLT “lands beyond the sea.”

³ tn The Hebrew term מִשְׁפָט (mishpat) could be translated “judgment,” but here it seems to refer to the dispute or debate between the LORD and the nations.

⁴ sn The expression *this one from the east* refers to the Persian conqueror Cyrus, as later texts indicate (see 44:28-45:6; 46:11; 48:14-16).

⁵ tn The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis.

⁶ tn Heb “[in] righteousness called him to his foot.”

⁷ tn Heb “he [at the LORD] places before him [Cyrus] nations.”

⁸ tn The verb יָרַד (yard^e) is an otherwise unattested Hiphil form from יָרָד (radah, “rule”). But the Hiphil makes no sense with “kings” as object; one must understand an ellipsis and supply “him” (Cyrus) as the object. The Qumran scroll 1QIsaa^a has יָרַד (yord), which appears to be a Hiphil form from יָרַד (yarad, “go down”). Others suggest reading יָרַד (yarod), a Qal form from יָרַד (radad, “beat down”).

⁹ sn The point is that they are powerless before Cyrus’ military power and scatter before him.

¹⁰ tn Heb “[in] peace”; KJV, ASV “safely”; NASB “in safety”; NIV “unclothed.”

¹¹ tn Heb “a way with his feet he does not come [or “enter”].” One could translate, “by a way he was not [previously] entering with his feet.” This would mean that he is advancing into new territory and expanding his conquests. The present translation assumes this is a hyperbolic description to his speedy advance. He moves so quickly he does not enter the way with his feet, i.e., his feet don’t even touch the ground. See C. R. North, *Second Isaiah*, 94.

¹² tn Heb “Who acts and accomplishes?”; NASB “Who has performed and accomplished it.”

¹³ tn The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

¹⁴ tn Heb “I, the LORD, [am with] the first, and with the last ones I [am] he.”

¹⁵ tn Or “islands” (NIV, CEV); NCV “faraway places”; NLT “lands beyond the sea.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “the ends of the earth,” but this is a merism, where the earth’s extremities stand for its entirety, i.e., the extremities and everything in between them.

they approach and come.

41:6 They help one another;¹⁷
one says to the other, ‘Be strong!’

41:7 The craftsman encourages the metalsmith,
the one who wields the hammer encourages¹⁸ the one who pounds on the anvil.
He approves the quality of the welding,¹⁹
and nails it down so it won’t fall over.”

The Lord Encourages His People

41:8 “You, my servant Israel,
Jacob whom I have chosen,
offspring of Abraham my friend,²⁰

41:9 you whom I am bringing back²¹ from
the earth’s extremities,
and have summoned from the remote
regions –

I told you, “You are my servant.”
I have chosen you and not rejected you.

41:10 Don’t be afraid, for I am with you!
Don’t be frightened, for I am your God!²²
I strengthen you –
yes, I help you –
yes, I uphold you with my saving right
hand!²³

41:11 Look, all who were angry at you
will be ashamed and humiliated;
your adversaries²⁴ will be reduced to
nothing²⁵ and perish.

41:12 When you will look for your opponents,²⁶ you will not find them;
your enemies²⁷ will be reduced to absolutely nothing.

¹⁷ tn Heb “each his neighbor helps”; NCV “The workers help each other.”

¹⁸ tn The verb “encourages” is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

¹⁹ tn Heb “saying of the welding, ‘It is good.’”

²⁰ tn Or perhaps, “covenantal partner” (see 1 Kgs 5:15 HT [5:1 ET]; 2 Chr 20:7).

²¹ tn Heb “whom I have taken hold of [i.e., to lead back].”

²² tn According to BDB (1043 s.v. שָׂמֵךְ), the verb תִּשְׁתַּחֲנוּ (iish-ta-nu^a) in the second line of the poetic couplet is a Hitpael form from the root שָׂמֵךְ (sha’ah, “gaze,” with metathesis of the stem prefix and the first root letter). Taking the Hitpael as iterative, one may then translate “do not anxiously look about.” However, the alleged Hitpael form of שָׂמֵךְ (sha’ah) only occurs here and in verse 23. HALOT 1671 s.v. שָׂמֵךְ proposes that the verb is instead a Qal form from the root שָׁמֵךְ (“fear”) which is attested in cognate Semitic languages, including Ugaritic (discovered after the publishing of BDB), suggests the existence of this root. The poetic structure of v. 10 also supports the proposal, for the form in question is in synonymous parallelism to יִירָא (yare’, “fear”).

²³ tn The “right hand” is a symbol of the LORD’s power to deliver (Exod 15:6, 12) and protect (Ps 63:9 HT [63:8 ET]). Here טָהֹר (tsedeq) has its well-attested nuance of “vindicated righteousness,” i.e., “victory, deliverance” (see 45:8; 51:5, and BDB 841-42 s.v.).

²⁴ tn Heb “the men of your strife”; NASB “those who contend with you.”

²⁵ tn Heb “like nothing”; NAB “come to nought.”

²⁶ tn Heb “the men of your struggle”; NASB “those who quarrel with you.”

²⁷ tn Heb “the men of your battle”; NAB “who do battle with you.”

41:13 For I am the LORD your God,
the one who takes hold of your right
hand,
who says to you, ‘Don’t be afraid, I am
helping you.’

41:14 Don’t be afraid, despised insignificant Jacob,¹
men of² Israel.
I am helping you,” says the LORD,
your protector,³ the Holy One of Israel.⁴

41:15 “Look, I am making you like⁵ a
sharp threshing sledge,
new and double-edged.⁶
You will thresh the mountains and crush
them;
you will make the hills like straw.⁷

41:16 You will winnow them and the wind
will blow them away;
the wind will scatter them.
You will rejoice in the LORD;
you will boast in the Holy One of Israel.

41:17 The oppressed and the poor look for
water, but there is none;
their tongues are parched from thirst.
I, the LORD, will respond to their prayers;⁸
I, the God of Israel, will not abandon
them.

41:18 I will make streams flow down the
slopes
and produce springs in the middle of the
valleys.
I will turn the desert into a pool of water
and the arid land into springs.

41:19 I will make cedars, acacias, myrtles,
and olive trees grow in the wilderness;
I will make evergreens, firs, and cypresses
grow together in the desert.

41:20 I will do this so⁹ people¹⁰ will ob-
serve and recognize,
so they will pay attention and understand
that the LORD’s power¹¹ has accomplished
this,
and that the Holy One of Israel has
brought it into being.”¹²

¹ **tn** Heb “O worm Jacob” (NAB, NIV). The worm metaphor suggests that Jacob is insignificant and despised.

² **tn** On the basis of the parallelism (note “worm”) and an alleged Akkadian cognate, some read “louse” or “weevil.” Cf. NAB “O maggot Israel”; NRSV “you insect Israel.”

³ **tn** Heb “your kinsman redeemer.” A **לְאַלְעָלָה** (*ga’al*, “kinsman redeemer”) was a protector of the extended family’s interests.

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

⁵ **tn** Heb “into” (so NIV); ASV “have made thee to be.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “owner of two-mouths,” i.e., double-edged.

⁷ **tn** The mountains and hills symbolize hostile nations that are obstacles to Israel’s restoration.

⁸ **tn** Heb “will answer them” (so ASV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

⁹ **tn** The words “I will do this” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The Hebrew text has here simply, “in order that.”

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “they”; NAB, NRSV “that all may see”; CEV, NLT “Everyone will see.”

¹¹ **tn** Heb “hand” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹² **tn** Or “created it” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “has made it happen.”

The Lord Challenges the Pagan Gods

41:21 “Present your argument,” says the LORD.

“Produce your evidence,”¹³ says Jacob’s king.¹⁴

41:22 “Let them produce evidence! Let them tell us what will happen!
Tell us about your earlier predictive oracles,¹⁵

so we may examine them¹⁶ and see how they were fulfilled.¹⁷

Or decree for us some future events!

41:23 Predict how future events will turn out,¹⁸

so we might know you are gods.

Yes, do something good or bad,
so we might be frightened and in awe.¹⁹

41:24 Look, you are nothing, and your accomplishments are nonexistent;
the one who chooses to worship you is disgusting.²⁰

41:25 I have stirred up one out of the north²¹ and he advances,
one from the eastern horizon who prays in my name.²²

He steps on²³ rulers as if they were clay,
like a potter treading the clay.

41:26 Who decreed this from the beginning, so we could know?

Who announced it²⁴ ahead of time, so we could say, ‘He’s correct’?

Indeed, none of them decreed it!

Indeed, none of them announced it!

Indeed, no one heard you say anything!

41:27 I first decreed to Zion, ‘Look, here’s what will happen!’²⁵

I sent a herald to Jerusalem.²⁶

41:28 I look, but there is no one,
among them there is no one who serves
as an adviser,

¹³ **tn** Heb “strong [words],” see HALOT 870 s.v. *

¹⁴ **sn** Apparently this challenge is addressed to the pagan idol gods, see vv. 23-24.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “As for the former things, tell us what they are!”

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “so we might set [them to] our heart.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “and might know their outcome.”

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “Declare the coming things, with respect to the end.”

¹⁹ **tc** The translation assumes the Qere **נִירָא** (*nir’ah*), from **נִירָא** (*[y]are’*), “be afraid”.

²⁰ **tn** Heb “so we might be frightened and afraid together.” On the meaning of the verb **שָׁתָא** (*shata’*), see the note at v. 10.

²¹ **tn** Heb “an object of disgust [is he who] chooses you.”

²² **sn** That is, Cyrus the Persian. See the note at v. 2.

²³ **tn** Heb “[one] from the rising of the sun [who] calls in my name.”

²⁴ **tn** The Hebrew text has **וַיֹּאמֶר** (*vayavo’*, “and he comes”), but this is likely a corruption of an original **וַיֹּאמֶר בְּבָשָׂר** (*vayavas*), from **בָּשָׂר** (*basar*, “step on”).

²⁵ **tn** The words “who announced it” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The interrogative particle and verb are understood by ellipsis (see the preceding line).

²⁶ **tn** The Hebrew text reads simply, “First to Zion, ‘Look here they are!’” The words “I decreed” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁷ **map** For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

that I might ask questions and receive answers.

41:29 Look, all of them are nothing,¹ their accomplishments are nonexistent; their metal images lack any real substance.²

The Lord Commissions His Special Servant

42:1³ "Here is my servant whom I support,
my chosen one in whom I take pleasure.
I have placed my spirit on him;
he will make just decrees⁴ for the nations.⁵

42:2 He will not cry out or shout;
he will not publicize himself in the streets.⁶

42:3 A crushed reed he will not break,
a dim wick he will not extinguish;⁷
he will faithfully make just decrees.⁸

42:4 He will not grow dim or be crushed⁹
before establishing justice on the earth;
the coastlands¹⁰ will wait in anticipation
for his decrees."¹¹

42:5 This is what the true God,¹² the LORD,
says –
the one who created the sky and stretched
it out,
the one who fashioned the earth and ev-
erything that lives on it,¹³
the one who gives breath to the people
on it,
and life to those who live on it.¹⁴

^{1 tc} The Hebrew text has פָּשָׁת ('aven, "deception," i.e., "false"), but the Qumran scroll 10Qlsa^a has פָּנָא ("nothing"), which forms a better parallel with בְּזַבֵּן ('efes, "nothing") in the next line. See also 40:17 and 41:12.

^{2 tn} Heb "their statues are wind and nothing"; NASB "wind and emptiness"; NIV "wind and confusion."

^{3 sn} Verses 1-7 contain the first of Isaiah's "servant songs," which describe the ministry of a special, ideal servant who accomplishes God's purposes for Israel and the nations. This song depicts the servant as a just king who brings justice to the earth and relief for the oppressed. The other songs appear in 49:1-13; 50:4-11; and 52:13-53:12.

^{4 tn} Heb "he will bring out justice" (cf. ASV, NASB, NRSV).

^{5 sn} Like the ideal king portrayed in Isa 11:1-9, the servant is energized by the divine spirit and establishes justice on the earth.

^{6 tn} Heb "he will not cause his voice to be heard in the street."

^{7 sn} The "crushed reed" and "dim wick" symbolize the weak and oppressed who are on the verge of extinction.

^{8 tn} Heb "faithfully he will bring out justice" (cf. ASV, NRSV).

^{9 tn} For rhetorical effect the terms used to describe the "crushed" (רָצַס, *ratsats*) reed and "dim" (קָהָה, *kahah*) wick" in v. 3 are repeated here.

^{10 tn} Or "islands" (NIV); NLT "distant lands beyond the sea."

^{11 tn} Or "on his law" (KJV, ASV, NASB, NIV) or "his instruction" (NLT).

^{12 tn} Heb "the God." The definite article here indicates distinctiveness or uniqueness.

^{13 tn} Heb "and its offspring" (so NASB); NIV "all that comes out of it."

^{14 tn} Heb "and spirit [i.e., "breath"] to the ones walking in it" (NAB, NASB, and NRSV all similar).

42:6 "I, the LORD, officially commission you;¹⁵

I take hold of your hand.

I protect you¹⁶ and make you a covenant mediator for people,¹⁷

and a light¹⁸ to the nations,¹⁹

42:7 to open blind eyes,²⁰

to release prisoners²¹ from dungeons,
those who live in darkness from prisons.

The Lord Intervenes

42:8 I am the LORD! That is my name!
I will not share my glory with anyone else,

or the praise due me with idols.

42:9 Look, my earlier predictive oracles have come to pass;²²

now I announce new events.

Before they begin to occur,
I reveal them to you."²³

42:10 Sing to the LORD a brand new song!
Praise him²⁴ from the horizon of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and every-
thing that lives in it,²⁵

you coastlands²⁶ and those who live there!

42:11 Let the desert and its cities shout out,
the towns where the nomads of Kedar live!
Let the residents of Sela shout joyfully;
let them shout loudly from the mountain-
tops.

^{15 tn} Heb "call you in righteousness." The pronoun "you" is masculine singular, referring to the servant. See the note at 41:2.

^{16 tn} The translation assumes the verb is derived from the root נִצָּת (*natsar*, "protect"). Some prefer to derive it from the root נִצָּר (*yatsar*, "form").

^{17 tn} Heb "a covenant of people." A person cannot literally be a covenant; בָּרִית (*bə-rit*) is probably metonymic here, indicating a covenant mediator. The precise identity of אָמֵן (*am*, "people") is uncertain. In v. 5 אָמֵן refers to mankind, and the following reference to "nations" also favors this. But in 49:8, where the phrase בָּרִית אָמֵן occurs again, Israel seems to be in view.

^{18 sn} Light here symbolizes deliverance from bondage and oppression; note the parallelism in 49:6b and in 51:4-6.

^{19 tn} Or "the Gentiles" (so KJV, ASV, NIV); the same Hebrew word can be translated "nations" or "Gentiles" depending on the context.

^{20 sn} This does not refer to literal physical healing of the blind. As the next two lines suggest, this refers metonymically to freeing captives from their dark prisons where their eyes have grown unaccustomed to light.

^{21 sn} This does not refer to hardened, dangerous criminals, who would have been executed for their crimes in ancient Near Eastern society. This verse refers to political prisoners or victims of social injustice.

^{22 tn} Heb "the former things, look, they have come."

^{23 tn} Heb "before they sprout up, I cause you to hear." The pronoun "you" is plural, referring to the people of Israel. In this verse "the former things" are the Lord's earlier predictive oracles which have come to pass, while "the new things" are predicted events that have not yet begun to take place. "The former things" are earlier events in Israel's history which God announced beforehand, such as the Exodus (see 43:16-18). "The new things" are the predictions about the servant (42:1-7), and may also include Cyrus' conquests (41:25-27).

^{24 tn} Heb "his praise." The phrase stands parallel to "new song" in the previous line.

^{25 tn} Heb "and its fullness"; NASB, NIV "and all that is in it."

^{26 tn} Or "islands" (NASB, NIV); NLT "distant coastlands."

42:12 Let them give the LORD the honor he deserves,¹
let them praise his deeds in the coastlands.²

42:13 The LORD emerges like a hero,
like a warrior he inspires himself for battle;³
he shouts, yes, he yells,
he shows his enemies his power.⁴

42:14 “I have been inactive⁵ for a long time;
I kept quiet and held back.
Like a woman in labor I groan;
I pant and gasp.⁶

42:15 I will make the trees on the mountains and hills wither up;⁷
I will dry up all their vegetation.
I will turn streams into islands,⁸
and dry up pools of water.⁹

42:16 I will lead the blind along an unfamiliar way;¹⁰
I will guide them down paths they have never traveled.¹¹
I will turn the darkness in front of them into light,
and level out the rough ground.¹²
This is what I will do for them.
I will not abandon them.

42:17 Those who trust in idols
will turn back and be utterly humiliated,¹³
those who say to metal images, ‘You are our gods.’”

The Lord Reasons with His People

42:18 “Listen, you deaf ones!

¹ tn Heb “Let them ascribe to the LORD glory.”

² tn Heb “and his praise in the coastlands [or “islands”] let them declare.”

³ tn Heb “like a man of war he stirs up zeal” (NIV similar).

⁴ tn Or perhaps, “he triumphs over his enemies” (cf. NIV); NLT “will crush all his enemies.”

⁵ tn Heb “silent” (so NASB, NIV, TEV, NLT); CEV “have held my temper.”

⁶ sn The imagery depicts the LORD as a warrior who is eager to fight and can no longer hold himself back from the attack.

⁷ tn Heb “I will dry up the mountains and hills.” The “mountains and hills” stand by synecdoche for the trees that grow on them. Some prefer to derive the verb from a homonymic root and translate, “I will lay waste.”

⁸ tc The Hebrew text reads, “I will turn streams into coastlands [or “islands”].” Scholars who believe that this reading makes little sense have proposed an emendation of בְּאַיִן (“ayyin,” “islands”) to בְּאַיָּוֹת (aysyyot, “dry places”; cf. NCV, NLT, TEV). However, since all the versions support the MT reading, there is insufficient grounds for an emendation here. Although the imagery of changing rivers into islands is somewhat strange, J. N. Oswalt describes this imagery against the backdrop of rivers of the Near East. The receding of these rivers at times occasioned the appearance of previously submerged islands (Isaiah [NICOT], 2:126).

⁹ sn The imagery of this verse, which depicts the LORD bringing a curse of infertility to the earth, metaphorically describes how the LORD will destroy his enemies.

¹⁰ tn Heb “a way they do not know” (so NASB); NRSV “a road they do not know.”

¹¹ tn Heb “in paths they do not know I will make them walk.”

¹² tn Heb “and the rough ground into a level place.”

¹³ tn Heb “be ashamed with shame”; ASV, NASB “be utterly put to shame.”

Take notice,¹⁴ you blind ones!

42:19 My servant is truly blind,
my messenger is truly deaf.
My covenant partner,¹⁵ the servant of the

LORD, is truly blind.¹⁶

42:20 You see¹⁷ many things, but don’t comprehend;¹⁸

their ears are open, but do not hear.”
42:21 The LORD wanted to exhibit his justice

by magnifying his law and displaying it.¹⁹

42:22 But these people are looted and plundered;

all of them are trapped in pits²⁰
and held captive²¹ in prisons.

They were carried away as loot with no one to rescue them;

they were carried away as plunder, and no one says, “Bring that back!”²²

42:23 Who among you will pay attention to this?

Who will listen attentively in the future?²³

42:24 Who handed Jacob over to the robber?

¹⁴ tn Heb “look to see”; NAB, NCV “look and see”; NRSV “look up and see.”

¹⁵ tc The precise meaning of משְׁלָמֵם (*məsh'llam*) in this context is uncertain. In later biblical Hebrew the form (which appears to be a Pual participle from the root מִשְׁלָם, *shalam*) occurs as a proper name, Meshullam. The Pual of בְּלִלָּה (“be complete”) is attested with the meaning “repaid, requited,” but that makes little sense here. BDB 1023 s.v. בְּלִילָה relates the form to the denominative verb בְּלִילָה (“be at peace”) and paraphrases “one in a covenant of peace” (J. N. Oswalt suggests “the covenanted one”; Isaiah [NICOT], 2:128, n. 59) Some emend the form to בְּלִילָם (*mosh'lam*, “their ruler”) or בְּלִילָה (*məsh'llakhi*, “my sent [or “commissioned”] one”), which fits nicely in the parallelism (note “my messenger” in the previous line). The translation above assumes an emendation to בְּלִילָה (*k'mo shol'mi*, “like my ally”). Isaiah uses בְּלִילָה in 30:22 and perhaps 51:5; for בְּלִילָה (“my ally”) see Ps 7:5 HT (7:4 ET).

¹⁶ tn Heb “Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like my messenger I send? Who is blind like my commissioned one, blind like the servant of the LORD?” The point of the rhetorical questions is that no one is as blind/deaf as this servant. In this context the LORD’s “servant” is exiled Israel (cf. 41:8-9), which is spiritually blind and deaf and has failed to fulfill God’s purpose for it. This servant stands in contrast to the ideal “Israel” of the servant songs.

¹⁷ tn The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has a perfect, 2nd person masculine singular; the marginal reading (*Qere*) has an infinitive absolute, which functions here as a finite verb.

¹⁸ tn Heb “but you do not guard [i.e., retain in your memory]”; NIV “but have paid no attention.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “The LORD was pleased for the sake of his righteousness [or “justice”], he was magnifying [the] law and was making [it] glorious.” The LORD contrasts his good intentions for the people with their present crisis (v. 22). To demonstrate his just character and attract the nations, the LORD wanted to showcase his law among and through Israel (Deut 4:5-8). But Israel disobeyed (v. 24) and failed to carry out their commission.

²⁰ tc The Hebrew text has בָּחֲרִים (*bakhurim*, “young men”), but the text should be emended to בָּהֲרִים (*bəhorim*, “in holes”).

²¹ tn Heb “and made to be hidden”; NAB, NASB, NIV, TEV “hidden away in prisons.”

²² tn Heb “they became loot and there was no one rescuing, plunder and there was no one saying, ‘Bring back’.”

²³ tn The interrogative particle is understood in the second line by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

Who handed Israel over to the looters?¹
 Was it not the LORD, against whom we sinned?
 They refused to follow his commands; they disobeyed his law.²

42:25 So he poured out his fierce anger on them, along with the devastation³ of war. Its flames encircled them, but they did not realize it;⁴ it burned against them, but they did notice.⁵

The Lord Will Rescue His People

43:1 Now, this is what the LORD says, the one who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel: “Don’t be afraid, for I will protect⁶ you. I call you by name, you are mine.

43:2 When you pass through the waters, I am with you; when you pass⁷ through the streams, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not harm⁸ you.

43:3 For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,⁹ your deliverer. I have handed over Egypt as a ransom price, Ethiopia and Seba¹⁰ in place of you.

43:4 Since you are precious and special in my sight,¹¹ and I love you, I will hand over people in place of you, nations in place of your life.

43:5 Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. From the east I will bring your descendants; from the west I will gather you.

¹ tn Heb “Who gave to the robber Jacob, and Israel to the looters?” In the first line the consonantal text (*Kethib*) has משׁׂהָה (*m^{esh}shohē*), a Polel participle from שָׁהַ (*shashāh*, “plunder”). The marginal reading (*Qere*) is משִׁיחָה (*m^{esh}shīshah*), a noun meaning “plunder.” In this case one could translate “Who handed Jacob over as plunder?”

² tn Heb “they were not willing in his ways to walk, and they did not listen to his law.”

³ tn Heb “strength” (so KJV, NASB); NAB “fury”; NASB “fierceness”; NIV “violence.”

⁴ tn Heb “and it blazed against him all around, but he did not know.” The subject of the third feminine singular verb “blazed” is the divine הָנָה (*khemah*, “anger”) mentioned in the previous line.

⁵ tn Heb “and it burned against him, but he did not set [it] upon [the] heart.”

⁶ tn Or “redeem.” See the note at 41:14. Cf. NCV “saved you”; CEV “rescued you”; NLT “ransomed you.”

⁷ tn The verb is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

⁸ tn Heb “burn” (so NASB); NAB, NRSV, NLT “consume”; NIV “set you ablaze.”

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

¹⁰ tn Seba is not the same as Sheba in southern Arabia; cf. Gen 1:10; 1 Chr 1:9.

¹¹ tn Heb “Since you are precious in my eyes and you are honored.”

43:6 I will say to the north, ‘Hand them over!’ and to the south, ‘Don’t hold any back! Bring my sons from distant lands, and my daughters from the remote regions of the earth,

43:7 everyone who belongs to me,¹² whom I created for my glory, whom I formed – yes, whom I made!

The Lord Declares His Sovereignty

43:8 Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes, those who are deaf, even though they have ears!

43:9 All nations gather together, the peoples assemble. Who among them announced this? Who predicted earlier events for us?¹³ Let them produce their witnesses to testify they were right;

let them listen and affirm, ‘It is true.’

43:10 You are my witnesses,” says the LORD, “my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may consider¹⁴ and believe in me,

and understand that I am he.

No god was formed before me, and none will outlive me.¹⁵

43:11 I, I am the LORD,

and there is no deliverer besides me.

43:12 I decreed and delivered and proclaimed,

and there was no other god among you. You are my witnesses,” says the LORD, “that I am God.

43:13 From this day forward I am he;¹⁶ no one can deliver from my power,¹⁶ I will act, and who can prevent it?”

The Lord Will Do Something New

43:14 This is what the LORD says, your protector,¹⁷ the Holy One of Israel:¹⁸ “For your sake I send to Babylon and make them all fugitives,¹⁹ turning the Babylonians’ joyful shouts into mourning songs.²⁰

¹² tn Heb “everyone who is called by my name” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹³ tn Heb “and the former things was causing us to hear?”

¹⁴ tn Or “know” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁵ tn Heb “and after me, there will not be”; NASB “there will be none after Me.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “hand” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “No one can oppose what I do.”

¹⁷ tn Or “kinsman redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

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

¹⁹ tn Heb “and I bring down [as] fugitives all of them.”

²⁰ tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “as for the Babylonians, in ships their joyful shout.” This might be paraphrased, “even the Babylonians in the ships [over which] they joyfully shouted.” The point would be that the LORD caused the Babylonians to flee for safety in the ships in which they took such great pride. A slight change in vocalization yields the reading

43:15 I am the LORD, your Holy One,¹ the one who created Israel, your king.”

43:16 This is what the LORD says, the one who made a road through the sea, a pathway through the surging waters, **43:17** the one who led chariots and horses to destruction,²

together with a mighty army.

They fell down,³ never to rise again; they were extinguished, put out like a burning wick:

43:18 “Don’t remember these earlier events;⁴

don’t recall these former events.

43:19 “Look, I am about to do something new.

Now it begins to happen!⁵ Do you not recognize⁶ it?

Yes, I will make a road in the desert and paths⁷ in the wilderness.

43:20 The wild animals of the desert honor me,

the jackals and ostriches, because I put water in the desert and streams in the wilderness, to quench the thirst of my chosen people, **43:21** the people whom I formed for myself,

so they might praise me.”⁸

The Lord Rebukes His People

43:22 “But you did not call for me, O Jacob;

you did not long⁹ for me, O Israel.

43:23 You did not bring me lambs for your burnt offerings;

you did not honor me with your sacrifices.

I did not burden you with offerings;

I did not make you weary by demanding¹⁰ incense.

43:24 You did not buy me aromatic reeds;¹¹

“into mourning songs,” which provides a good contrast with “joyful shout.” The prefixed *bet* (בְּ) would indicate identity.

1 sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

2 tn Heb “led out chariots and horses.” The words “to destruction” are supplied in the translation for clarification. The verse refers to the destruction of the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

3 tn Heb “lay down”; NAB “lie prostrate together”; CEV “lie dead”; NRSV “they lie down.”

4 tn Heb “the former things” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “forget all that.”

5 tn Heb “sprouts up”; NASB “will spring forth.”

6 tn Or “know” (KJV, ASV); NASB “be aware of”; NAB, NIV, NRSV “perceive.”

7 tn The Hebrew texts has “streams,” probably under the influence of v. 20. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a has “paths”.

8 tn Heb “[so] they might declare my praise.”

9 tn Or “strive”; KJV, ASV, NRSV “been weary of me.”

10 tn Heb “with.” The words “by demanding” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

11 tn That is, “calamus” (so NIV); NCV, TEV, NLT “incense”; CEV “spices.”

you did not present to me¹² the fat of your sacrifices.

Yet you burdened me with your sins; you made me weary with your evil deeds.¹³

43:25 I, am the one who blots out your rebellious deeds for my sake; your sins I do not remember.

43:26 Remind me of what happened! Let’s debate!

You, prove to me that you are right!¹⁴

43:27 The father of your nation¹⁵ sinned; your spokesmen¹⁶ rebelled against me.

43:28 So I defiled your holy princes, and handed Jacob over to destruction, and subjected¹⁷ Israel to humiliating abuse.”

The Lord Will Renew Israel

44:1 “Now, listen, Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen!”

44:2 This is what the LORD, the one who made you, says – the one who formed you in the womb and helps you:

“Don’t be afraid, my servant Jacob, Jeshurun,¹⁸ whom I have chosen!”

44:3 For I will pour water on the parched ground¹⁹ and cause streams to flow²⁰ on the dry land.

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

12 tn Heb “you did not saturate me”; NASB “Neither have you filled Me.”

13 sn In vv. 22-24 the LORD appears to be condemning his people for failure to bring the proper sacrifices. However, this is problematic. If this refers to the nation’s behavior while in exile, such cultic service was impossible and could hardly be expected by the LORD. If this refers to the nation’s conduct before the exile, it contradicts other passages that depict Israel as bringing excessive sacrifices (see, e.g., Isa 1:11-14; Jer 6:20; Amos 4:4-5, 5:21-23). Rather than being a condemnation of Israel’s failure to bring sacrifices, these verses are better taken as a highly rhetorical comment on the worthlessness of Israel’s religious ritual. They may have brought sacrifices, but not to the LORD, for he did not accept them or even want them. See C. R. North, *Second Isaiah*, 127, and R. Whybrey, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCBC), 91.

14 tn Heb “you, tell in order that you may be right”; NAB “prove your innocence.”

15 tn Heb “your first father.” This could refer to Abraham (see 51:2), but elsewhere in Isaiah he does not appear in a negative light (see 29:22; 41:8; 63:16). A more likely candidate is Jacob/Israel, also referred to as the nation’s “father” elsewhere (see 58:14; 63:16).

16 tn On the meaning of the term יִצְחָק (līts), see HALOT 590 s.v. מִצְחָק. This may refer to the nation’s prophets, priests, and/or kings.

17 tn The word “subjected” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

18 sn Jeshurun is a poetic name for Israel; it occurs here and in Deut 32:15; 33:5, 26.

19 tn Heb “the thirsty.” Parallelism suggests that dry ground is in view (see “dry land” in the next line.)

20 tn Heb “and streams”; KJV “floods.” The verb “cause...to flow” is supplied in the second line for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

44:4 They will sprout up like a tree in the grass,¹
like poplars beside channels of water.
44:5 One will say, ‘I belong to the LORD,’
and another will use² the name ‘Jacob.’
One will write on his hand, ‘The LORD’s,’
and use the name ‘Israel.’³

The Absurdity of Idolatry

44:6 This is what the LORD, Israel’s king,
says,
their protector,⁴ the LORD who com-
mands armies:
“I am the first and I am the last,
there is no God but me.”
44:7 Who is like me? Let him make his
claim!⁵
Let him announce it and explain it to me –
since I established an ancient people –⁶
let them announce future events!⁷
44:8 Don’t panic! Don’t be afraid!⁸
Did I not tell you beforehand and decree
it?
You are my witnesses! Is there any God
but me?
There is no other sheltering rock;⁹ I know
of none.
44:9 All who form idols are nothing;

¹ tn The Hebrew term בֵּין (ven) is usually taken as a preposition, in which case one might translate, “among the grass.” But בֵּין is probably the name of a tree (cf. C. R. North, *Second Isaiah*, 133). If one alters the preposition bet (ב) to kaf (כ), one can then read, “like a binu-tree.” (The Qumran scroll 1QIsa supports this reading.) This forms a nice parallel to “like poplars” in the next line. נְצִיר (katsir) is functioning as an adverbial accusative of location.

² tn The Hebrew text has a Qal verb form, “and another will call by the name of Jacob.” With support from Symmachus (an ancient Greek textual witness), some read the Niphah, “and another will be called by the name of Jacob.”

³ tn Heb “and by the name of Israel he will title.” Some, with support from several ancient versions, prefer to change the Piel (active) verb form to a Pual (passive), “and he will be titled by the name of Israel.”

⁴ tn Heb “his kinsman redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

⁵ tn Heb “let him call” or “let him proclaim” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB “Let him stand up and speak.”

⁶ tc The Hebrew text reads, “from (the time) I established an ancient people, and the coming things.” Various emendations have been proposed. One of the options assumes the reading מִשְׁמִינִים וְעַלְמִים אֲתָיוֹת (mashmi'im me'olam 'otiyot); This literally reads “the ones causing to hear from antiquity coming things,” but more idiomatically would read “as for those who predict from antiquity what will happen” (cf. NAB, NEB, REB). The emendation directs the attention of the reader to those who claim to be able to predict the future, challenging them to actually do what they claim they can do. The MT presents Yahweh as an example to whom these alleged “predictors of the future” can compare themselves. Since the ancient versions are unanimous in their support of the MT, the emendations should be set aside.

⁷ tn Heb and those things which are coming let them de-
clare for themselves.”

⁸ tn BDB 923 s.v. רָהַר derives this verb from an otherwise unattested root, while HALOT 403 s.v. רָהַר defines it as “be stupefied” on the basis of an Arabic cognate. The form is likely a corruption of תְּרִירָה, the reading attested in the Qumran scroll 1QIsa.

⁹ tn Heb “rock” or “rocky cliff,” a title that depicts God as a protective refuge in his role as sovereign king; thus the trans-
lation “sheltering rock.”

the things in which they delight are
worthless.

Their witnesses cannot see;
they recognize nothing, so they are put to
shame.

44:10 Who forms a god and casts an idol
that will prove worthless?¹⁰

44:11 Look, all his associates¹¹ will be put
to shame;

the craftsmen are mere humans.¹²
Let them all assemble and take their stand!

They will panic and be put to shame.

44:12 A blacksmith works with his tool¹³
and forges metal over the coals.

He forms it¹⁴ with hammers;
he makes it with his strong arm.
He gets hungry and loses his energy;¹⁵
he drinks no water and gets tired.

44:13 A carpenter takes measurements;¹⁶
he marks out an outline of its form;¹⁷
he scrapes¹⁸ it with chisels,
and marks it with a compass.

He patterns it after the human form,¹⁹
like a well-built human being,
and puts it in a shrine.²⁰

44:14 He cuts down cedars
and acquires a cypress²¹ or an oak.
He gets²² trees from the forest;
he plants a cedar²³ and the rain makes it

grow.

¹⁰ tn The rhetorical question is sarcastic. The sense is, “Who is foolish enough...?”

¹¹ tn The pronoun “his” probably refers to the one who forms/casts an idol (v. 10), in which case it refers to the craftsman’s associates in the idol-manufacturing guild.

¹² sn The point seems to be this: If the idols are the mere products of human hands, then those who trust in them will be disappointed, for man-made gods are incapable of helping their “creators.”

¹³ tn The noun מְצַדֵּד (ma'atsad), which refers to some type of tool used for cutting, occurs only here and in Jer 10:3. See HALOT 615 s.v. מְצַדֵּד.

¹⁴ tn Some English versions take the pronoun “it” to refer to an idol being fashioned by the blacksmith (cf. NIV, NCV, CEV). NLT understands the referent to be “a sharp tool,” which is then used by the carpenter in the following verse to carve an idol from wood.

¹⁵ tn Heb “and there is no strength”; NASB “his strength fails.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “stretches out a line” (ASV similar); NIV “measures with a line.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “he makes an outline with the [?].” The noun שֶׁרֶד (shered) occurs only here; it apparently refers to some type of tool or marker. Cf. KJV “with a line”; ASV “with a pencil”; NAB, NRSV “with a stylus”; NASB “with red chalk”; NIV “with a marker.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “works” (so NASB) or “fashions” (so NRSV); NIV “he roughs it out.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “he makes it like the pattern of a man”; NAB “like a man in appearance.”

²⁰ tn Heb “like the glory of man to sit [in] a house”; NIV “that it may dwell in a shrine.”

²¹ tn It is not certain what type of tree this otherwise unattested noun refers to. Cf. ASV “a holm-tree” (NRSV similar).

²² tn Heb “strengthens for himself,” i.e., “secures for himself” (see BDB 55 s.v. פָּנָא Pi.2).

²³ tn Some prefer to emend אַנְן ('oren) to אַנְנָא ('erez, “cedar”), but the otherwise unattested noun appears to have an Akkadian cognate, meaning “cedar.” See H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena* (SB LDS), 44–45. HALOT 90 s.v. אַנְן offers the meaning “laurel.”

44:15 A man uses it to make a fire;⁴
he takes some of it and warms himself.
Yes, he kindles a fire and bakes bread.
Then he makes a god and worships it;
he makes an idol and bows down to it.²

44:16 Half of it he burns in the fire –
over that half he cooks³ meat;
he roasts a meal and fills himself.
Yes, he warms himself and says,
'Ah! I am warm as I look at the fire.'

44:17 With the rest of it he makes a god,
his idol;
he bows down to it and worships it.
He prays to it, saying,
'Rescue me, for you are my god!'

44:18 They do not comprehend or understand,
for their eyes are blind and cannot see;
their minds do not discern.⁴

44:19 No one thinks to himself,
nor do they comprehend or understand
and say to themselves:
'I burned half of it in the fire –
yes, I baked bread over the coals;
I roasted meat and ate it.
With the rest of it should I make a disgusting idol?

Should I bow down to dry wood?⁵

44:20 He feeds on ashes;⁶
his deceived mind misleads him.
He cannot rescue himself,
nor does he say, 'Is this not a false god I hold in my right hand?'⁷

44:21 Remember these things, O Jacob,
O Israel, for you are my servant.
I formed you to be my servant;

O Israel, I will not forget you!⁸

44:22 I remove the guilt of your rebellious
deeds as if they were a cloud,
the guilt of your sins as if they were a
cloud.⁹

¹ tn Heb "and it becomes burning [i.e., firewood] for a man"; NAB "to serve man for fuel."

² tn Or perhaps, "them."

³ tn Heb "eats" (so NASB); NAB, NRSV "roasts."

⁴ tn Heb "for their eyes are smeared over so they cannot see, so their heart cannot be wise."

⁵ tn There is no formal interrogative sign here, but the context seems to indicate these are rhetorical questions. See GKC 473 §150.a.

⁶ tn Or perhaps, "he eats on an ash heap."

⁷ tn Heb "Is it not a lie in my right hand?"

⁸ tc The verb in the Hebrew text is a Niphal imperfect with a pronominal suffix. Although the Niphal ordinarily has the passive sense, it can have a reflexive nuance as well (see above translation). Some have suggested an emendation to a Qal form: "Do not forget me" (all the ancient versions, NEB, REB; see GKC 369 §117.x). "Do not forget me" would make a good parallel with "remember these things" in the first line. Since the MT is the harder reading and fits with Israel's complaint that God had forgotten her (Isa 40:27), the MT reading should be retained (NASB, NKJV, NRSV, ESV). The passive has been rendered as an active in the translation in keeping with contemporary English style (so also NIV, NCV, TEV, NLT).

⁹ tn Heb "I blot out like a cloud your rebellious deeds, and like a cloud your sins." "Rebellious deeds" and "sins" stand by metonymy for the guilt they produce. Both בָּאָרֶב ('av) and בָּאָנָן ('anan) refer to the clouds in the sky. It is tempting for stylis-

Come back to me, for I protect¹⁰ you."

44:23 Shout for joy, O sky, for the LORD intervenes;¹¹
shout out, you subterranean regions¹² of the earth.

O mountains, give a joyful shout;
you too, O forest and all your trees!¹³
For the LORD protects¹⁴ Jacob;
he reveals his splendor through Israel.¹⁵

The Lord Empowers Cyrus

44:24 This is what the LORD, your protector,¹⁶ says,
the one who formed you in the womb:

"I am the LORD, who made everything,
who alone stretched out the sky,
who fashioned the earth all by myself,"¹⁷

44:25 who frustrates the omens of the empty talkers¹⁸

and humiliates¹⁹ the omen readers,
who overturns the counsel of the wise men²⁰

and makes their advice²¹ seem foolish,
44:26 who fulfills the oracles of his prophetic servants²²

tic purposes to translate the second with "fog" or "mist" (cf. NAB, NRSV "cloud...mist"; NIV "cloud...morning mist"; NLT "morning mists...clouds"), but this distinction between the synonyms is unwarranted here. The point of the simile seems to be this: The LORD forgives their sins, causing them to vanish just as clouds disappear from the sky (see Job 7:9; 30:15).

¹⁰ tn Heb "redeem." See the note at 41:14.

¹¹ tn Heb "acts"; NASB, NRSV "has done it"; NLT "has done this wondrous thing."

¹² tn Heb "lower regions." This refers to Sheol and forms a merism with "sky" in the previous line. See Pss 63:9; 71:20.

¹³ tn Heb "O forest and all the trees in it"; NASB, NRSV "and every tree in it."

¹⁴ tn Heb "redeems." See the note at 41:14.

¹⁵ tn That is, by delivering Israel. Cf. NCV "showed his glory when he saved Israel"; TEV "has shown his greatness by saving his people Israel."

¹⁶ tn Heb "your redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

¹⁷ tn The consonantal text (*Kethib*) has "Who [was] with me?" The marginal reading (*Qere*) is "from with me," i.e., "by myself." See BDB 87 s.v. II נָתַן 4.c.

¹⁸ tc The Hebrew text has בְּרִים (*baddim*), perhaps meaning "empty talkers" (BDB 95 s.v. III נָדַך). In the four other occurrences of this word (Job 11:3; Isa 16:6; Jer 48:30; 50:36) the context does not make the meaning of the term very clear. Its primary point appears to be that the words spoken are meaningless or false. In light of its parallelism with "omen readers," some have proposed an emendation to בְּרִים (*barim*, "seers"). The Mesopotamian *baru*-priests were divination specialists who played an important role in court life. See R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, 93–98. Rather than supporting an emendation, J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:189, n. 79) suggests that Isaiah used בְּרִים purposefully as a derisive wordplay on the Akkadian word *baru* (in light of the close similarity of the d and r consonants).

¹⁹ tn Or "makes fools of" (NIV, NRSV); NAB and NASB both similar.

²⁰ tn Heb "who turns back the wise" (so NRSV); NIV "overthrows the learning of the wise"; TEV "The words of the wise I refute."

²¹ tn Heb "their knowledge" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NRSV).

²² tn Heb "the word of his servant." The following context indicates that the Lord's prophets are in view.

and brings to pass the announcements¹
of his messengers,
who says about Jerusalem,² ‘She will be
inhabited,’
and about the towns of Judah, ‘They will
be rebuilt,
her ruins I will raise up,’
44:27 who says to the deep sea, ‘Be dry!
I will dry up your sea currents,’
44:28 who commissions³ Cyrus, the one I
appointed as shepherd⁴
to carry out all my wishes⁵
and to decree concerning Jerusalem, ‘She
will be rebuilt,’
and concerning the temple, ‘It will be
reconstructed.’”⁶

45:1 This is what the LORD says to his
chosen⁷ one,
to Cyrus, whose right hand I hold⁸
in order to subdue nations before him,
and disarm kings,⁹
to open doors before him,
so gates remain unclosed:
45:2 “I will go before you
and level mountains.¹⁰
Bronze doors I will shatter
and iron bars¹¹ I will hack through.
45:3 I will give you hidden treasures,¹²
riches stashed away in secret places,
so you may recognize that I am the LORD,
the one who calls you by name, the God
of Israel.

45:4 For the sake of my servant Jacob,
Israel, my chosen one,

I call you by name
and give you a title of respect, even
though you do not recognize¹³ me.

45:5 I am the LORD, I have no peer,¹⁴
there is no God but me.
I arm you for battle,¹⁵ even though you
do not recognize¹⁶ me.

45:6 I do this¹⁷ so people¹⁸ will recognize
from east to west

that there is no God but me;
I am the LORD, I have no peer.

45:7 I am¹⁹ the one who forms light
and creates darkness,²⁰
the one who brings about peace
and creates calamity.²¹

I am the LORD, who accomplishes all
these things.

45:8 O sky, rain down from above!
Let the clouds send down showers²² of
deliverance!

Let the earth absorb it²³ so salvation may
grow,²⁴
and deliverance may sprout up²⁵ along
with it.

I, the LORD, create it.²⁶

¹ tn Heb “counsel.” The Hebrew term מֵצָה (‘etsah) probably refers here to the divine plan as announced by the prophets. See HALOT 867 s.v. I מֵצָה.

² map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

³ tn Heb “says to.” It is possible that the sentence is not completed, as the description of Cyrus and his God-given role is developed in the rest of the verse. 45:1 picks up where 44:28a leaves off with the Lord’s actual words to Cyrus finally being quoted in 45:2.

⁴ tn Heb “my shepherd.” The shepherd motif is sometimes applied, as here, to a royal figure who is responsible for the well-being of the people whom he rules.

⁵ tn Heb “that he might bring to completion all my desire.”

⁶ tn Heb “and [concerning the] temple, you will be founded.” The preposition לְ (lē) is understood by ellipsis at the beginning of the second line. The verb תִּבְנֶה (tivnēh, “you will be founded”) is second masculine singular and is probably addressed to the personified temple (לְבָנָה [hekhal, “temple”] is masculine).

⁷ tn Heb “anointed” (so KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NCV “his appointed king.”

⁸ sn The “right hand” is a symbol of activity and strength; the Lord directs Cyrus’ activities and assures his success.

⁹ tn Heb “and the belts of kings I will loosen”; NRSV “strip kings of their robes”; NIV “strip kings of their armor.”

¹⁰ tc The form הַדָּרִירִים (hadarim) makes little, if any, sense here. It is probably a corruption of an original הַרְרִירִים (hararim, “mountains”), the reduplicated form of הָרָה (har, “mountain”).

¹¹ tn That is, on the gates. Cf. CEV “break the iron bars on bronze gates.”

¹² tn Heb “treasures of darkness” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV “treasures from dark, secret places.”

¹³ tn Or “know” (NCV, NRSV, TEV, NLT); NIV “acknowledge.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “and there is none besides.” On the use of שׁוֹן (‘oshen) here, see BDB 729 s.v. 1.c.

¹⁵ tn Heb “gird you” (so NASB) or “strengthen you” (so NIV).

¹⁶ tn Or “know” (NAB, NCV, NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT); NIV “have not acknowledged.”

¹⁷ tn The words “I do this” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁸ tn Heb “they” (so KJV, ASV); TEV, CEV “everyone”; NLT “all the world.”

¹⁹ tn The words “I am” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text the participle at the beginning of v. 7 stands in apposition to “the Lord” in v. 6.

²⁰ tn On the surface v. 7a appears to describe God’s sovereign control over the cycle of day and night, but the following statement suggests that “light” and “darkness” symbolize “deliverance” and “judgment.”

²¹ sn This verse affirms that God is ultimately sovereign over his world, including mankind and nations. In accordance with his sovereign will, he can cause wars to cease and peace to predominate (as he was about to do for his exiled people through Cyrus), or he can bring disaster and judgment on nations (as he was about to do to Babylon through Cyrus).

²² tn Heb “let the clouds drip with”; KJV “let the skies pour down.”

²³ tn Heb “open up” (so NASB); NIV, NLT “open wide.”

²⁴ tc The plural verb should be emended to a singular form. The vav (ו) ending is probably virtually dittographic (note the yod at the beginning of the following word).

²⁵ tc The Hiphil verb form תִּצְמַח (titsmakh) should probably be emended to a Qal (תִּצְמַח, titsmakh). The מְ sequence at the end of the form is probably due to dittography (note the following מְהָדָה, yakhad).

²⁶ tn The masculine singular pronominal suffix probably refers back to יְשֻׁעָה (yasha, “salvation”).

The Lord Gives a Warning

45:9 One who argues with his Creator is in grave danger,¹ one who is like a mere² shard among the other shards on the ground!

The clay should not say to the potter,³ “What in the world⁴ are you doing?

Your work lacks skill!”⁵

45:10 Danger awaits one who says⁶ to his father, “What in the world⁷ are you fathering?” and to his mother, “What in the world are you bringing forth?”⁸

45:11 This is what the LORD says, the Holy One of Israel,⁹ the one who formed him,

concerning things to come:¹⁰

“How dare you question me¹¹ about my children!

How dare you tell me what to do with¹² the work of my own hands!

45:12 I made the earth, I created the people who live¹³ on it. It was me – my hands¹⁴ stretched out the sky,¹⁵

I give orders to all the heavenly lights.¹⁶

¹ tn Heb “Woe [to] the one who argues with the one who formed him.”

² tn The words “one who is like a mere” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons and clarification.

³ tn Heb “Should the clay say to the one who forms it?” The rhetorical question anticipates a reply, “Of course not!”

⁴ tn The words “in the world” are supplied in the translation to approximate in English idiom the force of the sarcastic question.

⁵ tn Heb “your work, there are no hands for it,” i.e., “your work looks like something made by a person who has no hands.”

⁶ tn Heb “Woe [to] one who says” (NASB and NIV both similar); NCV “How terrible it will be.”

⁷ tn See the note at v. 9. This phrase occurs a second time later in this verse.

⁸ sn Verses 9-10 may allude to the exiles’ criticism that the LORD does not appear to know what he is doing.

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

¹⁰ tc The Hebrew text reads “the one who formed him, the coming things.” Among various suggestions, some have proposed an emendation of יָצַרְתָּ (yats’er), “the one who formed him” to יָצַרְתָּ (yots’er), “the one who forms”; the suffixed form in the Hebrew text may be influenced by vv. 9-10, where the same form appears twice) and takes “coming things” as the object of the participle (either objective genitive or accusative); “the one who brings the future into being.”

¹¹ tn Heb “Ask me” The rhetorical command sarcastically expresses the Lord’s disgust with those who question his ways.

¹² tn Heb “Do you command me about...?” The rhetorical question sarcastically expresses the Lord’s disgust with those who question his ways.

¹³ tn The words “who live” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁴ tn Heb “I, even my hands”; NASB “I stretched out...with My hands”; NRSV “it was my hands that stretched out.” The same construction occurs at the beginning of v. 13.

¹⁵ tn Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמָיִם (shamayim) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

¹⁶ tn Heb “and to all their host I commanded.” See the notes at 40:26.

45:13 It is me – I stir him up and commission him;¹⁷ I will make all his ways level. He will rebuild my city; he will send my exiled people home, but not for a price or a bribe,” says the LORD who commands armies.

The Lord is the Nations’ Only Hope

45:14 This is what the LORD says:

“The profit¹⁸ of Egypt and the revenue¹⁹ of Ethiopia, along with the Sabeans, those tall men, will be brought to you²⁰ and become yours.

They will walk behind you, coming along in chains.²¹

They will bow down to you and pray to you.²²

‘Truly God is with²³ you; he has no peer;²⁴ there is no other God!’”

45:15 Yes, you are a God who keeps hidden,

O God of Israel, deliverer!

45:16 They will all be ashamed and embarrassed; those who fashion idols will all be humiliated.²⁵

45:17 Israel will be delivered once and for all by the LORD;²⁶ you will never again be ashamed or humiliated.²⁷

45:18 For this is what the LORD says, the one who created the sky – he is the true God,²⁸ the one who formed the earth and made it;

he established it,

¹⁷ tn Heb “I stir him up in righteousness”; NASB “I have aroused him.” See the note at 41:2. Cyrus (cf. 44:28) is in view here.

¹⁸ tn Heb “labor,” which stands metonymically for the fruits of labor, either “monetary profit,” or “products.”

¹⁹ tn Or perhaps, “merchandise” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB “the gain of Ethiopia”; CEV “the treasures of Ethiopia.”

²⁰ tn Heb “they will pass over to you”; NASB, NIV “will come over to you”; CEV “will belong to you.”

²¹ sn Restored Israel is depicted here in typical ancient Near Eastern fashion as an imperial power that receives riches and slaves as tribute.

²² sn Israel’s vassals are portrayed as so intimidated and awed that they treat Israel as an intermediary to God or subdeity.

²³ tn Or perhaps, “among.” Cf. KJV, ASV “Surely God is in thee.”

²⁴ tn Heb “there is no other” (so NIV, NRSV). The same phrase occurs at the end of v. 18, in v. 21, and at the end of v. 22.

²⁵ tn “together they will walk in humiliation, the makers of images.”

²⁶ tn Heb “Israel will be delivered by the LORD [with] a permanent deliverance.”

²⁷ tn Heb “you will not be ashamed and you will not be humiliated for ages of future time.”

²⁸ tn Heb “he [is] the God.” The article here indicates uniqueness.

he did not create it without order,¹
he formed it to be inhabited –
“I am the LORD, I have no peer.
45:19 I have not spoken in secret,
in some hidden place.²
I did not tell Jacob’s descendants,
‘Seek me in vain!’³
I am the LORD,
the one who speaks honestly,
who makes reliable announcements.⁴
45:20 Gather together and come!
Approach together, you refugees from the
nations!
Those who carry wooden idols know
nothing,
those who pray to a god that cannot deliver.
45:21 Tell me! Present the evidence!⁵
Let them consult with one another!
Who predicted this in the past?
Who announced it beforehand?
Was it not I, the LORD?
I have no peer, there is no God but me,
a God who vindicates and delivers;⁶
there is none but me.
45:22 Turn to me so you can be delivered,⁷
all you who live in the earth’s remote
regions!
For I am God, and I have no peer.
45:23 I solemnly make this oath⁸ –
what I say is true and reliable:⁹
‘Surely every knee will bow to me,
every tongue will solemnly affirm;¹⁰
45:24 they will say about me,
“Yes, the LORD is a powerful deliverer.”¹¹
All who are angry at him will cower be-
fore him.¹²
45:25 All the descendants of Israel will be
vindicated by the LORD
and will boast in him.¹³

¹ tn Or “unformed.” Gen 1:2 describes the world as “unformed” (*תֹהוּ, tohu*) prior to God’s creative work, but God then formed the world and made it fit for habitation.

² tn Heb “in a place of a land of darkness” (ASV similar); NASB “in some dark land.”

³ tn “In vain” translates *בְּאִין* (*tohu*), used here as an adverbial accusative: “for nothing.”

⁴ tn The translation above assumes that *צֵדֶק* (*tsedeq*) and *מִשְׁרָם* (*mishram*) are adverbial accusatives (see 33:15). If they are taken as direct objects, indicating the content of what is spoken, one might translate, “who proclaims deliverance, who announces justice.”

⁵ tn Heb “Declare! Bring near!”; NASB “Declare and set forth your case.” See 41:21.

⁶ tn Or “a righteous God and deliverer”; NASB, NIV, NRSV “a righteous God and a Savior.”

⁷ tn The Niphal imperative with prefixed vav (ו) indicates purpose after the preceding imperative. The Niphal probably has a tolerative sense, “allow yourselves to be delivered, accept help.”

⁸ tn Heb “I swear by myself”; KJV, NASB “have sworn.”

⁹ tn Heb “a word goes out from my mouth [in] truth and will not return.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “swear” (so KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); NLT “confess allegiance.”

¹¹ tn Heb “‘Yes, in the LORD,’ one says about me, ‘is deliverance and strength.’”

¹² tn Heb “will come to him and be ashamed.”

¹³ tn Heb “In the Lord all the offspring of Israel will be vindi-

The Lord Carries His People

46:1 Bel¹⁴ kneels down,
Nebo¹⁵ bends low.
Their images weigh down animals and
beasts.¹⁶
Your heavy images are burdensome to
tired animals.¹⁷
46:2 Together they bend low and kneel
down;
they are unable to rescue the images;¹⁸
they themselves¹⁹ head off into captivity.²⁰
46:3 “Listen to me, O family of Jacob,²¹
all you who are left from the family of
Israel,²²
you who have been carried from birth,²³
you who have been supported from the
time you left the womb.²⁴
46:4 Even when you are old, I will take
care of you,²⁵
even when you have gray hair, I will
carry you.
I made you and I will support you;
I will carry you and rescue you.²⁶
46:5 To whom can you compare and liken
me?
Tell me whom you think I resemble, so
we can be compared!
46:6 Those who empty out gold from a
purse
and weigh out silver on the scale²⁷
hire a metalsmith, who makes it into a god.
They then bow down and worship it.
46:7 They put it on their shoulder and
carry it;
they put it in its place and it just stands
there;

cated and boast.”

¹⁴ tn Bel was the name of a Babylonian god. The name was originally associated with Enlil, but later was applied to Marduk. See HALOT 132 s.v. בֵל.

¹⁵ tn Nebo is a variation of the name of the Babylonian god Nabu.

¹⁶ tn Heb “their images belong to animals and beasts”; NIV “their idols are borne by beasts of burden”; NLT “are being hauled away.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “your loads are carried [as] a burden by a weary [animal].”

¹⁸ tn Heb “[the] burden,” i.e., their images, the heavy bur- den carried by the animals.

¹⁹ tn נַפְשָׁם (*nafsham*, “their souls/lives”) is equivalent here to a third masculine plural suffix, but the third feminine singular verb הַלְכָה (*halakham*, “they go”) agrees with the feminine noun נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*, “soul, life”).

²⁰ tn The downfall of Babylon is depicted here. The idols are carried off by the victorious enemy; the gods are likened to defeated captives who cower before the enemy and are taken into exile.

²¹ tn Heb “house of Jacob”; TEV “descendants of Jacob.”

²² tn Heb “and all the remnant of the house of Israel.”

²³ tn Heb “from the womb” (so NRSV); KJV “from the belly”; NAB “from your infancy.”

²⁴ tn Heb “who have been lifted up from the womb.”

²⁵ tn Heb “until old age, I am he” (NRSV similar); NLT “I will be your God throughout your lifetime.”

²⁶ tn Unlike the weary idol gods, whose images must be carried by animals, the LORD carries his weary people.

²⁷ tn Heb “the reed,” probably referring to the beam of a scales. See BDB 889 s.v. נֶגֶב 4.c.

it does not⁴ move from its place.
Even when someone cries out to it, it
 does not reply;
it does not deliver him from his distress.

46:8 Remember this, so you can be
 brave!²

Think about it, you rebels!³

46:9 Remember what I accomplished in
 antiquity!⁴

Truly I am God, I have no peer;⁵
I am God, and there is none like me,

46:10 who announces the end from the
 beginning
and reveals beforehand⁶ what has not yet
 occurred,
who says, ‘My plan will be realized,
I will accomplish what I desire,’

46:11 who summons an eagle⁷ from the
 east,
from a distant land, one who carries out
 my plan.

Yes, I have decreed,⁸
yes, I will bring it to pass;
I have formulated a plan,
yes, I will carry it out.

46:12 Listen to me, you stubborn people,⁹
you who distance yourself from doing
 what is right.¹⁰

46:13 I am bringing my deliverance near,
it is not far away;
I am bringing my salvation near,¹¹ it does
 not wait.

I will save Zion,¹²
I will adorn Israel with my splendor.¹³

Babylon Will Fall

47:1 “Fall down! Sit in the dirt,
O virgin¹⁴ daughter Babylon!

^{1 tn} Or perhaps, “cannot,” here and in the following two lines. The imperfect forms can indicate capability.

^{2 tn} The meaning of the verb שָׁׁמַךְ (‘ashash, which appears here in the Hitpolel stem) is uncertain. BDB 84 s.v. שָׁׁמַךְ relates it to a root meaning “found, establish” in Arabic; HALOT 100 s.v. הָשַׁׁמֵּךְ gives the meaning “pluck up courage.” The imperative with vav (ו) may indicate purpose following the preceding imperative.

^{3 tn} Heb “return [it], rebels, to heart”; NRSV “recall it to mind, you transgressors.”

^{4 tn} Heb “remember the former things, from antiquity”; KJV, ASV “the former things of old.”

^{5 tn} Heb “and there is no other” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

^{6 tn} Or “from long ago”; KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV “from ancient times.”

^{7 tn} Or, more generally, “a bird of prey” (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV; see 18:6).

^{8 tn} Heb “spoken”; KJV “I have spoken it.”

^{9 tn} Heb “strong of heart [or, mind]”; KJV “stouthearted”; NAB “fainthearted”; NIV “stubborn-hearted.”

^{10 tn} Heb “who are far from righteousness [or perhaps, “deliverance”].”

^{11 tn} Heb “my salvation.” The verb “I am bringing near” is understood by ellipsis (note the previous line).

^{12 tn} Heb “I will place in Zion salvation”; NASB “I will grant salvation in Zion.”

^{13 tn} Heb “to Israel my splendor”; KJV, ASV “for Israel my glory.”

^{14 tn} בָּתִילָה (be’ulah) often refers to a virgin, but the phrase “virgin daughter” is apparently stylized (see also 23:12);

Sit on the ground, not on a throne,
O daughter of the Babylonians!
Indeed,¹⁵ you will no longer be called
 delicate and pampered.

47:2 Pick up millstones and grind flour!
Remove your veil,
strip off your skirt,
expose your legs,
cross the streams!

47:3 Let your private parts be exposed!
Your genitals will be on display!¹⁶
I will get revenge;
I will not have pity on anyone.”¹⁷

47:4 says our protector –
the LORD who commands armies is his
 name,

the Holy One of Israel.¹⁸

47:5 “Sit silently! Go to a hiding place,¹⁹
O daughter of the Babylonians!
Indeed,²⁰ you will no longer be called
 ‘Queen of kingdoms.’

47:6 I was angry at my people;
I defiled my special possession
and handed them over to you.
You showed them no mercy,²¹
you even placed a very heavy burden on
 old people.²²

47:7 You said,
‘I will rule forever as permanent queen!’²³
You did not think about these things,²⁴
you did not consider how it would turn
 out.²⁵

47:8 So now, listen to this,
O one who lives so lavishly,²⁶
who lives securely,
who says to herself,²⁷

‘I am unique! No one can compare to me!’²⁸

37:22). In the extended metaphor of this chapter, where Babylon is personified as a queen (vv. 5, 7), she is depicted as being both a wife and mother (vv. 8-9).

^{15 tn} Or “For” (NASB, NRSV).

^{16 tn} Heb “Your shame will be seen.” In this context “shame” is a euphemism referring to the genitals.

^{17 tn} Heb “I will not meet a man.” The verb נִגְשַׁה (pagah) apparently carries the nuance “meet with kindness” here (cf. 64:5, and see BDB 803 s.v. Qal.2).

^{18 tc} The Hebrew text reads, “Our redeemer – the LORD who commands armies [traditionally, the LORD of hosts] is his name, the Holy One of Israel.” The ancient Greek version adds “says” before “our redeemer.” אָנָר (‘amar) may have accidentally dropped from the text by virtual haplography. Note that the preceding word אָדָם (‘adam) is graphically similar.

^{19 tn} See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

^{20 tn} Or “For” (NASB, NRSV).

^{21 tn} Or “compassion.”

^{22 tn} Heb “on the old you made very heavy your yoke.”

^{23 tn} Heb “Forever I [will be] permanent queen”; NIV “the eternal queen”; CEV “queen forever.”

^{24 tn} Heb “you did not set these things upon your heart [or “mind”].”

^{25 tn} Heb “you did not remember its outcome”; NAB “you disregarded their outcome.”

^{26 tn} Or perhaps, “voluptuous one” (NAB); NAB “you sensual one”; NLT “You are a pleasure-crazy kingdom.”

^{27 tn} Heb “the one who says in her heart.”

^{28 tn} Heb “I [am], and besides me there is no other.” See Zeph 2:15.

I will never have to live as a widow;
I will never lose my children.¹

47:9 Both of these will come upon you suddenly, in one day!

You will lose your children and be widowed.²

You will be overwhelmed by these tragedies,³

despite⁴ your many incantations
and your numerous amulets.⁵

47:10 You were complacent in your evil deeds;⁶

you thought,⁷ ‘No one sees me.’

Your self-professed⁸ wisdom and knowledge lead you astray,
when you say, ‘I am unique! No one can compare to me!’⁹

47:11 Disaster will overtake you; you will not know how to charm it away.¹⁰

Destruction will fall on you;

you will not be able to appease it.

Calamity will strike you suddenly,
before you recognize it.¹¹

47:12 Persist¹² in trusting¹³ your amulets and your many incantations, which you have faithfully recited¹⁴ since your youth!

Maybe you will be successful¹⁵ – maybe you will scare away disaster.¹⁶

47:13 You are tired out from listening to so much advice.¹⁷

Let them take their stand –

¹ tn Heb “I will not live [as] a widow, and I will not know loss of children.”

² tn Heb “loss of children and widowhood.” In the Hebrew text the phrase is in apposition to “both of these” in line 1.

³ tn Heb “according to their fullness, they will come upon you.”

⁴ tn For other examples of the preposition *bet* (בְּ) having the sense of “although, despite,” see BDB 90 s.v. III.7.

⁵ sn Reference is made to incantations and amulets, both of which were important in Mesopotamian religion. They were used to ward off danger and demons.

⁶ tn Heb “you trusted in your evil”; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “wickedness.”

⁷ tn Or “said”; NAB “said to yourself” NASB “said in your heart.”

⁸ tn The words “self-professed” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁹ tn See the note at v. 8.

¹⁰ tc The Hebrew text has שָׁחַרְתָּה (shakhrah), which is either a suffixed noun (“its dawning,” i.e., origin) or infinitive (“to look early for it”). Some have suggested an emendation to שָׁחַדְתָּה (shakhadah), a suffixed infinitive from שָׁחַד (shakhad), “[how] to buy it off”; see BDB 1005 s.v. שָׁחַד. This forms a nice parallel with the following couplet. The above translation is based on a different etymology of the verb in question. HALOT 1466 s.v. III שָׁחַר references a verbal root with these letters (שָׁחַד) that refers to magical activity.

¹¹ tn Heb “you will not know”; NIV “you cannot foresee.”

¹² tn Heb “stand” (so KJV, ASV); NASB, NRSV “Stand fast.”

¹³ tn The word “trusting” is supplied in the translation for clarification. See v. 9.

¹⁴ tn Heb “in that which you have toiled.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “maybe you will be able to profit.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “maybe you will cause to tremble.” The object “disaster” is supplied in the translation for clarification. See the note at v. 9.

¹⁷ tn Heb “you are tired because of the abundance of your advice.”

the ones who see omens in the sky, who gaze at the stars, who make monthly predictions – let them rescue you from the disaster that is about to overtake you!¹⁸

47:14 Look, they are like straw, which the fire burns up; they cannot rescue themselves from the heat¹⁹ of the flames. There are no coals to warm them, no firelight to enjoy.²⁰

47:15 They will disappoint you,²¹ those you have so faithfully dealt with since your youth.²² Each strays off in his own direction,²³ leaving no one to rescue you.”

The Lord Appeals to the Exiles

48:1 Listen to this, O family of Jacob,²⁴ you who are called by the name ‘Israel,’ and are descended from Judah,²⁵ who take oaths in the name of the LORD, and invoke²⁶ the God of Israel – but not in an honest and just manner.²⁷

48:2 Indeed, they live in the holy city,²⁸ they trust in²⁹ the God of Israel, whose name is the LORD who commands armies.

48:3 “I announced events beforehand,³⁰

¹⁸ tn Heb “let them stand and rescue you – the ones who see omens in the sky, who gaze at the stars, who make known by months – from those things which are coming upon you.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “hand,” here a metaphor for the strength or power of the flames.

²⁰ tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “there is no coal [for?] their food, light to sit before it.” Some emend מִלְחָמָה (lakhmam, “their food”) to מִלְחָמָה (Pekhummam, “to warm them”; see HALOT 328 s.v. מִלְחָמָה). This statement may allude to Isa 44:16, where idolaters are depicted warming themselves over a fire made from wood, part of which was used to form idols. The fire of divine judgment will be no such campfire; its flames will devour and destroy.

²¹ tn Heb “So they will be to you”; NIV “That is all they can do for you.”

²² tn Heb “that for which you toiled, your traders from your youth.” The omen readers and star gazers are likened to merchants with whom Babylon has had an ongoing economic relationship.

²³ tn Heb “each to his own side, they err.”

²⁴ tn Heb “house of Jacob”; TEV, CEV “people of Israel.”

²⁵ tc The Hebrew text reads literally “and from the waters of Judah came out.” בְּמִינֵּי (mimme) could be a corruption of מִינֵּי (minne), “from the inner parts of”; cf. NASB, NIV, NLT, NRSV as suggested in the above translation. Some translations (ESV, NKJV) retain the MT reading because the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa², which corrects a similar form to “from inner parts of” in 39:7, does not do it here.

²⁶ tn Heb “cause to remember”; KJV, ASV “make mention of.”

²⁷ tn Heb “not in truth and not in righteousness.”

²⁸ tn Heb “they call themselves [or “are called”] from the holy city.” The precise meaning of the statement is uncertain. The Niphal of קָרָא (qara') is combined with the preposition מִן (min) only here. When the Qal of קָרָא is used with מִן, the preposition often indicates the place from which one is summoned (see 46:11). So one could translate, “from the holy city they are summoned,” meaning that they reside there.

²⁹ tn Heb “lean on” (so NASB, NRSV); NAB, NIV “rely on.”

³⁰ tn Heb “the former things beforehand I declared.”

I issued the decrees and made the predictions;¹
suddenly I acted and they came to pass.

48:4 I did this² because I know how stubborn you are.

Your neck muscles are like iron
and your forehead like bronze.³

48:5 I announced them to you beforehand;
before they happened, I predicted them
for you,

so you could never say,

'My image did these things,
my idol, my cast image, decreed them.'

48:6 You have heard; now look at all the
evidence!⁴

Will you not admit that what I say is
true?⁵

From this point on I am announcing to
you new events
that are previously unrevealed and you do
not know about.⁶

48:7 Now they come into being,⁷ not in
the past;
before today you did not hear about them,
so you could not say,
'Yes,⁸ I know about them.'

48:8 You did not hear,
you do not know,
you were not told beforehand.⁹
For I know that you are very deceitful;¹⁰
you were labeled¹¹ a rebel from birth.

48:9 For the sake of my reputation¹² I hold
back my anger;
for the sake of my prestige¹³ I restrain my-
self from destroying you.¹⁴

48:10 Look, I have refined you, but not as
silver;

I have purified you¹⁵ in the furnace of
misery.

48:11 For my sake alone¹⁶ I will act,

¹ tn Heb "and from my mouth they came forth and I caused them to be heard."

² tn The words "I did this" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text v. 4 is subordinated to v. 3.

³ sn The image is that of a person who has tensed the muscles of the face and neck as a sign of resolute refusal.

⁴ tn Heb "gaze [at] all of it"; KJV "see all this."

⁵ tn Heb "[as for] you, will you not declare?"

⁶ tn Heb "and hidden things, and you do not know them."

⁷ tn Heb "are created" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT "They are brand new."

⁸ tn Heb "look"; KJV, NASB "Behold."

⁹ tn Heb "beforehand your ear did not open."

¹⁰ tn Heb "deceiving, you deceive." The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb for emphasis.

¹¹ tn Or "called" (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹² tn Heb "for the sake of my name" (so NAB, NASB); NLT "for my own sake."

¹³ tn Heb "and my praise." לְמַעַן (*lēma'an*, "for the sake of") is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

¹⁴ tn Heb "I restrain [myself] concerning you not to cut you off."

¹⁵ tc The Hebrew text has בָּחֲרָתִיךְ (*bəkhariikhā*, "I have chosen you"), but the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a reads correctly בָּחֲרָתְךָ (*bəkhari'atekha*). The metallurgical background of the imagery suggests that purification through testing is the idea.

¹⁶ tn The Hebrew text repeats לְמַעַן? (*lēma'ani*, "for my

for how can I allow my name to be defiled?¹⁷

I will not share my glory with anyone else!¹⁸

48:12 Listen to me, O Jacob,
Israel, whom I summoned!

I am the one;

I am present at the very beginning
and at the very end.¹⁹

48:13 Yes, my hand founded the earth;
my right hand spread out the sky.

I summon them;
they stand together.

48:14 All of you, gather together and lis-
ten!

Who among them²⁰ announced these
things?

The LORD's ally²¹ will carry out his desire
against Babylon;
he will exert his power against the Baby-
lonians.²²

48:15 I, I have spoken –
yes, I have summoned him;

I lead him and he will succeed.²³

48:16 Approach me! Listen to this!
From the very first I have not spoken in
secret;

when it happens,²⁴ I am there."

So now, the sovereign LORD has sent me,
accompanied by his spirit.²⁵

48:17 This is what the LORD, your protec-
tor²⁶ says,
the Holy One of Israel:²⁷

"I am the LORD your God,
who teaches you how to succeed,
who leads you in the way you should go.

48:18 If only you had obeyed my²⁸ com-
mandments,
prosperity would have flowed to you like
a river,²⁹
deliverance would have come to you like
the waves of the sea.³⁰

sake") for emphasis.

¹⁷ tn The Hebrew text reads literally, "for how can it be defiled?" The subject of the verb is probably "name" (v. 9).

¹⁸ sn See 42:8.

¹⁹ tn Heb "I [am] he, I [am the] first, also I [am the] last."

²⁰ sn This probably refers to the idol gods (see v. 5).

²¹ tn Or "friend," or "covenant partner."

²² tn The LORD's ally is a reference to Cyrus.

²³ tn Heb "and his arm [against] the Babylonians."

²⁴ tn Heb "and his way will be prosperous."

²⁵ tn Heb "from the time of its occurring."

²⁶ sn The speaker here is not identified specifically, but he is probably Cyrus, the LORD's "ally" mentioned in vv. 14–15.

²⁷ tn Heb "your redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

²⁸ sn See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

²⁹ tn Heb "paid attention to" (so NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV "had listened to."

³⁰ tn Heb "like a river your peace would have been." שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*) probably refers here to the peace and prosperity which God promised in return for obedience to the covenant.

³¹ tn Heb "and your righteousness like the waves of the sea." נֶדֶגֶת (*nedegah*) probably refers here to divine deliverance from enemies. See v. 19.

48:19 Your descendants would have been as numerous as sand,¹ and your children² like its granules. Their name would not have been cut off and eliminated from my presence.³

48:20 Leave Babylon! Flee from the Babylonians! Announce it with a shout of joy! Make this known! Proclaim it throughout the earth!⁴ Say, "The LORD protects⁵ his servant Jacob."

48:21 They do not thirst as he leads them through dry regions; he makes water flow out of a rock for them; he splits open a rock and water flows out.⁶

48:22 There will be no prosperity for the wicked," says the LORD.

Ideal Israel Delivers the Exiles

49:1 Listen to me, you coastlands!⁷ Pay attention, you people who live far away! The LORD summoned me from birth;⁸ he commissioned me when my mother brought me into the world.⁹

49:2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword, he hid me in the hollow of his hand; he made me like a sharpened¹⁰ arrow, he hid me in his quiver.¹¹

49:3 He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, through whom I will reveal my splendor."¹²

49:4 But I thought,¹³ "I have worked in vain; I have expended my energy for absolutely nothing."¹⁴

But the LORD will vindicate me; my God will reward me.¹⁵

49:5 So now the LORD says, the one who formed me from birth¹⁶ to be

his servant – he did this¹⁷ to restore Jacob to himself, so that Israel might be gathered to him; and I will be honored¹⁸ in the LORD's sight,

for my God is my source of strength¹⁹ – **49:6** he says, "Is it too insignificant a task

for you to be my servant, to reestablish the tribes of Jacob, and restore the remnant²⁰ of Israel?²¹ I will make you a light to the nations,²² so you can bring²³ my deliverance to the remote regions of the earth."

49:7 This is what the LORD, the protector²⁴ of Israel, their Holy One,²⁵ says

^{1 tn} Heb "like sand"; NCV "as many as the grains of sand."

^{2 tn} Heb "and the issue from your inner parts."

^{3 tn} Heb "and his name would not be cut off and would not be destroyed from before me."

^{4 tn} Heb "to the end of the earth" (so KJV, NASB, NRSV).

^{5 tn} Heb "redeems." See the note at 41:14.

^{6 sn} The translation above (present tense) assumes that this verse describes God's provision for returning Babylonian exiles (see v. 20; 35:6; 49:10) in terms reminiscent of the Exodus from Egypt (see Exod 17:6).

^{7 tn} Or "islands" (NASB, NIV); NLT "in far-off lands."

^{8 sn} The Lord's special servant, introduced in chap. 42, speaks here of his commission.

^{9 tn} Heb "called me from the womb."

^{10 tn} Heb "from the inner parts of my mother he mentioned my name."

^{11 tn} Or perhaps, "polished" (so KJV, ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV); NASB "a select arrow."

^{12 sn} The figurative language emphasizes the servant's importance as the Lord's effective instrument. The servant's mouth, which stands metonymically for his words, is compared to a sharp sword because he will be an effective spokesman on God's behalf (see 50:4). The Lord holds his hand on the servant, ready to draw and use him at the appropriate time. The servant is like a sharpened arrow reserved in a quiver for just the right moment.

^{12 sn} This verse identifies the servant as *Israel*. This seems to refer to the exiled nation (cf. 41:8-9; 44:1-2, 21; 45:4; 48:20), but in vv. 5-6 this servant says he has been commissioned to reconcile Israel to God, so he must be distinct from the exiled nation. This servant is an ideal "Israel" who, like Moses of old, mediates a covenant for the nation (see v. 8), leads them out of bondage (v. 9a), and carries out God's original plan for Israel by positively impacting the pagan nations (see v. 6b). By living according to God's law, Israel was to be a model of God's standards of justice to the surrounding nations (Deut 4:6-8). The sinful nation failed, but the servant, the ideal "Israel," will succeed by establishing justice throughout the earth.

^{13 tn} Or "said" (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT "I replied."

^{14 tn} Heb "for nothing and emptiness." Synonyms are combined to emphasize the common idea.

^{15 tn} Heb "But my justice is with the Lord, and my reward [or "wage"] with my God."

^{16 tn} Heb "from the womb" (so KJV, NASB).

^{17 tn} The words "he did this" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons. In the Hebrew text the infinitive construct of purpose is subordinated to the previous statement.

^{18 tn} The vav (ו) + imperfect is translated here as a result clause; one might interpret it as indicating purpose, "and so I will be honored."

^{19 tn} Heb "and my God is [perhaps, "having been"] my strength." The disjunctive structure (vav [ו] + subject + verb) is interpreted here as indicating a causal circumstantial clause.

^{20 tn} Heb "the protected [or "preserved"] ones."

^{21 sn} The question is purely rhetorical; it does not imply that the servant was dissatisfied with his commission or that he minimized the restoration of Israel.

^{22 tn} See the note at 42:6.

^{23 tn} Heb "be" (so KJV, ASV); CEV "you must take."

^{24 tn} Heb "redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

^{25 sn} See the note on the phrase "the Holy One of Israel" in 1:4.

to the one who is despised⁴ and rejected²
by nations,³

a servant of rulers:

"Kings will see and rise in respect,⁴
princes will bow down,
because of the faithful LORD,
the Holy One of Israel who has chosen
you."

49:8 This is what the LORD says:

"At the time I decide to show my favor, I
will respond to you;
in the day of deliverance I will help you;
I will protect you⁵ and make you a cov-
enant mediator for people,⁶
to rebuild⁷ the land⁸
and to reassign the desolate property.
49:9 You will say⁹ to the prisoners, 'Come
out,'
and to those who are in dark dungeons,¹⁰
'Emerge.'¹¹

They will graze beside the roads;
on all the slopes they will find pasture.
49:10 They will not be hungry or thirsty;
the sun's oppressive heat will not beat
down on them,¹²
for one who has compassion on them will
guide them;
he will lead them to springs of water.
49:11 I will make all my mountains into
a road;

¹ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally "to [one who] despises life." It is preferable to read with the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a לְבַזֵּן, which should be vocalized as a passive participle, לְבָזֵן (*lub-zayn*, "to the one despised with respect to life" [*שָׁנָה* is a genitive of specification]). The consonantal sequence *וִי* was probably misread as *וְנִ* in the MT tradition. The contextual argument favors the 1QIsa^a reading. As J. N. Oswalt (*Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:294) points out, the three terse phrases "convey a picture of lowliness, worthlessness, and helplessness."

² **tn** MT's Piel participle ("to the one who rejects") does not fit contextually. The form should be revocalized as a Pual, "to the one rejected."

³ **tn** Parallelism (see "rulers," "kings," "princes") suggests that the singular *נוֹגֵד* (*noged*) be emended to a plural or understood in a collective sense (see 55:5).

⁴ **tn** For this sense of *מִקְרָם* (*qum*), see Gen 19:1; 23:7; 33:10; Lev 19:32; 1 Sam 20:41; 25:41; 1 Kgs 2:19; Job 29:8.

⁵ **tn** The translation assumes the verb is derived from the root *נוֹגֵד* (*natsar*, "protect"). Some prefer to derive it from the root *נוֹגֵז* (*yatsar*, "form").

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "a covenant of people." A person cannot literally be a covenant; *בְּרִית* (*berit*) is probably metonymic here, indicating a covenant mediator. Here *עָם* ('am, "people") appears to refer to Israel. See the note at 42:6.

⁷ **tn** The Hiphil of *מִקְרָם* (*qum*, "arise") is probably used here in the sense of "rebuild."

⁸ **tn** The "land" probably stands by metonymy for the ruins within it.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "to say." In the Hebrew text the infinitive construct is subordinated to what precedes.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "in darkness" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT "the prisoners of darkness."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "show yourselves" (so ASV, NAB, NASB).

¹² **tn** *Heb* "and the heat and the sun will not strike them." In Isa 35:7, its only other occurrence in the OT, *שָׁרֶב* (*sharav*) stands parallel to "parched ground" and in contrast to "pool." In later Hebrew and Aramaic it refers to "dry heat, heat of the sun" (Jastrow 1627 s.v.). Here it likely has this nuance and forms a hendiadys with "sun."

I will construct my roadways."

49:12 Look, they come from far away!

Look, some come from the north and
west,

and others from the land of Sinim!¹³

49:13 Shout for joy, O sky!¹⁴

Rejoice, O earth!

Let the mountains give a joyful shout!

For the LORD consoles his people

and shows compassion to the¹⁵ oppressed.

The Lord Remembers Zion

49:14 "Zion said, 'The LORD has aban-
doned me,
the sovereign master¹⁶ has forgotten me.'

49:15 Can a woman forget her baby who
nurses at her breast?¹⁷

Can she withhold compassion from the
child she has borne?¹⁸

Even if mothers¹⁹ were to forget,
I could never forget you!²⁰

49:16 Look, I have inscribed your name²¹
on my palms;

your walls are constantly before me.

49:17 Your children hurry back,
while those who destroyed and devas-
tated you depart.

49:18 Look all around you!²²

All of them gather to you.

As surely as I live," says the LORD,
'you will certainly wear all of them like
jewelry;

you will put them on as if you were a
bride.

49:19 Yes, your land lies in ruins;
it is desolate and devastated.²³

But now you will be too small to hold
your residents,
and those who devoured you will be far
away.

¹³ **tc** The MT reads "Sinim" here; the Dead Sea Scrolls read "Syene," a location in Egypt associated with modern Aswan. A number of recent translations adopt this reading: "Syene" (NAB, NRSV); "Aswan" (NIV); "Egypt" (NLT).

¹⁴ **tn** The precise location of the *land of Sinim* is uncertain, but since the north and west are mentioned in the previous line, it was a probably located in the distant east or south.

¹⁵ **tn** Or "O heavens." The Hebrew term *בְּרִיאָה* (*shamayim*) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* "his" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "her suckling"; NASB "her nursing child."

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* "so as not to have compassion on the son of her
womb?"

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "these" (so ASV, NASB).

²⁰ **sn** The argument of v. 15 seems to develop as follows: The LORD has an innate attachment to Zion, just like a mother does for her infant child. But even if mothers were to suddenly abandon their children, the LORD would never forsake Zion. In other words, the LORD's attachment to Zion is like a mother's attachment to her infant child, but even stronger.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* "you." Here the pronoun is put by metonymy for the person's name.

²² **tn** *Heb* "Lift up around your eyes and see."

²³ **tn** *Heb* "Indeed your ruins and your desolate places, and
the land of your destruction." This statement is abruptly ter-
minated in the Hebrew text and left incomplete.

49:20 Yet the children born during your time of bereavement will say within your hearing, ‘This place is too cramped for us,¹ make room for us so we can live here.’²

49:21 Then you will think to yourself,³ ‘Who bore these children for me? I was bereaved and barren, dismissed and divorced.⁴ Who raised these children? Look, I was left all alone; where did these children come from?’

49:22 This is what the sovereign LORD says:

“Look I will raise my hand to the nations; I will raise my signal flag to the peoples. They will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.

49:23 Kings will be your children’s⁵ guardians; their princesses will nurse your children.⁶ With their faces to the ground they will bow down to you and they will lick the dirt on⁷ your feet. Then you will recognize that I am the LORD;

those who wait patiently for me are not put to shame.

49:24 Can spoils be taken from a warrior, or captives be rescued from a conqueror?⁸

49:25 Indeed,” says the LORD, “captives will be taken from a warrior; spoils will be rescued from a conqueror. I will oppose your adversary and I will rescue your children.

49:26 I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will get drunk on their own blood, as if it were wine.⁹

Then all humankind¹⁰ will recognize that I am the LORD, your deliverer, your protector,¹¹ the powerful Ruler of Jacob.”¹²

50:1 This is what the LORD says: “Where is your mother’s divorce certificate by which I divorced her? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you?¹³ Look, you were sold because of your sins;¹⁴ because of your rebellious acts I divorced your mother.¹⁵

50:2 Why does no one challenge me when I come? Why does no one respond when I call?¹⁶ Is my hand too weak¹⁷ to deliver¹⁸ you? Do I lack the power to rescue you? Look, with a mere shout¹⁹ I can dry up the sea; I can turn streams into a desert, so the fish rot away and die from lack of water.²⁰

50:3 I can clothe the sky in darkness; I can cover it with sackcloth.”

The Servant Perseveres

50:4 The sovereign LORD has given me the capacity to be his spokesman,²¹ so that I know how to help the weary.²²

13 sn The LORD challenges the exiles (Zion’s children) to bring incriminating evidence against him. The rhetorical questions imply that Israel accused the LORD of divorcing his wife (Zion) and selling his children (the Israelites) into slavery to pay off a debt.

14 sn The LORD admits that he did sell the Israelites, but it was because of their sins, not because of some debt he owed. If he had sold them to a creditor, they ought to be able to point him out, but the preceding rhetorical question implies they would not be able to do so.

15 sn The LORD admits he did divorce Zion, but that too was the result of the nation’s sins. The force of the earlier rhetorical question comes into clearer focus now. The question does not imply that a certificate does not exist and that no divorce occurred. Rather, the question asks for the certificate to be produced so the accuser can see the reason for the divorce in black and white. The LORD did not put Zion away arbitrarily.

16 sn The present tense translation of the verbs assumes that the LORD is questioning why Israel does not attempt to counter his arguments. Another possibility is to take the verbs as referring to past events: “Why did no one meet me when I came? Why did no one answer when I called?” In this case the LORD might be asking why Israel rejected his calls to repent and his offer to deliver them.

17 tn Heb “short” (so NAB, NASB, NIV).

18 tn Or “ransom” (NAB, NASB, NIV).

19 tn Heb “with my rebuke.”

20 tn Heb “the fish stink from lack of water and die from thirst.”

21 tn Heb “has given to me a tongue of disciples.”

sn Verses 4-11 contain the third of the so-called servant songs, which depict the career of the LORD’s special servant, envisioned as an ideal Israel (49:3) who rescues the exiles and fulfills God’s purposes for the world. Here the servant alludes to opposition (something hinted at in 49:4), but also expresses his determination to persevere with the LORD’s help.

22 tc Heb “to know [?] the weary with a word.” Comparing it with Arabic and Aramaic cognates yields the meaning of “help, sustain.” Nevertheless, the meaning of מִתְּעַנָּה (‘ut) is uncertain. The word occurs only here in the OT (see BDB 736 s.v.). Various scholars have suggested an emendation to מִתְּעַנֵּת (‘anot) from בְּנֵי (‘anah, “answer”): “so that I know how to respond kindly to the weary.” Since the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a and the Vulgate support the MT reading, that reading is re-

1 tn Heb “me.” The singular is collective.

2 tn Heb “draw near to me so I can dwell.”

3 tn Heb “and you will say in your heart.”

4 tn Or “exiled and thrust away”; NIV “exiled and rejected.”

5 tn Heb “your,” but Zion here stands by metonymy for her children (see v. 22b).

6 tn Heb “you.” See the preceding note.

7 tn Or “at your feet” (NAB, NIV); NLT “from your feet.”

8 tc The Hebrew text has רִצְצָה (isadiq, “a righteous [one]”), but this makes no sense in the parallelism. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a reads correctly וְרִצְצָה (“violent [one], tyrant”); see v. 25.

9 sn Verse 26a depicts siege warfare and bloody defeat. The besieged enemy will be so starved they will their own flesh. The bloodstained bodies lying on the blood-soaked battle site will look as if they collapsed in drunkenness.

10 tn Heb “flesh” (so KJV, NASB).

11 tn Heb “your redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

12 tn Heb “the powerful [one] of Jacob.” See 1:24.

He wakes me up every morning;
he makes me alert so I can listen attentively as disciples do.¹

50:5 The sovereign LORD has spoken to me clearly;²
I have not rebelled,
I have not turned back.

50:6 I offered my back to those who attacked,³
my jaws to those who tore out my beard;
I did not hide my face
from insults and spitting.

50:7 But the sovereign LORD helps me,
so I am not humiliated.
For that reason I am steadfastly resolved;⁴
I know I will not be put to shame.

50:8 The one who vindicates me is close by.
Who dares to argue with me? Let us confront each other!⁵
Who is my accuser?⁶ Let him challenge me!⁷

50:9 Look, the sovereign LORD helps me.
Who dares to condemn me?
Look, all of them will wear out like clothes;
a moth will eat away at them.

50:10 Who among you fears the LORD?
Who obeys⁸ his servant?
Whoever walks in deep darkness,⁹
without light,
should trust in the name of the LORD
and rely on his God.

50:11 Look, all of you who start a fire
and who equip yourselves with¹⁰ flaming arrows,¹¹
walk¹² in the light¹³ of the fire you started
and among the flaming arrows you ignited!¹⁴

This is what you will receive from me:¹⁵
you will lie down in a place of pain.¹⁶

tained.

¹tn Heb "he arouses for me an ear, to hear like disciples."²tn Or perhaps, "makes me obedient." The text reads literally, "has opened for me an ear."³tn Or perhaps, "who beat [me]."⁴tn Heb "Therefore I set my face like flint."⁵tn Heb "Let us stand together!"⁶tn Heb "Who is the master of my judgment?"⁷tn Heb "let him approach me"; NAB, NIV "Let him confront me."⁸tn Heb "[who] listens to the voice of his servant?" The interrogative is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).⁹tn The plural indicates degree. Darkness may refer to exile and/or moral evil.¹⁰tc Several more recent commentators have proposed an emendation of נָתַן (n^eazze're, "who put on") to נָתַנְתִּי (n^eir'i, "who light"). However, both Qumran scrolls of Isaiah and the Vulgate support the MT reading (cf. NIV, ESV).¹¹tn On the meaning of תְּמִימָה (ziqot, "flaming arrows"), see HALOT 268 s.v. תְּמִימָה.¹²tn The imperative is probably rhetorical and has a predictive force.¹³tn Or perhaps, "flame" (so ASV).¹⁴tn Perhaps the servant here speaks to his enemies and warns them that they will self-destruct.¹⁵tn Heb "from my hand" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).¹⁶sn The imagery may be that of a person who becomes ill*There is Hope for the Future*

51:1 "Listen to me, you who pursue godlessness,¹⁷
who seek the LORD!
Look at the rock from which you were chiseled,
at the quarry¹⁸ from which you were dug!¹⁹

51:2 Look at Abraham, your father,
and Sarah, who gave you birth.²⁰
When I summoned him, he was a lone individual,²¹
but I blessed him²² and gave him numerous descendants.²³

51:3 Certainly the LORD will console Zion; he will console all her ruins.
He will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the Garden of the LORD.
Happiness and joy will be restored to²⁴ her,

thanksgiving and the sound of music.

51:4 Pay attention to me, my people!
Listen to me, my people!
For²⁵ I will issue a decree,²⁶
I will make my justice a light to the nations.²⁷

51:5 I am ready to vindicate,²⁸
I am ready to deliver,²⁹
I will establish justice among the nations.³⁰

The coastlands³¹ wait patiently for me;
they wait in anticipation for the revelation of my power.³²

51:6 Look up at the sky!
Look at the earth below!
For the sky will dissipate³³ like smoke,
and the earth will wear out like clothes;
its residents will die like gnats.
But the deliverance I give³⁴ is permanent;

and is forced to lie down in pain on a sickbed. Some see this as an allusion to a fiery place of damnation because of the imagery employed earlier in the verse.

¹⁷tn Or "righteousness" (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NAB "justice"; NLT "hope for deliverance."¹⁸tn Heb "the excavation of the hole."¹⁹tn The "rock" and "quarry" refer here to Abraham and Sarah, the progenitors of the nation.²⁰sn Although Abraham and Sarah are distant ancestors of the people the prophet is addressing, they are spoken of as the immediate parents.²¹tn Heb "one"; NLT "was alone"; TEV "was childless."²²tn "Bless" may here carry the sense of "endue with potency, reproductive power." See Gen 1:28.²³tn Heb "and I made him numerous."²⁴tn Heb "found in" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).²⁵tn Or "certainly."²⁶tn Heb "instruction [or a law] will go out from me."²⁷tn Heb "and my justice for a light to the nations I will cause to rest."²⁸tn Heb "my righteousness [or "vindication"] is near."²⁹tn Heb "my deliverance goes forth."³⁰tn Heb "and my arms will judge [on behalf of] nations."³¹tn Or "islands" (NIV); TEV "Distant lands."³²tn Heb "for my arm" (so NIV, NRSV).³³tn Heb "will be torn in pieces." The perfect indicates the certitude of the event, from the Lord's rhetorical perspective.³⁴tn Heb "my deliverance." The same Hebrew word can

the vindication I provide¹ will not disappear.²

51:7 Listen to me, you who know what is right,
you people who are aware of my law!³
Don't be afraid of the insults of men;
don't be discouraged because of their abuse!

51:8 For a moth will eat away at them like clothes;
a clothes moth will devour them like wool.
But the vindication I provide⁴ will be permanent;
the deliverance I give will last."

51:9 Wake up! Wake up!
Clothe yourself with strength, O arm of the LORD!⁵

Wake up as in former times, as in antiquity!
Did you not smash⁶ the Proud One?⁷
Did you not⁸ wound the sea monster?

51:10 Did you not dry up the sea,
the waters of the great deep?
Did you not make¹⁰ a path through the depths of the sea,
so those delivered from bondage¹¹ could cross over?

51:11 Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return;
they will enter Zion with a happy shout.
Unending joy will crown them,¹²

also be translated "salvation" (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); cf. CEV "victory."

¹ tn Heb "my righteousness [or "vindication"]."

² tn Heb "will not be shattered [or "dismayed"]."'

³ tn Heb "people (who have) my law in their heart."

⁴ tn Heb "my vindication"; many English versions "my righteousness"; NRSV, TEV "my deliverance"; CEV "my victory."

⁵ tn The arm of the LORD is a symbol of divine military power. Here it is personified and told to arouse itself from sleep and prepare for action.

⁶ tn Heb "Are you not the one who smashed?" The feminine singular forms agree grammatically with the feminine noun "arm." The Hebrew text has חַנְכָה (hammakhtsav), from the verbal root חַנֵּךְ (khatṣav, "hew, chop"). The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a has, probably correctly, מַחֲקָתָה, from the verbal root מַחֲקָה (mak̄hat, "smash") which is used in Job 26:12 to describe God's victory over "the Proud One."

⁷ tn This title (בָּהָבָד, rahab, "proud one") is sometimes translated as a proper name: "Rahab" (cf. NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV). It is used here of a symbolic sea monster, known elsewhere in the Bible and in Ugaritic myth as Leviathan. This sea creature symbolizes the forces of chaos that seek to destroy the created order. In the Bible "the Proud One" opposes God's creative work, but is defeated (see Job 26:12; Ps 89:10). Here the title refers to Pharaoh's Egyptian army that opposed Israel at the Red Sea (see v. 10, and note also Isa 30:7 and Ps 87:4, where the title is used of Egypt).

⁸ tn The words "did you not" are understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line). The rhetorical questions here and in v. 10 expect the answer, "Yes, you certainly did!"

⁹ tn Hebrew תַּנִּינָה (tannin) is another name for the symbolic sea monster. See the note at 27:1. In this context the sea creature represents Egypt. See the note on the title "Proud One" earlier in this verse.

¹⁰ tn The Hebrew text reads literally, "Are you not the one who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made...?"

¹¹ tn Heb "the redeemed" (so ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); KJV "the ransomed."

¹² tn Heb "[will be] on their head[s]." "Joy" may be likened

happiness and joy will overwhelm¹³ them; grief and suffering will disappear.¹⁴

51:12 "I, I am the one who consoles you.¹⁵
Why are you afraid of mortal men,
of mere human beings who are as short-lived as grass?¹⁶

51:13 Why do you forget¹⁷ the LORD, who made you,
who stretched out the sky¹⁸
and founded the earth?
Why do you constantly tremble all day long¹⁹

at the anger of the oppressor,
when he makes plans to destroy?

Where is the anger of the oppressor?²⁰

51:14 The one who suffers²¹ will soon be released;
he will not die in prison,²²
he will not go hungry.²³

51:15 I am the LORD your God,
who churns up the sea so that its waves surge.

The LORD who commands armies is his name!

Zion's Time to Celebrate

51:16 I commission you²⁴ as my spokesman;²⁵

I cover you with the palm of my hand,²⁶

here to a crown (cf. 2 Sam 1:10). The statement may also be an ironic twist on the idiom "earth/dust on the head" (cf. 2 Sam 1:2; 13:19; 15:32; Job 2:12), referring to a mourning practice.

¹³ tn Heb "overtake" (so NIV); NASB "they will obtain."

¹⁴ tn Heb "grief and groaning will flee."

¹⁵ tc The plural suffix should probably be emended to the second masculine singular (which is used in v. 13). The final mem (ם) is probably dittographic; note the mem at the beginning of the next word.

¹⁶ tn Heb "Who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, and of the son of man who [as] grass is given up?" The feminine singular forms should probably be emended to the masculine singular (see v. 13). They have probably been influenced by the construction נֶגֶד הַיְהִי ('at-hi') in vv. 9-10.

¹⁷ tn Heb "and that you forget."

¹⁸ tn Or "the heavens" (also in v. 16). The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (shamayim) may be translated "heavens" or "sky" depending on the context.

¹⁹ tn Heb "and that you tremble constantly all the day."

²⁰ tn The question anticipates the answer, "Ready to disappear!" See v. 14.

²¹ tn Heb "who is stooped over" (under a burden).

²² tn Heb "the pit" (so KJV); ASV, NAB "die and go down into the pit"; NASB, NIV "dungeon"; NCV "prison."

²³ tn Heb "he will not lack his bread."

²⁴ tn The addressee (second masculine singular, as in vv. 13, 15) in this verse is unclear. The exiles are addressed in the immediately preceding verses (note the critical tone of vv. 12-13 and the reference to the exiles in v. 14). However, it seems unlikely that they are addressed in v. 16, for the addressee appears to be commissioned to tell Zion, who here represents the restored exiles, "you are my people." The addressee is distinct from the exiles. The language of v. 16a is reminiscent of 49:2 and 50:4, where the LORD's special servant says he is God's spokesman and effective instrument. Perhaps the LORD, having spoken to the exiles in vv. 1-15, now responds to this servant, who spoke just prior to this in 50:4-11.

²⁵ tn Heb "I place my words in your mouth."

²⁶ tn Heb "with the shadow of my hand."

to establish⁴ the sky and to found the earth,
to say to Zion, ‘You are my people.’”²

51:17 Wake up! Wake up!
Get up, O Jerusalem!
You drank from the cup the LORD passed
to you,
which was full of his anger!³
You drained dry
the goblet full of intoxicating wine.⁴
51:18 There was no one to lead her
among all the children she bore;
there was no one to take her by the hand
among all the children she raised.
51:19 These double disasters confronted
you.
But who feels sorry for you?
Destruction and devastation,
famine and sword.
But who consoles you?⁵
51:20 Your children faint;
they lie at the head of every street
like an antelope in a snare.
They are left in a stupor by the LORD’s
anger,
by the battle cry of your God.⁶
51:21 So listen to this, oppressed one,
who is drunk, but not from wine!
51:22 This is what your sovereign master,⁷
the LORD your God, says:
“Look, I have removed from your hand
the cup of intoxicating wine,⁸
the goblet full of my anger.⁹
You will no longer have to drink it.
51:23 I will put it into the hand of your
tormentors¹⁰

¹ **tc** The Hebrew text has לִנְטוֹא (lintoa', 'to plant'). Several scholars prefer to emend this form to נָתַת (nintot) from נָתַת (natah, 'to stretch out'); see v. 13, as well as 40:22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; cf. NAB, NCV, NRSV. However, since the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a, LXX (and Aquila and Symmachus), and Vulgate support the MT reading, there is no need to emend the form. The interpretation is clear enough: Yahweh fixed the sky in its place.

² **tn** The infinitives in v. 16b are most naturally understood as indicating the purpose of the divine actions described in v. 16a. The relationship of the third infinitive to the commission is clear enough – the Lord has made the addressee (his special servant?) his spokesman so that the latter might speak encouraging words to those in Zion. But how do the first two infinitives relate? The text seems to indicate that the Lord has commissioned the addressee so that the latter might create the universe! Perhaps creation imagery is employed metaphorically here to refer to the transformation that Jerusalem will experience (see 65:17–18).

³ **tn** *Heb* “[you] who have drunk from the hand of the Lord
the cup of his anger.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the goblet, the cup [that causes] staggering, you
drank, you drained.”

⁵ **tc** The Hebrew text has אָנָחָמֶךָ (anakhamekh), a first per-
son form, but the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a reads correctly יְנַחֲמֶךָ (yinakhamekh), a third person form.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “those who are full of the anger of the Lord, the
shout [or “rebuke”] of your God.”

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew term translated “sovereign master” here
is אֲדֹנָי (‘adonay).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “the cup of [= that causes] staggering” (so ASV,
NAB, NRSV); NASB “the cup of reeling.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “the goblet of the cup of my anger.”

¹⁰ **tn** That is, to make them drink it.

who said to you, ‘Lie down, so we can
walk over you.’

You made your back like the ground,
and like the street for those who walked
over you.”

52:1 Wake up! Wake up!

Clothe yourself with strength, O Zion!
Put on your beautiful clothes,
O Jerusalem,¹¹ holy city!

For uncircumcised and unclean pagans
will no longer invade you.

52:2 Shake off the dirt!¹²

Get up, captive¹³ Jerusalem!

Take off the iron chains around your neck,
O captive daughter Zion!

52:3 For this is what the LORD says:

“You were sold for nothing,
and you will not be redeemed for money.”

52:4 For this is what the sovereign LORD
says:

“In the beginning my people went to live
temporarily in Egypt;

Assyria oppressed them for no good rea-
son.

52:5 And now, what do we have here?”¹⁴
says the LORD.

“Indeed my people have been carried
away for nothing,

those who rule over them taunt,”¹⁵ says
the LORD,

“and my name is constantly slandered¹⁶
all day long.

52:6 For this reason my people will know
my name,
for this reason they will know¹⁷ at that
time¹⁸ that I am the one who says,
‘Here I am.’”

52:7 How delightful it is to see approach-
ing over the mountains¹⁹
the feet of a messenger who announces
peace,

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

¹² **tn** *Heb* “Shake yourself free from the dirt.”

¹³ **tc** The Hebrew text has שֵׁבֶן (sh'vev), which some under-
stand as a feminine singular imperative from שָׁבַב (yashav,
“sit”). The LXX, Vulgate, Syriac, and the Targum support the
MT reading (the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a does indirectly). Some
interpret this to mean “take your throne”: The Lord exhorts
Jerusalem to get up from the dirt and sit, probably with the
idea of sitting in a place of honor (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NI-
COT], 2:361). However, the form is likely a corruption of שְׁבִיָּה
(sh'veyyah, “captive”), which appears in the parallel line.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and now what [following the marginal reading
(Qere)] to me here?”

¹⁵ **tn** The verb appears to be a Hiphil form from the root לִלְלָה
(yalal, “howl”), perhaps here in the sense of “mock.” Some
emend the form to לִלְלָה (y^ehollal) and understand a Polel
form of the root לִלְלָה meaning here “mock, taunt.”

¹⁶ **tn** The verb is apparently a Hitpael form (with assimilated
tav, נ) from the root נָאַטֵּס (na'ats), but GKC 151-52 §55.b
explains it as a mixed form, combining Pual and Hitpael readings.

¹⁷ **tn** The verb is understood by ellipsis (note the preced-
ing line).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “in that day” (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “How delightful on the mountains.”

a messenger who brings good news, who announces deliverance,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"¹

52:8 Listen,² your watchmen shout;
in unison they shout for joy,
for they see with their very own eyes³
the LORD's return to Zion.

52:9 In unison give a joyful shout,
O ruins of Jerusalem!
For the LORD consoles his people;
he protects⁴ Jerusalem.

52:10 The LORD reveals⁵ his royal power⁶
in the sight of all the nations;
the entire⁷ earth sees
our God deliver.⁸

52:11 Leave! Leave! Get out of there!
Don't touch anything unclean!
Get out of it!
Stay pure, you who carry the LORD's holy
items!⁹

52:12 Yet do not depart quickly
or leave in a panic.¹⁰
For the LORD goes before you;
the God of Israel is your rear guard.

The Lord Will Vindicate His Servant

52:13 "Look, my servant will succeed!¹¹
He will be elevated, lifted high, and
greatly exalted¹² —

52:14 (just as many were horrified by the
sight of you)¹³
he was so disfigured¹⁴ he no longer looked
like a man;¹⁵

¹ tn Or "has become king." When a new king was enthroned, his followers would give this shout. For other examples of this enthronement formula (Qal perfect 3rd person masculine singular נָלַךְ [malakh], followed by the name of the king), see 2 Sam 15:10; 1 Kgs 1:11, 13, 18; 2 Kgs 9:13. The Lord is an eternal king, but here he is pictured as a victorious warrior who establishes his rule from Zion.

² tn קֹל (qol, "voice") is used at the beginning of the verse as an interjection.

³ tn Heb "eye in eye"; KJV, ASV "eye to eye"; NAB "directly, before their eyes."

⁴ tn Or "redeems." See the note at 41:14.

⁵ tn Heb "lays bare"; NLT "will demonstrate."

⁶ tn Heb "his holy arm." This is a metonymy for his power.

⁷ tn Heb "the remote regions," which here stand for the extremities and everything in between.

⁸ tn Heb "the deliverance of our God." "God" is a subjective genitive here.

⁹ tn Heb "the vessels of the Lord" (so KJV, NAB).

¹⁰ tn Heb "go or go in flight"; NAB "leave in headlong flight."

¹¹ tn Heb "act wisely," which by metonymy means "succeed."

¹² tn This piling up of synonyms emphasizes the degree of the servant's coming exaltation.

¹³ tn Some witnesses read "him," which is more consistent with the context, where the servant is spoken about, not addressed. However, it is possible that the Lord briefly addresses the servant here. The present translation assumes the latter view and places the phrase in parentheses.

¹⁴ tn Heb "such was the disfigurement." The noun פִּשְׁחַת (mishkhat) occurs only here. It may be derived from the verbal root שָׁחַת (shakhat, "be ruined"; see BDB 1007-8 s.v. שָׁחַת). The construct form appears here before a prepositional phrase (cf. GKC 421 §130.a).

¹⁵ tn Heb "from a man his appearance." The preposition מִן

52:15 his form was so marred he no longer looked human¹⁶ —
so now¹⁷ he will startle¹⁸ many nations.
Kings will be shocked by his exaltation,¹⁹
for they will witness something unan-
nounced to them,
and they will understand something they
had not heard about.

53:1 Who would have believed²⁰ what we²¹
just heard?²²
When²³ was the LORD's power²⁴ revealed
through him?

53:2 He sprouted up like a twig before
God,²⁵

(min) here carries the sense "away from," i.e., "so as not to be." See BDB 583 s.v.

¹⁶ tn Heb "and his form from the sons of men." The preposition מִן (min) here carries the sense "away from," i.e., "so as not to be."

¹⁷ tn This statement completes the sentence begun in v. 14a. The introductory בְּ (ken) answers to the introductory בְּ (ka'asher) of v. 14a. Verses 14b-15a are parenthetical, explaining why many were horrified.

¹⁸ tn Traditionally the verb נָזַח (nazeh, a Hiphil stem) has been understood as a causative of נָזָח (nazah, "spurt, spatter") and translated "sprinkle." In this case the passage pictures the servant as a priest who "sprinkles" (or spiritually cleanses) the nations. Though the verb נָזַח does occur in the Hiphil with the meaning "sprinkle," the usual interpretation is problematic. In all other instances where the object or person sprinkled is indicated, the verb is combined with a preposition. This is not the case in Isaiah 52:15, unless one takes the following נֶעֱלָה ('alay, "on him") with the preceding line. But then one would have to emend the verb to a plural, make the nations the subject of the verb "sprinkle," and take the servant as the object. Consequently some interpreters doubt the cultic idea of "sprinkling" is present here. Some emend the text; others propose a homonymic root meaning "spring, leap," which in the Hiphil could mean "cause to leap, startle" and would fit the parallelism of the verse nicely.

¹⁹ tn Heb "Because of him kings will shut their mouths," i.e., be speechless.

²⁰ tn The perfect has a hypothetical force in this rhetorical question. For another example, see Gen 21:7.

²¹ sn The speaker shifts here from God to an unidentified group (note the first person plural pronouns throughout vv. 1-6). The content of the speech suggests that the prophet speaks here as representative of the sinful nation Israel. The group acknowledges its sin and recognizes that the servant suffered on their behalf.

²² tn The first half of v. 1 is traditionally translated, "Who has believed our report?" or "Who has believed our message?" as if the group speaking is lamenting that no one will believe what they have to say. But that doesn't seem to be the point in this context. Here the group speaking does not cast itself in the role of a preacher or evangelist. No, they are repentant sinners, who finally see the light. The phrase "our report" can mean (1) the report which we deliver, or (2) the report which was delivered to us. The latter fits better here, where the report is most naturally taken as the announcement that has just been made in 52:13-15.

²³ tn Heb "to whom" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

²⁴ tn Heb "the arm of the Lord." The "arm of the Lord" is a metaphor of military power; it pictures the Lord as a warrior who bares his arm, takes up his weapon, and crushes his enemies (cf. 51:9-10; 63:5-6). But Israel had not seen the Lord's military power at work in the servant.

²⁵ tn Heb "before him." Some suggest an emendation to "before us." If the third singular suffix of the Hebrew text is retained, it probably refers to the Lord (see v. 1b). For a defense of this reading, see R. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCBC), 173-74.

like a root out of parched soil;¹
he had no stately form or majesty that
might catch our attention;²
no special appearance that we should
want to follow him.³

53:3 He was despised and rejected by
people,⁴
one who experienced pain and was ac-
quainted with illness;
people hid their faces from him;⁵
he was despised, and we considered him
insignificant.⁶

53:4 But he lifted up our illnesses,
he carried our pain;⁷
even though we thought he was being
punished,
attacked by God, and afflicted for some-
thing he had done.⁸

53:5 He was wounded because of⁹ our
rebellious deeds,
crushed because of our sins;
he endured punishment that made us
well;¹⁰
because of his wounds we have been
healed.¹¹

53:6 All of us had wandered off like
sheep;
each of us had strayed off on his own
path,
but the LORD caused the sin of all of us to
attack him.¹²

53:7 He was treated harshly and afflicted,¹³
but he did not even open his mouth.
Like a lamb led to the slaughtering block,
like a sheep silent before her shearers,
he did not even open his mouth.¹⁴

53:8 He was led away after an unjust trial¹⁵ –
but who even cared?¹⁶
Indeed, he was cut off from the land of
the living,¹⁷
because of the rebellion of his own¹⁸
people he was wounded.

^{12 tn} Elsewhere the Hiphil of פָּגַע (paga') means "to intercede verbally" (Jer 15:11; 36:25) or "to intervene militarily" (Isa 59:16), but neither nuance fits here. Apparently here the Hiphil is the causative of the normal Qal meaning, "encounter, meet, touch." The Qal sometimes refers to a hostile encounter or attack; when used in this way the object is normally introduced by the preposition אֶת (bet, see Josh 2:16; Judg 8:21; 15:12, etc.). Here the causative Hiphil has a double object – the LORD makes "sin" attack "him" (note that the object attacked is introduced by the preposition אֶת). In their sin the group was like sheep who had wandered from God's path. They were vulnerable to attack; the guilt of their sin was ready to attack and destroy them. But then the servant stepped in and took the full force of the attack.

^{13 tn} The translation assumes the Niphal is passive; another option is take the clause (note the subject + verb pattern) as concessive and the Niphal as reflexive, "though he humbled himself."

^{14 tn} This verse emphasizes the servant's silent submission. The comparison to a sheep does not necessarily suggest a sacrificial metaphor. Sheep were slaughtered for food as well as for sacrificial rituals, and בְּכָר (tevakh) need not refer to sacrificial slaughter (see Gen 43:16; Prov 7:22; 9:2; Jer 50:27; note also the use of the related verb in Exod 21:37 HT [22:1 ET]; Deut 28:31; 1 Sam 25:11).

^{15 tn} The precise meaning of this line is uncertain. The present translation assumes that מִן (min) here has an instrumental sense ("by, through") and understands בְּנֵי עֲוֹנִים שְׁפָט (otser umimishpat, "coercion and legal decision") as a hendiadys meaning "coercive legal decision," thus "an unjust trial." Other interpretive options include: (1) "without [for this sense of מִן, see BDB 578 s.v. 1.b] hindrance and proper judicial process," i.e., "unfairly and with no one to defend him," (2) "from [in the sense of "after," see BDB 581 s.v. 4.b] arrest and judgment."

^{16 tn} Heb "and his generation, who considers?" (NASB similar). Some understand "his generation" as a reference to descendants. In this case the question would suggest that he will have none. However, אֶת ('et) may be taken here as specifying a new subject (see BDB 85 s.v. I אֶת 3). If "his generation" refers to the servant's contemporary generation, one may then translate, "As for his contemporary generation, who took note?" The point would be that few were concerned about the harsh treatment he received.

^{17 tn} The "land of the living" is an idiom for the sphere where people live, in contrast to the underworld realm of the dead. See, for example, Ezek 32:23-27.

^{18 tn} The Hebrew text reads "my people," a reading followed by most English versions, but this is problematic in a context where the first person plural predominates, and where God does not appear to speak again until v. 11b. Therefore, it is preferable to read with the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a נָבָל ("his people"). In this case, the group speaking in these verses is identified as the servant's people (compare פְּשָׁעֵנוּ [p^esha'enu, "our rebellious deeds"] in v. 5 with פְּשָׁעֵנוּ בְּנֵי עַמִּינוּ [pesha' ammi, "the rebellion of his people"] in v. 8).

^{1 sn} The metaphor in this verse suggests insignificance.

^{2 tn} Heb "that we might see him." The vav conjunctive prefixed to the imperfect introduces a result clause here. See GKC 504-5 §166.a.

^{3 tn} Heb "that we should desire him." The vav conjunctive prefixed to the imperfect introduces a result clause here. See GKC 504-5 §166.a.

^{4 tn} Heb "lacking of men." If the genitive is taken as specifying ("lacking with respect to men"), then the idea is that he lacked company because he was rejected by people. Another option is to take the genitive as indicating genus or larger class (i.e., "one lacking among men"). In this case one could translate, "he was a transient" (cf. the use of קָהָל [khadel] in Ps 39:5 HT [39:4 ET]).

^{5 tn} Heb "like a hiding of the face from him," i.e., "like one before whom the face is hidden" (see BDB 712 s.v. בָּקַר).

^{6 sn} The servant is likened to a seriously ill person who is shunned by others because of his horrible disease.

^{7 sn} Illness and pain stand by metonymy (or perhaps as metaphors) for sin and its effects, as vv. 11-12 make clear.

^{8 tn} The words "for something he had done" are supplied in the translation for clarification. The group now realizes he suffered because of his identification with them, not simply because he was a special target of divine anger.

^{9 tn} The preposition מִן (min) has a causal sense (translated "because of") here and in the following clause.

^{10 tn} Heb "the punishment of our peace [was] on him." שָׁלוֹם (shalom, "peace") is here a genitive of result, i.e., "punishment that resulted in our peace."

^{11 sn} Continuing to utilize the imagery of physical illness, the group acknowledges that the servant's willingness to carry their illnesses (v. 4) resulted in their being healed. Healing is a metaphor for forgiveness here.

53:9 They intended to bury him with criminals,¹ but he ended up in a rich man's tomb,² because³ he had committed no violent deeds, nor had he spoken deceitfully.

53:10 Though the LORD desired to crush him and make him ill, once restitution is made,⁴ he will see descendants and enjoy long life.⁵

¹ tn Heb "one assigned his grave with criminals." The subject of the singular is impersonal; English typically uses "they" in such constructions.

² tn This line reads literally, "and with the rich in his death." בְּמִתָּה (bə'motay) combines a preposition, a plural form of the noun מֵת (mōt), and a third masculine singular suffix. The plural of the noun is problematic and the וּ may be the result of virtual dittography. The form should probably be emended to בָּמָתָה (bamato), singular noun). The relationship between this line and the preceding one is uncertain. The parallelism appears to be synonymous (note "his grave" and "in his death"), but "criminals" and "the rich" hardly make a compatible pair in this context, for they would not be buried in the same kind of tomb. Some emend אֲשֶׁר ('ashir, "rich") to עֲשֵׂר ('ase ra', "doers of evil") but the absence of the ayin (ע) is not readily explained in this graphic environment. Others suggest an emendation to שְׁעִירִים (she'irim, "he-goats, demons"), but the meaning in this case is not entirely transparent and the proposal assumes that the form suffered from both transposition and the inexplicable loss of a final mem. Still others relate אֲשֶׁר ('ashir) to an alleged Arabic cognate meaning "mob." See HALOT 896 s.v. شَرْ. Perhaps the parallelism is antithetical, rather than synonymous. In this case, the point is made that the servant's burial in a rich man's tomb, in contrast to a criminal's burial, was appropriate, for he had done nothing wrong.

³ tn If the second line is antithetical, then לְעַל ('al) is probably causal here, explaining why the servant was buried in a rich man's tomb, rather than that of criminal. If the first two lines are synonymous, then לְעַל is probably concessive: "even though...."

⁴ tn The meaning of this line is uncertain. It reads literally, "if you/she makes, a reparation offering, his life." The verb תָּסִים (tasim) could be second masculine singular, in which case it would have to be addressed to the servant or to God. However, the servant is only addressed once in this servant song (see 52:14a), and God either speaks or is spoken about in this servant song; he is never addressed. Furthermore, the idea of God himself making a reparation offering is odd. If the verb is taken as third feminine singular, then the feminine noun נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh) at the end of the line is the likely subject. In this case one can take the suffixed form of the noun as equivalent to a pronoun and translate, "if he [literally, "his life"] makes a reparation offering."

⁵ tn What constitutes the servant's reparation offering? Some might think his suffering, but the preceding context views this as past, while the verb here is imperfect in form. The offering appears to be something the servant does after his suffering has been completed. Perhaps the background of the language can be found in the Levitical code, where a healed leper would offer a reparation offering as part of the ritual to achieve ceremonial cleanliness (see Lev 14). The servant was pictured earlier in the song as being severely ill. This illness (a metaphor for the effects of the people's sin) separated him from God. However, here we discover the separation is not final; once reparation is made, so to speak, he will again experience the Lord's favor.

⁵ sn The idiomatic and stereotypical language emphasizes the servant's restoration to divine favor. Having numerous descendants and living a long life are standard signs of divine blessing. See Job 42:13-16.

and the LORD's purpose will be accomplished through him.

53:11 Having suffered, he will reflect on his work, he will be satisfied when he understands what he has done.⁶

"My servant⁷ will acquit many,⁸ for he carried their sins.⁹

53:12 So I will assign him a portion with the multitudes,¹⁰

⁶ tn Heb "he will be satisfied by his knowledge," i.e., "when he knows." The preposition is understood as temporal and the suffix as a subjective genitive. Some take בְּרֹאשׁוֹ (bə'reašׁo), "by his knowledge" with what follows and translate "by knowledge of him," understanding the preposition as instrumental and the suffix as objective.

⁷ sn The song ends as it began (cf. 52:13-15), with the LORD announcing the servant's vindication and exaltation.

⁸ tn Heb "he will acquit, a righteous one, my servant, many." צַדִּiq (tsadiq) may refer to the servant, but more likely it is ditographic (note the preceding verb יָצַדְיָq, yatsdiq). The precise meaning of the verb (the Hiphil of צַדֵּq, tsadaq) is debated. Elsewhere the Hiphil is used at least six times in the sense of "make righteous" in a legal sense, i.e., "pronounce innocent, acquit" (see Exod 23:7; Deut 25:1; 1 Kgs 8:32 = 2 Chr 6:23; Prov 17:15; Isa 5:23). It can also mean "render justice" (as a royal function, see 2 Sam 15:4; Ps 82:3), "concede" (Job 27:5), "vindicate" (Isa 50:8), and "lead to righteousness" (by teaching and example, Dan 12:3). The preceding context and the next line suggest a legal sense here. Because of his willingness to carry the people's sins, the servant is able to "acquit" them.

⁹ tn Some (e.g., H. M. Orlinsky, "The So-called 'Suffering Servant' in Isaiah 53,22," VTSup 14 [1967]: 3-133) object to this legal interpretation of the language, arguing that it would be unjust for the righteous to suffer for the wicked and for the wicked to be declared innocent. However, such a surprising development is consistent with the ironic nature of this song. It does seem unfair for the innocent to die for the guilty. But what is God to do when all have sinned and wandered off like stray sheep (cf. v. 6)? Covenant law demands punishment, but punishment in this case would mean annihilation of what God has created. God's justice, as demanded by the law, must be satisfied. To satisfy his justice, he does something seemingly unjust. He punishes his sinless servant, the only one who has not strayed off! In the progress of biblical revelation, we discover that the sinless servant is really God in the flesh, who offers himself because he is committed to the world he has created. If his justice can only be satisfied if he himself endures the punishment, then so be it. What appears to be an act of injustice is really love satisfying the demands of justice!

⁹ tn The circumstantial clause (note the vav [I] + object + subject + verb pattern) is understood as causal here. The pre-fixed verb form is either a preterite or an imperfect used in a customary manner.

¹⁰ tn Scholars have debated the precise meaning of the term רַבִּים (rabbim) that occurs five times in this passage (Isa 52:14, 15; 53:11, 12 [2x]). Its two broad categories of translation are "much"/"many" and "great" (HALOT 1171-72 s.v. רַבִּים). Unlike other Hebrew terms for might or strength, this term is linked with numbers or abundance. In all sixteen uses outside of Isaiah 52:13-53:12 (articular and plural) it signifies an inclusive meaning: "the majority" or "the multitude" (J. Jeremias, TDNT 6:536-37). This term occurs in parallelism with נַצְנָעִים ('atsumim), which normally signifies "numerous" or "large" or "powerful" (through large numbers). Like רַבִּים (rabbim), it refers to greatness in numbers (cf. Deut 4:38; 7:1; 9:1; 11:34). It emphasizes the multitudes with whom the Servant will share the spoil of his victory. As J. Olley wrote: "Yahweh has won the victory and vindicates his Servant, giving to him many subservient people, together with their spoils. These numerous peoples in turn receive blessing, sharing in the "peace" resulting from Yahweh's victory and the Servant's suffering" (John W. Olley, "The Many": How Is Isa 53,12a to

he will divide the spoils of victory with the powerful,¹
because he willingly submitted² to death and was numbered with the rebels, when he lifted up the sin of many and intervened³ on behalf of the rebels.”

Zion Will Be Secure

54:1 “Shout for joy, O barren one who has not given birth!
Give a joyful shout and cry out, you who have not been in labor!
For the children of the desolate one are more numerous than the children of the married woman,” says the LORD.
54:2 Make your tent larger, stretch your tent curtains farther out!⁴
Spare no effort, lengthen your ropes, and pound your stakes deep.⁵
54:3 For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your children will conquer⁶ nations and will resettle desolate cities.
54:4 Don’t be afraid, for you will not be put to shame!
Don’t be intimidated,⁷ for you will not be humiliated!
You will forget about the shame you experienced in your youth; you will no longer remember the disgrace of your abandonment.⁸
54:5 For your husband is the one who made you – the LORD who commands armies is his name.
He is your protector,⁹ the Holy One of Israel.¹⁰
He is called “God of the entire earth.”
54:6 “Indeed, the LORD will call you back

Be Understood,” Bib 68 [1987]: 330-56).

1 sn The servant is compared here to a warrior who will be richly rewarded for his effort and success in battle.

2 tn Heb “because he laid bare his life”; traditionally, ASV “because he (+ hath KJV) poured out his soul (life NIV) unto death.”

3 tn The Hiphil of פָּגַע (paga') can mean “cause to attack” (v. 6), “urge, plead verbally” (Jer 15:11; 36:25), or “intervene militarily” (Isa 59:16). Perhaps the third nuance fits best here, for military imagery is employed in the first two lines of the verse.

4 tn Heb “the curtains of our dwelling places let them stretch out.”

5 tn Heb “your stakes strengthen.”

6 tn Or “take possession of”; NAB “shall dispossess.”

7 tn Or “embarrassed”; NASB “humiliated...disgraced.”

8 tn Another option is to translate, “the disgrace of our widowhood” (so NRSV). However, the following context (vv. 6-7) refers to Zion’s husband, the LORD, abandoning her, not dying. This suggests that an אַלְמָנָה (almanah) was a woman who had lost her husband, whether by death or abandonment.

9 tn Or “redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

10 sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

like a wife who has been abandoned and suffers from depression,¹¹ like a young wife when she has been rejected,” says your God.
54:7 “For a short time I abandoned¹² you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

54:8 In a burst¹³ of anger I rejected you¹⁴ momentarily, but with lasting devotion I will have compassion on you,” says your protector,¹⁵ the LORD.

54:9 “As far as I am concerned, this is like in Noah’s time,¹⁶ when I vowed that the waters of Noah’s flood¹⁷ would never again cover the earth.

In the same way I have vowed that I will not be angry at you or shout at you.

54:10 Even if the mountains are removed and the hills displaced, my devotion will not be removed from you,

nor will my covenant of friendship¹⁸ be displaced,” says the LORD, the one who has compassion on you.

54:11 “O afflicted one, driven away,¹⁹ and unconsoled!

Look, I am about to set your stones in antimony and I lay your foundation with lapis-lazuli.

54:12 I will make your pinnacles out of gems,²⁰ your gates out of beryl,²¹ and your outer wall²² out of beautiful²³ stones.

54:13 All your children will be followers of the LORD, and your children will enjoy great prosperity.²⁴

54:14 You will be reestablished when I vindicate you.²⁵

11 tn Heb “like a woman abandoned and grieved in spirit.”

12 tn Or “forsook” (NASB).

13 tn According to BDB 1009 s.v. שִׁבְעָה the noun שֵׁתֶף here is an alternate form of שְׂטֵפָה (shetef, “flood”). Some relate the word to an alleged Akkadian cognate meaning “strength.”

14 tn Heb “I hid my face from you.”

15 tn Or “redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

16 tc The Hebrew text reads literally, “For [or “indeed”] the waters of Noah [is] this to me.” בְּרִיאָה (ki-me, “for the waters of”) should be emended to בְּרִיָּה (k'emy, “like the days of”), which is supported by the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a and all the ancient versions except LXX.

17 tn Heb “the waters of Noah” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

18 tn Heb “peace” (so many English versions); NLT “of blessing.”

19 tn Or, more literally, “windblown, storm tossed.”

20 tn Perhaps, “rubies” (so ASV, NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

21 tn On the meaning of אֲלָמָנָה (eqdakh), which occurs only here, see HALOT 82 s.v.

22 tn Heb “border” (so ASV); NASB “your entire wall.”

23 tn Heb “delightful”; KJV “pleasant.”

24 tn Heb “and great [will be] the peace of your sons.”

25 tn Heb “in righteousness [or “vindication”] you will be

You will not experience oppression;¹
indeed, you will not be afraid.
You will not be terrified,²
for nothing frightening³ will come near
you.

54:15 If anyone dares to⁴ challenge you, it
will not be my doing!
Whoever tries to challenge you will be
defeated.⁵

54:16 Look, I create the craftsman,
who fans the coals into a fire
and forges a weapon.⁶
I create the destroyer so he might devastate.

54:17 No weapon forged to be used
against you will succeed;
you will refute everyone who tries to ac-
cuse you.⁷

This is what the LORD will do for his
servants –
I will vindicate them,”⁸
says the LORD.

The Lord Gives an Invitation

55:1 “Hey,⁹ all who are thirsty, come to
the water!
You who have no money, come!
Buy and eat!
Come! Buy wine and milk
without money and without cost!¹⁰

55:2 Why pay money for something that
will not nourish you?¹¹
Why spend¹² your hard-earned money¹³ on
something that will not satisfy?

established.” The precise meaning of **צְדָקָה** (*ts^ddaqah*) here is uncertain. It could mean “righteousness, justice,” indicating that the city will be a center for justice. But the context focuses on deliverance, suggesting that the term means “deliverance, vindication” here.

1 tn *Heb* “Be far from oppression!” The imperative is used here in a rhetorical manner to express certainty and assurance. See GKC 324 §110.c.

2 tn *Heb* “from terror.” The rhetorical command, “be far” is understood by ellipsis here. Note the preceding context.

3 tn *Heb* “it,” i.e., the “terror” just mentioned.

4 tn The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb here for emphasis.

5 tn *Heb* “will fall over you.” The expression **נִפְלֵא עֲלֵךְ** (*nafal al*) can mean “attack,” but here it means “fall over to,” i.e., “surrender to.”

6 tn *Heb* “who brings out an implement for his work.”

7 tn *Heb* “and every tongue that rises up for judgment with you will prove to be guilty.”

8 tn *Heb* “this is the inheritance of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication from me.”

9 tn The Hebrew term **הֹי** (*hoy*, “woe, ah”) was used in funeral laments and is often prefixed to judgment oracles for rhetorical effect. But here it appears to be a simple interjection, designed to grab the audience’s attention. Perhaps there is a note of sorrow or pity. See BDB 223 s.v.

10 sn The statement is an oxymoron. Its ironic quality adds to its rhetorical impact. The statement reminds one of the norm (one must normally buy commodities) as it expresses the astounding offer. One might paraphrase the statement: “Come and take freely what you normally have to pay for.”

11 tn *Heb* “for what is not food.”

12 tn The interrogative particle and the verb “spend” are understood here by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

13 tn *Heb* “your labor,” which stands by metonymy for that which one earns.

Listen carefully¹⁴ to me and eat what is
nourishing!¹⁵

Enjoy fine food!¹⁶

55:3 Pay attention and come to me!

Listen, so you can live!¹⁷

Then I will make an unconditional cov-
enantal promise to¹⁸ you,
just like the reliable covenantal promises
I made to David.¹⁹

55:4 Look, I made him a witness to na-
tions,²⁰

a ruler and commander of nations.”

55:5 Look, you will summon nations²¹ you
did not previously know;

nations²² that did not previously know
you will run to you,

because of the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel,²³

for he bestows honor on you.

55:6 Seek the LORD while he makes him-

self available,²⁴

call to him while he is nearby!

55:7 The wicked need to abandon their

lifestyle²⁵

14 tn The infinitive absolute follows the imperative and lends emphasis to the exhortation.

15 tn *Heb* “good” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

16 tn *Heb* “Let your appetite delight in fine food.”

sn Nourishing, fine food here represents the blessings God freely offers. These include forgiveness, a new covenantal relationship with God, and national prominence (see vv. 3-6).

17 tn The jussive with *vav* (ו) conjunctive following the imperative indicates purpose/result.

sn To *live* here refers to covenantal blessing, primarily material prosperity and national security (see vv. 4-5, 13, and Deut 30:6, 15, 19-20).

18 tn Or “an eternal covenant with.”

19 tn *Heb* “the reliable expressions of loyalty of David.” The syntactical relationship of **חַסְדָּיו** (*khasde*, “expressions of loyalty”) to the preceding line is unclear. If the term is appositional to **בָּרִית** (*b^rit*, “covenant”), then the LORD here transfers the promises of the Davidic covenant to the entire nation. Another option is to take **חַסְדָּיו** (*khasde*) as an adverbial accusative and to translate “according to the reliable covenantal promises.” In this case the new covenantal arrangement proposed here is viewed as an extension or perhaps fulfillment of the Davidic promises. A third option, the one reflected in the above translation, is to take the last line as comparative. In this case the new covenant being proposed is analogous to the Davidic covenant. Verses 4-5, which compare David’s international prominence to what Israel will experience, favors this view. In all three of these interpretations, “David” is an objective genitive; he is the recipient of covenantal promises. A fourth option would be to take David as a subjective genitive and understand the line as giving the basis for the preceding promise: “Then I will make an unconditional covenantal promise to you, because of David’s faithful acts of covenantal loyalty.”

20 sn Ideally the Davidic king was to testify to the nations of God’s greatness (cf. Pss 18:50 HT [18:49 ET]; 22:28 HT [22:27 ET]). See J. H. Eaton, *Kingship in the Psalms* (SBT), 182-84.

21 tn *Heb* “a nation,” but the singular is collective here, as the plural verbs in the next line indicate (note that both “know” and “run” are third plural forms).

22 tn *Heb* “a nation,” but the singular is collective here, as the plural verbs that follow indicate.

23 sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

24 tn *Heb* “while he allows himself to be found.” The Niphal form has a tolerative force here.

25 tn *Heb* “Let the wicked one abandon his way.” The sin-

and sinful people their plans.¹
They should return² to the LORD, and he
will show mercy to them,³
and to their God, for he will freely for-
give them.⁴

55:8 “Indeed,⁵ my plans⁶ are not like⁷
your plans,
and my deeds⁸ are not like⁹ your deeds,
55:9 for just as the sky¹⁰ is higher than the
earth,
so my deeds¹¹ are superior to¹² your
deeds
and my plans¹³ superior to your plans.

55:10¹⁴ The rain and snow fall from the
sky
and do not return,
but instead water the earth
and make it produce and yield crops,
and provide seed for the planter and food
for those who must eat.

55:11 In the same way, the promise that I
make
does not return to me, having accom-
plished nothing.¹⁵
No, it is realized as I desire
and is fulfilled as I intend.”¹⁶

singular is collective.

1 tn Heb “and the man of evil his thoughts.” The singular is collective.

2 tn Heb “let him return.” The singular is collective, meaning “let them.”

3 tn The imperfect with vav (ו) conjunctive after the jussive indicates purpose/result.

4 sn The appeal and promise of vv. 6-7 echoes the language of Deut 4:25-31; 30:1-10; and 1 Kgs 8:46-53, all of which anticipate the exile and speak of the prerequisites for restoration.

5 tn Or “For” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV).

6 tn Or “thoughts” (so many English versions).

7 tn Heb “are not.” “Like” is interpretive, but v. 9 indicates that a comparison is in view.

8 tn Heb “ways” (so many English versions).

9 tn Heb “are not.” “Like” is interpretive, but v. 9 indicates that a comparison is in view.

10 tn Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

11 tn Heb “ways” (so many English versions).

12 tn Heb “are higher than.”

13 tn Or “thoughts” (so many English versions).

14 tn This verse begins in the Hebrew text with בְּקַאֲשֶׁר (*ki ka'asher*, “for, just as”), which is completed by בֵּן (*ken*, “so, in the same way”) at the beginning of v. 11. For stylistic reasons, this lengthy sentence is divided up into separate sentences in the translation.

15 tn Heb “so is the word which goes out from my mouth, it does not return to empty.” “Word” refers here to divine promises, like the ones made just prior to and after this (see vv. 7b, 12-13).

16 tn Heb “but it accomplishes what I desire, and succeeds [on the mission] which I send it.”

sn Verses 8-11 focus on the reliability of the divine word and support the promises before (vv. 3-5, 7b) and after (vv. 12-13) this. Israel can be certain that repentance will bring forgiveness and a new covenantal relationship because God’s promises are reliable. In contrast to human plans (or “thoughts”), which are destined to fail (Ps 94:11) apart from divine approval (Prov 19:21), and human deeds (or “ways”), which are evil and lead to destruction (Prov 1:15-19; 3:31-33; 4:19), God’s plans are realized and his deeds accomplish something positive.

55:12 Indeed you will go out with joy;
you will be led along in peace;
the mountains and hills will give a joyful
shout before you,
and all the trees in the field will clap their
hands.

55:13 Evergreens will grow in place of
thorn bushes,
firs will grow in place of nettles;
they will be a monument to the LORD,¹⁷
a permanent reminder that will remain.¹⁸

The Lord Invites Outsiders to Enter

56:1 This is what the LORD says,
“Promote¹⁹ justice! Do what is right!
For I am ready to deliver you;
I am ready to vindicate you openly.²⁰

56:2 The people who do this will be
blessed,²¹
the people who commit themselves to
obedience,²²
who observe the Sabbath and do not de-
file it,
who refrain from doing anything that is
wrong.²³

56:3 No foreigner who becomes a fol-
lower of²⁴ the LORD should say,
‘The LORD will certainly²⁵ exclude me
from his people.’

The eunuch should not say,
‘Look, I am like a dried-up tree.’”

56:4 For this is what the LORD says:
“For the eunuchs who observe my Sab-
baths

and choose what pleases me
and are faithful to²⁶ my covenant,

56:5 I will set up within my temple and
my walls a monument²⁷
that will be better than sons and daugh-
ters.

I will set up a permanent monument²⁸ for
them that will remain.

56:6 As for foreigners who become fol-
lowers of²⁹ the LORD and serve him,
who love the name of the LORD and want
to be his servants –

17 tn Heb “to the LORD for a name.” For בְּשֵׁם (*shem*) used in the sense of “monument,” see also 56:5, where it stands parallel to יָד (*yad*).

18 tn Or, more literally, “a permanent sign that will not be cut off.”

19 tn Heb “guard”; KJV “Keep”; NAB “Observe”; NASB “Pre-serve”; NIV, NRSV “Maintain.”

20 tn Heb “for near is my deliverance to enter, and my vindica-tion [or “righteousness”] to be revealed.”

21 tn Heb “blessed is the man who does this.”

22 tn Heb “the son of mankind who takes hold of it.”

23 tn Heb and who keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

24 tn Heb “who attaches himself to.”

25 tn The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb for em-
phasis.

26 tn Heb “and take hold of” (so KJV); NASB “hold fast.”

27 tn Heb “a hand and a name.” For other examples where יָד (*yad*) refers to a monument, see HALOT 388 s.v.

28 tn Heb “name” (so KJV, NIV, NRSV).

29 tn Heb “who attach themselves to.”

all who observe the Sabbath and do not defile it,
and who are faithful to¹ my covenant –
56:7 I will bring them to my holy mountain;
I will make them happy in the temple
where people pray to me.²
Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will
be accepted on my altar,
for my temple will be known as a temple
where all nations may pray.³
56:8 The sovereign LORD says this,
the one who gathers the dispersed of
Israel:
“I will still gather them up.”⁴

The Lord Denounces Israel's Paganism

56:9 All you wild animals in the fields,
come and devour,
all you wild animals in the forest!
56:10 All their watchmen⁵ are blind,
they are unaware.⁶
All of them are like mute dogs,
unable to bark.
They pant,⁷ lie down,
and love to snooze.
56:11 The dogs have big appetites;
they are never full.⁸
They are shepherds who have no under-
standing;
they all go their own way,
each one looking for monetary gain.⁹
56:12 Each one says,¹⁰
‘Come on, I'll get some wine!
Let's guzzle some beer!

Tomorrow will be just like today!
We'll have everything we want!¹¹

57:1 The godly¹² perish,
but no one cares.¹³
Honest people disappear,¹⁴
when no one¹⁵ minds¹⁶
that the godly¹⁷ disappear¹⁸ because of¹⁹
evil.²⁰

57:2 Those who live uprightly enter a
place of peace;
they rest on their beds.²¹

57:3 But approach, you sons of omen
readers,
you offspring of adulteresses and prosti-
tutes!²²

57:4 At whom are you laughing?
At whom are you opening your mouth
and sticking out your tongue?
You are the children of rebels,
the offspring of liars,²³

57:5 you who practice ritual sex²⁴ under
the oaks and every green tree,

¹¹ tn Heb “great, [in] abundance, very much,” i.e., “very great indeed.” See HALOT 452 s.v. יְמִינָה.

¹² tn Or “righteous” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “the just man”; TEV “Good people.”

¹³ tn Or perhaps, “understands.” Heb “and there is no man who sets [it] upon [his] heart.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “Men of loyalty are taken away.” The Niphal of נִפְאַת (‘asaf) here means “to die.”

¹⁵ tn The Hebrew term בֵּין (be'en) often has the nuance “when there is no.” See Prov 8:24; 11:14; 14:4; 15:22; 26:20; 29:18.

¹⁶ tn Or “realizes”; Heb “understands” (so NASB, NIV, NRSV).

¹⁷ tn Or “righteous” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “the just man.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “are taken away.” The Niphal of נִפְאַת (‘asaf) here means “to die.”

¹⁹ tn The term מִפְנֵי (mippene, “from the face of”) often has a causal nuance. It also appears with the Niphal of אֲסַפָּה (‘asaph, “gather”) in 2 Chr 12:5: אֲשֶׁר־נָאכַפְתָּם מִפְנֵי שִׁיחָלָם mipp’ney shishaq, “who had gathered at Jerusalem because of [i.e., due to fear of] Shishak.”

²⁰ tn The translation assumes that this verse, in proverbial fashion, laments society’s apathy over the persecution of the godly. The second half of the verse observes that such apathy results in more widespread oppression. Since the next verse pictures the godly being taken to a place of rest, some interpret the second half of v. 1 in a more positive vein. According to proponents of this view, God removes the godly so that they might be spared suffering and calamity, a fact which the general populace fails to realize.

²¹ tn Heb “he enters peace, they rest on their beds, the one who walks straight ahead of himself.” The tomb is here viewed in a fairly positive way as a place where the dead are at peace and sleep undisturbed.

²² tc The Hebrew text reads literally, “offspring of an adulterer [masculine] and [one who] has committed adultery.” Perhaps the text has suffered from transposition of vav (ו) and tav (ת) and בָּתִינְחָה (vatinnah) or מִבְּנָה (mibnah) of vattinneh should be emended to בָּתִינְחָה (vatinnah) or מִבְּנָה (mibnah) efel vezonah, “an adulteress and a prostitute”). Both singular nouns would be understood in a collective sense. Most modern English versions render both forms as nouns.

²³ tn Heb “Are you not children of rebellion, offspring of a lie?” The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, “Of course you are!”

²⁴ tn Heb “inflame yourselves”; NRSV “burn with lust.” This verse alludes to the practice of ritual sex that accompanied pagan fertility rites.

¹ tn Heb “and take hold of”; NAB “hold to”; NIV, NRSV “hold fast.”

² tn Heb “in the house of my prayer.”

³ tn Heb “for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations.”

⁴ tn The meaning of the statement is unclear. The text reads literally, “Still I will gather upon him to his gathered ones.” Perhaps the preposition לְ (lamed) before “gathered ones” introduces the object of the verb, as in Jer 49:5. The third masculine singular suffix on both לְאַלְיָהָן (‘alay) and נִגְבָּתָאָן (nigbatay) probably refers to “Israel.” In this case one can translate literally, “Still I will gather to him his gathered ones.”

⁵ sn The “watchmen” are probably spiritual leaders, most likely prophets and priests, responsible for giving the people moral direction.

⁶ tn Heb “they do not know”; KJV “they are all ignorant”; NIV “they all lack knowledge.”

⁷ tn The Hebrew text has בַּיִתְהָזִים (hozim), which appears to be derived from an otherwise unattested verbal root הָזַה (hazah). On the basis of alleged cognates, BDB 223 s.v. הָזַה offers the definition “dream, rave” while HALOT 243 s.v. מִתְהָזֵה lists “pant.” In this case the dog metaphor of the preceding lines continues. The reference to dogs at the beginning of v. 11 favors the extension of the metaphor. The Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a has יְהִוָּה (“seers”) here. In this case the “watchmen” are directly identified as prophets and depicted as lazy.

⁸ sn The phrase never full alludes to the greed of the leaders.

⁹ tn Heb “for his gain from his end.”

¹⁰ tn The words “each one says” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

who slaughter children near the streams under the rocky overhangs.¹

57:6 Among the smooth stones of the stream are the idols you love; they, they are the object of your devotion.²

You pour out liquid offerings to them, you make an offering.

Because of these things I will seek vengeance.³

57:7 On every high, elevated hill you prepare your bed; you go up there to offer sacrifices.

57:8 Behind the door and doorpost you put your symbols.⁴

Indeed,⁵ you depart from me⁶ and go up and invite them into bed with you.⁷

You purchase favors from them,⁸

you love their bed,

and gaze longingly⁹ on their genitals.¹⁰

57:9 You take olive oil as tribute¹¹ to your king.¹²

¹ **sn** This apparently alludes to the practice of child sacrifice (cf. TEV, CEV, NLT).

² **tn** *Heb* “among the smooth stones of the stream [is] your portion, they, they [are] your lot.” The next line indicates idols are in view.

³ **tn** The text reads literally, “Because of these am I relenting?” If the prefixed interrogative particle is retained at the beginning of the sentence, then the question would be rhetorical, with the Niphal of נִחַם (*nakham*) probably being used in the sense of “relent, change one’s mind.” One could translate: “Because of these things, how can I relent?” However, the initial letter he may be ditto graphic (note the final he [ה] on the preceding word). In this case one may understand the verb in the sense of “console oneself, seek vengeance,” as in 1:24.

⁴ **tn** The precise referent of זֵיכָר (*zikkaron*) in this context is uncertain. Elsewhere the word refers to a memorial or commemorative sign. Here it likely refers to some type of idolatrous symbol.

⁵ **tn** Or “for” (KJV, NRSV).

⁶ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally, “from me you uncover.” The translation assumes an emendation of the Piel form גַּלְלֵי (*gillî*, “you uncover”), which has no object expressed here, to the Qal גַּלְלֵי (*galit*, “you depart”).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “you make wide your bed” (NASB similar).

⁸ **tc** *Heb* “and you [second masculine singular, unless the form be taken as third feminine singular] cut for yourself [feminine singular] from them.” Most English translations retain the MT reading in spite of at least three problems. This section makes significant use of feminine verbs and noun suffixes because of the sexual imagery. The verb in question is likely a 2nd person masculine singular verb. Nevertheless, this kind of fluctuation in gender appears elsewhere (GKC 127-28 §47.k and 462 §144.p; cf. Jer 3:5; Ezek 22:4; 23:32; cf. J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:473, n. 13). Secondly, when this verbal root signifies establishing a covenant, it is normally accompanied by the noun for “covenant” (בְּרִית, *b’rit*). Finally, this juxtaposition of the verb “to cut” and “covenant” normally is followed by the preposition “with,” while here it is “from.” The translation above assumes an emendation of וְקַרְבָּתֶךָ (*v’karbatêkha*, “and you cut”) to וְקַרְבָּתֶךָ (*v’karbitêkha*, “and you purchase”) from the root בְּהָרָה (*kharah*); see HALOT 497 s.v. בְּהָרָה.

⁹ **tn** The Hebrew text has simply חָזָה (*khazah*, “gaze”). The adverb “longingly” is interpretive (see the context, where sexual lust is depicted).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “[at] a hand you gaze.” The term יָד (*yad*, “hand”) probably has the sense of “power, manhood” here, where it is used, as in Ugaritic, as a euphemism for the genitals. See HALOT 387 s.v. יָד.

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “you journey with oil.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “the king.” Since the context refers to idolatry and

along with many perfumes.¹³

You send your messengers to a distant place;

you go all the way to Sheol.¹⁴

57:10 Because of the long distance you must travel, you get tired,¹⁵

but you do not say, ‘I give up.’¹⁶

You get renewed energy,¹⁷

so you don’t collapse.¹⁸

57:11 Whom are you worried about?

Whom do you fear, that you would act so deceitfully

and not remember me

or think about me?¹⁹

Because I have been silent for so long,²⁰

you are not afraid of me.²¹

57:12 I will denounce your so-called righteousness and your deeds,²²

but they will not help you.

57:13 When you cry out for help, let your idols²³ help you!

The wind blows them all away,²⁴

a breeze carries them away.²⁵

But the one who looks to me for help²⁶

will inherit the land

and will have access to²⁷ my holy mountain.”

57:14 He says,²⁸

“Build it! Build it! Clear a way!

Remove all the obstacles out of the way of my people!”

child sacrifice (see v. 5), some emend תְּמִלָּחָה (*melekh*, “king”) to “Molech.” Perhaps Israel’s devotion to her idols is likened here to a subject taking tribute to a ruler.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “and you multiply your perfumes.”

¹⁴ **sn** Israel’s devotion to her idols is inordinate, irrational, and self-destructive.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “by the greatness [i.e., “length,” see BDB 914 s.v. נֶאֱמָן] of your way you get tired.”

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “it is hopeless” (so NAB, NASB, NIV); NRSV “It is useless.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “the life of your hand you find.” The term קַיָּה (*khayyah*, “life”) is here used in the sense of “renewal” (see BDB 312 s.v.) while יָד (*yad*) is used of “strength.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “you do not grow weak.”

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “you do not place [it] on your heart.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “Is it not [because] I have been silent, and from long ago?”

²¹ **sn** God’s patience with sinful Israel has caused them to think that they can sin with impunity and suffer no consequences.

²² **tn** *Heb* “I, I will declare your righteousness and your deeds.”

²³ **tn** The Hebrew text has גִּבְעֹתָיִךְ (*qibbutayikh*, “your gatherings”), an otherwise unattested noun from the verbal root גִּבְעַת (*gavats*, “gather”). Perhaps this alludes to their religious assemblies and by metonymy to their rituals. Since idolatry is a prominent theme in the context, some understand this as a reference to a collection of idols. The second half of the verse also favors this view.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “all of them a wind lifts up.”

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “a breath takes [them] away.”

²⁶ **tn** Or “seeks refuge in me.” “Seeking refuge” is a metonymy for “being loyal to.”

²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “possess, own.” The point seems to be that he will have free access to God’s presence, as if God’s temple mount were his personal possession.

²⁸ **tn** Since God is speaking throughout this context, perhaps we should emend the text to “and I say.” However, divine speech is introduced in v. 15.

57:15 For this is what the high and exalted one says,
the one who rules¹ forever, whose name is holy:
“I dwell in an exalted and holy place,
but also with the discouraged and humiliated,”²
in order to cheer up the humiliated
and to encourage the discouraged.³

57:16 For I will not be hostile⁴ forever
or perpetually angry,
for then man’s spirit would grow faint
before me,⁵
the life-giving breath I created.

57:17 I was angry because of their sinful greed;
I attacked them and angrily rejected them,⁶
yet they remained disobedient and stubborn.⁷

57:18 I have seen their behavior,⁸
but I will heal them and give them rest,
and I will once again console those who mourn.⁹

57:19 I am the one who gives them reason to celebrate.¹⁰
Complete prosperity¹¹ is available both to those who are far away and those who are nearby,”
says the LORD, “and I will heal them.

57:20 But the wicked are like a surging sea
that is unable to be quiet;
its waves toss up mud and sand.

57:21 There will be no prosperity,” says my God, “for the wicked.”

¹ tn Heb “the one who dwells forever.” שָׁכֵן אָד (shokhen ‘ad) is sometimes translated “the one who lives forever,” and understood as a reference to God’s eternal existence. However, the immediately preceding and following descriptions (“high and exalted” and “holy”) emphasize his sovereign rule. In the next line, he declares, “I dwell in an exalted and holy [place],” which refers to the place from which he rules. Therefore it is more likely that שָׁכֵן אָד (shokhen ‘ad) means “I dwell [in my lofty palace] forever” and refers to God’s eternal kingship.

² tn Heb “and also with the crushed and lowly of spirit.” This may refer to the repentant who have humbled themselves (see 66:2) or more generally to the exiles who have experienced discouragement and humiliation.

³ tn Heb “to restore the lowly of spirit and to restore the heart of the crushed.”

⁴ tn Or perhaps, “argue,” or “accuse” (so NAB, NIV, NRSV).

⁵ tn Heb “for a spirit from before me would be faint.”

⁶ tn Heb “and I struck him, hiding, and I was angry.” פְּנַיִם (panayim, “face”) is the implied object of “hiding.”

⁷ tn Heb “and he walked [as an] apostate in the way of his heart.”

⁸ tn Heb “his ways” (so KJV, NASB, NIV); TEV “how they acted.”

⁹ tn Heb “and I will restore consolation to him, to his mourners.”

¹⁰ tc The Hebrew text has literally, “one who creates fruit of lips.” Perhaps the pronoun אַנְי (‘ani) should be inserted after the participle; it may have been accidentally omitted by haplography: בָּרָא אַנְי נָבָלָתִים (bore’ [‘ani] nuv s’fatayim). “Fruit of the lips” is often understood as a metonymy for praise; perhaps it refers more generally to joyful shouts (see v. 18).

¹¹ tn Heb “Peace, peace.” The repetition of the noun emphasizes degree.

The Lord Desires Genuine Devotion

58:1 “Shout loudly! Don’t be quiet!
Yell as loud as a trumpet!
Confront my people with their rebellious deeds;¹²
confront Jacob’s family with their sin!¹³

58:2 They seek me day after day;
they want to know my requirements,¹⁴
like a nation that does what is right
and does not reject the law of their God.
They ask me for just decrees;
they want to be near God.

58:3 They lament,¹⁵ ‘Why don’t you notice when we fast?
Why don’t you pay attention when we humble ourselves?’
Look, at the same time you fast, you satisfy your selfish desires,¹⁶
you oppress your workers.¹⁷

58:4 Look, your fasting is accompanied by¹⁸ arguments, brawls,
and fistfights.¹⁹
Do not fast as you do today,
trying to make your voice heard in heaven.

58:5 Is this really the kind of fasting I want?²⁰
Do I want a day when people merely humble themselves,²¹
bowing their heads like a reed
and stretching out²² on sackcloth and ashes?
Is this really what you call a fast,
a day that is pleasing to the LORD?

58:6 No, this is the kind of fast I want.²³
I want you²⁴ to remove the sinful chains,
to tear away the ropes of the burdensome yoke,
to set free the oppressed,²⁵
and to break every burdensome yoke.

¹² tn Heb “declare to my people their rebellion.”

¹³ tn Heb “and to the house of Jacob their sin.” The verb “declare” is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

¹⁴ tn Heb “ways” (so KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, TEV); NLT “my laws.”

¹⁵ tn The words “they lament” are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹⁶ tn Heb “you find pleasure”; NASB “you find your desire.”

¹⁷ tn Or perhaps, “debtors.” See HALOT 865 s.v. *

¹⁸ tn Heb “you fast for” (so NASB); NRSV “you fast only to quarrel.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “and for striking with a sinful fist.”

²⁰ tn Heb “choose” (so NASB, NRSV); NAB “wish.”

²¹ tn Heb “a day when man humbles himself.” The words “Do I want” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²² tn Or “making [their] bed.”

²³ tn Heb “Is this not a fast I choose?” “No” is supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁴ tn The words “I want you” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁵ tn Heb “crushed.”

58:7 I want you¹ to share your food with the hungry and to provide shelter for homeless, oppressed people.²

When you see someone naked, clothe him!

Don't turn your back on your own flesh and blood!³

58:8 Then your light will shine like the sunrise;⁴ your restoration will quickly arrive;⁵ your godly behavior⁶ will go before you, and the LORD's splendor will be your rear guard.⁷

58:9 Then you will call out, and the LORD will respond; you will cry out, and he will reply, 'Here I am.'

You must⁸ remove the burdensome yoke from among you and stop pointing fingers and speaking sinfully.

58:10 You must⁹ actively help the hungry and feed the oppressed.¹⁰

Then your light will dispel the darkness,¹¹ and your darkness will be transformed into noonday.¹²

58:11 The LORD will continually lead you; he will feed you even in parched regions.¹³

He will give you renewed strength,¹⁴ and you will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring that continually produces water.

58:12 Your perpetual ruins will be rebuilt;¹⁵ you will reestablish the ancient foundations.

You will be called, 'The one who repairs broken walls, the one who makes the streets inhabitable again.'¹⁶

¹tn Heb "Is it not?" The rhetorical question here expects a positive answer, "It is!"

²tn Heb "and afflicted [ones], homeless [ones] you should bring [into] a house." On the meaning of מַרְוִידִים (*m'rudim*, "homeless") see HALOT 633 s.v. מַרְוֵיד.

³tn Heb "and from your flesh do not hide yourself."

⁴tn Heb "will burst out like the dawn."

⁵sn Light here symbolizes God's favor and restored blessing, as the immediately following context makes clear.

⁶tn Heb "prosper"; KJV "spring forth speedily."

⁷tn Or "righteousness." Their godly behavior will be on display for all to see.

⁸tn Heb "The nation will experience God's protective presence."

⁹tn Heb "if you." In the Hebrew text vv. 9b-10 are one long conditional sentence. The protasis ("if" clauses appear in vv. 9b-10a), with the apodosis ("then" clause) appearing in v. 10b.

¹⁰tn Heb "if you furnish for the hungry [with] your being, and the appetite of the oppressed you satisfy."

¹¹tn Heb "will rise in the darkness."

¹²tn Heb "and your darkness [will be] like noonday."

¹³tn Heb "he will satisfy in parched regions your appetite."

¹⁴tn Heb "and your bones he will strengthen."

¹⁵tn Heb "and they will build from you ancient ruins."

¹⁶tc The Hebrew text has "the one who restores paths for

58:13 You must¹⁷ observe the Sabbath¹⁸ rather than doing anything you please on my holy day.¹⁹

You must look forward to the Sabbath²⁰ and treat the LORD's holy day with respect.²¹

You must treat it with respect by refraining from your normal activities, and by refraining from your selfish pursuits and from making business deals.²²

58:14 Then you will find joy in your relationship to the LORD,²³ and I will give you great prosperity,²⁴ and cause crops to grow on the land I gave to your ancestor Jacob.²⁵

Know for certain that the LORD has spoken.²⁶

Injustice Brings Alienation from God

59:1 Look, the LORD's hand is not too weak²⁷ to deliver you;

his ear is not too deaf to hear you.²⁸

59:2 But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God;

dwelling." The idea of "paths to dwell in" is not a common notion. Some have proposed emending נֶתֶבּוֹת (*n'tibot*, "paths") to נֶתֶנְתָּה (*n'ten-tah*, "ruins"), a passive participle from נָתַן (*natah*, "tear down"; see HALOT 732 s.v. *נָתַנְתָּה"), because tighter parallelism with the preceding line is achieved. However, none of the textual sources support this emendation. The line may mean that paths must be repaired in order to dwell in the land.

¹⁷tn Lit. "if you." In the Hebrew text vv. 13-14 are one long conditional sentence. The protasis ("if" clauses appear in v. 13), with the apodosis ("then" clause) appearing in v. 14.

¹⁸tn Heb "if you turn from the Sabbath your feet."

¹⁹tn Heb "[from] doing your desires on my holy day." The Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a supplies the preposition עַל (*al*) on "doing."

²⁰tn Heb "and call the Sabbath a pleasure"; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV "a delight."

²¹tn Heb "and [call] the holy [day] of the LORD honored." On קָדָשָׁךְ (*qadosh*, "holy") as indicating a time period, see BDB 872 s.v. 2.e (cf. also Neh 8:9-11).

²²tn Heb "and you honor it [by refraining] from accomplishing your ways, from finding your desire and speaking a word." It is unlikely that the last phrase ("speaking a word") is a prohibition against talking on the Sabbath; instead it probably refers to making transactions or plans (see Hos 10:4). Some see here a reference to idle talk (cf. 2 Sam 19:30).

²³tn For a parallel use of the phrase "find joy in" (Hitpael of נָגַן [*anag*] followed by the preposition בְּ [*'al*]), see Ps 37:4.

²⁴tn Heb "and I will cause you to ride upon the heights of the land." The statement seems to be an allusion to Deut 32:13, where it is associated, as here, with God's abundant provision of food.

²⁵tn Heb "and I will cause you to eat the inheritance of Jacob your father." The Hebrew term נַקְהָלָה (*nakhalah*) likely stands with metonymy for the crops that grow on Jacob's "inheritance" (i.e., the land he inherited as a result of God's promise).

²⁶tn Heb "for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." The introductory יְ (ki) may be asseverative (as reflected in the translation) or causal/explanatory, explaining why the preceding promise will become reality (because it is guaranteed by the divine word).

²⁷tn Heb "short" (so NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

²⁸tn Heb "or his ear too heavy [i.e., "dull"] to hear."

your sins have caused him to reject you
and not listen to your prayers.¹

59:3 For your hands are stained with blood
and your fingers with sin;
your lips speak lies,
your tongue utters malicious words.

59:4 No one is concerned about justice;²
no one sets forth his case truthfully.
They depend on false words³ and tell lies;
they conceive of oppression⁴
and give birth to sin.

59:5 They hatch the eggs of a poisonous
snake
and spin a spider's web.
Whoever eats their eggs will die,
a poisonous snake is hatched.⁵

59:6 Their webs cannot be used for cloth-
ing;
they cannot cover themselves with what
they make.

Their deeds are sinful;
they commit violent crimes.⁶

59:7 They are eager to do evil,⁷
quick to shed innocent blood.⁸
Their thoughts are sinful;
they crush and destroy.⁹

59:8 They are unfamiliar with peace;
their deeds are unjust.¹⁰
They use deceitful methods,
and whoever deals with them is unfamil-
iar with peace.¹¹

Israel Confesses its Sin

59:9 For this reason deliverance¹² is far
from us¹³
and salvation does not reach us.
We wait for light,¹⁴ but see only darkness;¹⁵
we wait for¹⁶ a bright light,¹⁷ but live¹⁸ in
deep darkness.¹⁹

¹ tn Heb “and your sins have caused [his] face to be hid-
den from you so as not to hear.”

² tn Heb “no one pleads with justice.”

³ tn Heb “nothing”; NAB “emptiness.”

⁴ tn Or “trouble” (NIV), or “harm.”

⁵ tn Heb “that which is pressed in hatches [as] a snake.”

⁶ tn Heb “their deeds are deeds of sin, and the work of
violence [is] in their hands.”

⁷ tn Heb “their feet run to evil.”

⁸ tn Heb “they quickly pour out innocent blood.”

⁹ tn Heb “their thoughts are thoughts of sin, destruction
and crushing [are] in their roadways.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “a way of peace they do not know, and there is no
justice in their pathways.”

¹¹ tn Heb “their paths they make crooked, everyone who
walks in it does not know peace.”

¹² tn מִשְׁפָט (mishpat), which refers to “justice” in the earlier
verses, here refers to “justice from God,” or “vindication.” Be-
cause the people are unjust, God refuses to vindicate them
before their enemies. See v. 11.

¹³ sn The prophet speaks on behalf of the sinful nation and
confesses its sins.

¹⁴ sn Light here symbolizes prosperity and blessing.

¹⁵ tn Heb “but, look, darkness”; NIV “but all is darkness.”

¹⁶ tn The words “we wait for” are supplied in the translation;
the verb is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

¹⁷ tn The plural noun form may indicate degree here.

¹⁸ tn Or “walk about”; NCV “all we have is darkness.”

¹⁹ tn The plural noun form may indicate degree here.

59:10 We grope along the wall like the
blind,
we grope like those who cannot see;²⁰
we stumble at noontime as if it were
evening.

Though others are strong, we are like
dead men.²¹

59:11 We all growl like bears,
we coo mournfully like doves;
we wait for deliverance,²² but there is
none,
for salvation, but it is far from us.

59:12 For you are aware of our many re-
bellious deeds,²³
and our sins testify against us;
indeed, we are aware of our rebellious
deeds;

we know our sins all too well.²⁴

59:13 We have rebelled and tried to de-
ceive the LORD;
we turned back from following our God.
We stir up²⁵ oppression and rebellion;
we tell lies we concocted in our minds.²⁶

59:14 Justice is driven back;
godliness²⁷ stands far off.
Indeed,²⁸ honesty stumbles in the city
square

and morality is not even able to enter.

59:15 Honesty has disappeared;
the one who tries to avoid evil is robbed.
The LORD watches and is displeased,²⁹
for there is no justice.

The Lord Intervenes

59:16 He sees there is no advocate;³⁰
he is shocked³¹ that no one intervenes.
So he takes matters into his own hands,³²
his desire for justice drives him on.³³

59:17 He wears his desire for justice³⁴ like
body armor,³⁵

and his desire to deliver is like a helmet
on his head.³⁶

²⁰ tn Heb “like there are no eyes.”

²¹ tn Heb among the strong, like dead men.”

²² tn See the note at v. 9.

²³ tn Heb “for many are our rebellious deeds before you.”

²⁴ tn Heb “indeed [or “for”] our rebellious deeds (are) with
us, and our sins, we know them.”

²⁵ tn Heb “speaking.” A new sentence was started here in
the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁶ tn Heb “conceiving and uttering from the heart words of
falsehood.”

²⁷ tn Or “righteousness” (ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); KJV, NAB
“justice.”

²⁸ tn Or “for” (KJV, NRSV).

²⁹ tn Heb “and it is displeasing in his eyes.”

³⁰ tn Heb “man” (so KJV, ASV); TEV “no one to help.”

³¹ tn Or “appalled” (NAB, NIV, NRSV), or “disgusted.”

³² tn Heb “and his arm delivers for him.”

³³ tn Heb “and his justice [or “righteousness”] supports
him.”

³⁴ tn Or “righteousness” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NCV
“goodness.”

³⁵ tn Or “a breastplate” (traditional; so many English ver-
sions); TEV “a coat of armour.”

³⁶ tn Heb “and [as] a helmet deliverance on his head.”

He puts on the garments of vengeance¹
and wears zeal like a robe.
59:18 He repays them for what they have
done,
dispensing angry judgment to his adver-
saries

and punishing his enemies.²
He repays the coastlands.³
59:19 In the west, people respect⁴ the
LORD's reputation;⁵
in the east they recognize his splendor.⁶
For he comes like a rushing⁷ stream
driven on by wind sent from the LORD.⁸
59:20 "A protector⁹ comes to Zion,
to those in Jacob who repent of their re-
bellious deeds,"¹⁰ says the LORD.

59:21 "As for me, this is my promise to¹¹
them," says the LORD. "My spirit, who is upon
you, and my words, which I have placed in your
mouth, will not depart from your mouth or from
the mouths of your children and descendants from
this time forward,"¹² says the LORD.

Zion's Future Splendor

60:1 "Arise! Shine! For your light arrives!
The splendor¹³ of the LORD shines on you!
60:2 For, look, darkness covers the earth
and deep darkness covers¹⁴ the nations,
but the LORD shines on you;
his splendor¹⁵ appears over you.
60:3 Nations come to your light,
kings to your bright light.
60:4 Look all around you!¹⁶
They all gather and come to you –
your sons come from far away
and your daughters are escorted by
guardians.
60:5 Then you will look and smile,¹⁷
you will be excited and your heart will

1 tn Heb "and he puts on the clothes of vengeance [as] a garment."

2 tn Heb "in accordance with deeds, so he repays, anger to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies."

3 tn Or "islands" (KJV, NIV).

4 tc Heb "fear." A few medieval Hebrew MSS read "see."

5 tn Heb "and they fear from the west the name of the LORD."

6 tn Heb "and from the rising of the sun his splendor."

7 tn Heb "narrow"; NAB, NIV, NRSV "pent-up."

8 tn Heb "the wind of the Lord drives it on." The term רוח (ruach) could be translated "breath" here (see 30:28).

9 tn Or "redeemer." See the note at 41:14.

10 tn Heb "and to those who turn from rebellion in Jacob."

11 tn Or "my covenant with" (so many English versions); NCV "my agreement with."

sn The Lord promises the repentant (note "to them") that they and their offspring will possess his spirit and function as his spokesmen. In this regard they follow in the footsteps of the Lord's special servant. See 42:1; 49:2; 51:16.

12 tn Heb "from now and on into the future."

13 tn Or "glory" (so most English versions).

14 tn The verb "covers" is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

15 tn Or "glory" (so most English versions); TEV "the brightness of his presence."

16 tn Heb "Lift up around your eyes and see!"

17 tn Or "shine," or "be radiant" (NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).

swell with pride.¹⁸
For the riches of distant lands¹⁹ will be-
long to you
and the wealth of nations will come to
you.

60:6 Camel caravans will cover your
roads,²⁰

young camels from Midian and Ephah.
All the merchants of Sheba²¹ will come,
bringing gold and incense
and singing praises to the LORD.²²

60:7 All the sheep of Kedar will be gath-
ered to you;
the rams of Nebaioth will be available to
you as sacrifices.²³

They will go up on my altar acceptably,²⁴
and I will bestow honor on my majestic
temple.

60:8 Who are these who float along²⁵ like
a cloud,

who fly like doves to their shelters?²⁶

60:9 Indeed, the coastlands²⁷ look eagerly
for me,
the large ships²⁸ are in the lead,
bringing your sons from far away,
along with their silver and gold,
to honor the LORD your God,²⁹
the Holy One of Israel,³⁰ for he has be-
stowed honor on you.

60:10 Foreigners will rebuild your walls;
their kings will serve you.

Even though I struck you down in my
anger,
I will restore my favor and have compas-
sion on you.³¹

18 tn Heb "and it will tremble and be wide, your heart."

19 tn Heb "the wealth of the sea," i.e., wealth that is trans-
ported from distant lands via the sea.

20 tn Heb "an abundance of camels will cover you."

21 tn Heb "all of them, from Sheba."

22 tn Heb "and they will announce the praises of the LORD."

23 tn Heb "will serve you," i.e., be available as sacrifices
(see the next line). Another option is to understand these
"rams" as symbolic of leaders who will be subject to the peo-
ple of Zion. See v. 10.

24 tc Heb "they will go up on acceptance [on] my altar." Some have suggested that the preposition לְ (al) is ditto-
graphic (note the preceding לִילָה [la'al]). Consequently, the form should be emended to לִלְכַּדְתָּן (l'latson, "acceptably"; see BDB 953 s.v. לִלְכַּדְתָּן). However, the Qumran scroll 1Qlsa^a has both לִלְכַּדְתָּן followed by the preposition לְ, which would argue against deleted the preposition. As the above translation seeks to demonstrate, the preposition לְ (al) indicates a norm ("in accordance with acceptance" or "acceptably"); IBHS 218 §11.2.13e, n. 111) and the "altar" functions as an objective accusative with a verb of motion (cf. Gen 49:4; Lev 2:2; Num 13:17; J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:534, n. 14).

25 tn Heb "fly" (so KJV, NASB, NRSV); NAB, NIV "fly along."

26 tn Heb "to their windows," i.e., to the openings in their
coops. See HALOT 83 s.v. חַנְנָא.

27 tn Or "islands" (NIV); CEV "distant islands"; TEV "distant
lands."

28 tn Heb "the ships of Tarshish." See the note at 2:16.

29 tn Heb "to the name of the LORD your God."

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

31 tn Heb "in my favor I will have compassion on you."

60:11 Your gates will remain open at all times;
 they will not be shut during the day or at night,
 so that the wealth of nations may be delivered,
 with their kings leading the way.¹

60:12 Indeed,² nations or kingdoms that do not serve you will perish; such nations will be totally destroyed.³

60:13 The splendor of Lebanon will come to you, its evergreens, firs, and cypresses together, to beautify my palace;⁴ I will bestow honor on my throne room.⁵

60:14 The children of your oppressors will come bowing to you; all who treated you with disrespect will bow down at your feet.

They will call you, ‘The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’⁶

60:15 You were once abandoned and despised, with no one passing through,
 but I will make you⁷ a permanent source of pride and joy to coming generations.

60:16 You will drink the milk of nations; you will nurse at the breasts of kings.⁸ Then you will recognize that I, the LORD, am your deliverer, your protector,⁹ the powerful Ruler of Jacob.¹⁰

60:17 Instead of bronze, I will bring you gold, instead of iron, I will bring you silver, instead of wood, I will bring you¹¹ bronze, instead of stones, I will bring you¹² iron. I will make prosperity¹³ your overseer, and vindication your sovereign ruler.¹⁴

60:18 Sounds of violence¹⁵ will no longer be heard in your land, or the sounds of¹⁶ destruction and devastation within your borders. You will name your walls, ‘Deliverance,’ and your gates, ‘Praise.’

60:19 The sun will no longer supply light for you by day, nor will the moon’s brightness shine on you; the LORD will be your permanent source of light – the splendor of your God will shine upon you.¹⁷

60:20 Your sun will no longer set; your moon will not disappear;¹⁸ the LORD will be your permanent source of light; your time¹⁹ of sorrow will be over.

60:21 All of your people will be godly;²⁰ they will possess the land permanently. I will plant them like a shoot; they will be the product of my labor, through whom I reveal my splendor.²¹

60:22 The least of you will multiply into²² a thousand; the smallest of you will become a large nation. When the right time comes, I the LORD will quickly do this!²³

The Lord Will Rejuvenate His People

61:1 The spirit of the sovereign LORD is upon me, because the LORD has chosen²⁴ me.²⁵ He has commissioned²⁶ me to encourage²⁷ the poor, to help²⁸ the brokenhearted, to decree the release of captives, and the freeing of prisoners,

¹ tn Or “led in procession.” The participle is passive.

² tn Or “For” (KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); TEV “But.”

³ tn The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

⁴ tn Or “holy place, sanctuary.”

⁵ tn Heb “the place of my feet.” See Ezek 43:7, where the LORD’s throne is called the “place of the soles of my feet.”

⁶ sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 1:4.

⁷ tn Heb “Instead of your being abandoned and despised, with no one passing through, I will make you.”

⁸ sn The nations and kings are depicted as a mother nursing her children. Restored Zion will be nourished by them as she receives their wealth as tribute.

⁹ tn Or “redeemer.” See the note at 41:14.

¹⁰ sn See 1:24 and 49:26.

¹¹ tn The words “I will bring you” are supplied in the translation; they are understood by ellipsis (see the preceding lines).

¹² tn The words “I will bring you” are supplied in the translation; they are understood by ellipsis (see the first two lines of the verse).

¹³ tn Or “peace” (KJV and many other English versions).

¹⁴ tn The plural indicates degree. The language is ironic; in the past Zion was ruled by oppressive tyrants, but now personified prosperity and vindication will be the only things that will “dominate” the city.

¹⁵ tn The words “sounds of” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁶ tn The words “sounds of” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁷ tn Heb “and your God for your splendor.”

¹⁸ sn In this verse “sun” and “moon” refer to the LORD’s light, which will replace the sun and moon (see v. 19). Light here symbolizes the restoration of divine blessing and prosperity in conjunction with the LORD’s presence. See 30:26.

¹⁹ tn Heb “days” (so KJV, NAB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

²⁰ tn Or “righteous” (NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT); NAB “just.”

²¹ tn Heb “a shoot of his planting, the work of my hands, to reveal splendor.”

²² tn Heb “will become” (so NASB, NIV).

²³ tn Heb “I, the LORD, in its time, I will quickly do it.”

²⁴ tn Heb “anointed,” i.e., designated to carry out an assigned task.

²⁵ sn The speaker is not identified, but he is distinct from the LORD and from Zion’s suffering people. He possesses the divine spirit, is God’s spokesman, and is sent to release prisoners from bondage. The evidence suggests he is the LORD’s special servant, described earlier in the servant songs (see 42:1-4, 7; 49:2, 9; 50:4; see also 51:16).

²⁶ tn Or “sent” (NAB); NCV “has appointed me.”

²⁷ tn Or “proclaim good news to.”

²⁸ tn Heb “to bind up [the wounds of].”

61:2 to announce the year when the LORD will show his favor,
the day when our God will seek vengeance,¹
to console all who mourn,
61:3 to strengthen those who mourn in Zion,
by giving them a turban, instead of ashes,
oil symbolizing joy,² instead of mourning,
a garment symbolizing praise,³ instead of discouragement.⁴
They will be called oaks of righteousness,⁵
trees planted by the LORD to reveal his splendor.⁶
61:4 They will rebuild the perpetual ruins and restore the places that were desolate;⁷ they will reestablish the ruined cities, the places that have been desolate since ancient times.
61:5⁸ “Foreigners will take care of⁹ your sheep; foreigners will work in your fields and vineyards.
61:6 You will be called, ‘the LORD’s priests, servants of our God.’¹⁰
You will enjoy¹¹ the wealth of nations and boast about¹² the riches you receive from them.¹³
61:7 Instead of shame, you will get a double portion;¹⁴ instead of humiliation, they will rejoice over the land they receive.¹⁵

¹ tn Heb “to announce the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of our God’s vengeance.”

² tn Heb “oil of joy” (KJV, ASV); NASB, NIV, NRSV “the oil of gladness.”

³ tn Heb “garment of praise.”

⁴ tn Heb “a faint spirit” (so NRSV); KJV, ASV “the spirit of heaviness”; NASB “a spirit of fainting.”

⁵ tn Rather than referring to the character of the people, בָּשֵׂר (tsedeq) may carry the nuance “vindication” here, suggesting that God’s restored people are a testimony to his justice. See v. 2, which alludes to the fact that God will take vengeance against the enemies of his people. Cf. NAB “oaks of justice.”

⁶ tn Heb “a planting of the LORD to reveal splendor.”

⁷ tn Heb “and the formerly desolate places they will raise up.”

⁸ tn The LORD speaks in vv. 7-8 (and possibly v. 9). It is not clear where the servant’s speech (see vv. 1-3a) ends and the LORD’s begins. Perhaps the direct address to the people signals the beginning of the LORD’s speech.

⁹ tn Heb “will stand [in position] and shepherd.”

¹⁰ tn The Hebrew text adds, “it will be said concerning you.”

¹¹ tn Heb “eat” (KJV, NAB, NASB); NIV “feed on”; NLT “be fed with.”

¹² tc The form in the Hebrew text is probably a corruption of בָּזַבְרִי (yit’amm̄nu), a Hitpael from אָמַר (‘amar), meaning “boast about” (see HALOT 67 s.v. II אמר, HALOT 416 s.v. מֹר, and BDB 56 s.v. מֹרָא).

¹³ tn Heb “their glory” (i.e., riches).

¹⁴ tn Heb “instead of your shame, a double portion.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “and [instead of] humiliation they will rejoice [over] their portion.” The term תְּחִתָּה (takhat, “instead of”) is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

Yes,¹⁶ they will possess a double portion in their land

and experience lasting joy.

61:8 For I, the LORD, love justice and hate robbery and sin.

I will repay them because of my faithfulness;¹⁷

I will make a permanent covenant with them.

61:9 Their descendants will be known among the nations, their offspring among the peoples.

All who see them will recognize that the LORD has blessed them.¹⁸

61:10 I¹⁹ will greatly rejoice²⁰ in the LORD; I will be overjoyed because of my God.²¹ For he clothes me in garments of deliverance;

he puts on me a robe symbolizing vindication.²²

I look like a bridegroom when he wears a turban as a priest would;

I look like a bride when she puts on her jewelry.²³

61:11 For just as the ground produces its crops

and a garden yields its produce, so the sovereign LORD will cause deliverance²⁴ to grow,

and give his people reason to praise him in the sight of all the nations.²⁵

The Lord Takes Delight in Zion

62:1 “For the sake of Zion I will not be silent;

for the sake of Jerusalem²⁶ I will not be quiet,

until her vindication shines brightly²⁷ and her deliverance burns like a torch.”

62:2 Nations will see your vindication, and all kings your splendor.

You will be called by a new name that the LORD himself will give you.²⁸

¹⁶ tn Heb “therefore” (so KJV, NASB); NIV “and so.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “in faithfulness”; NASB, NRSV, NLT “faithfully.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “all who see them will recognize them, that they [are] descendants [whom] the LORD has blessed.”

¹⁹ sn The speaker in vv. 10-11 is not identified, but it is likely that the personified nation (or perhaps Zion) responds here to the LORD’s promise of restoration.

²⁰ tn The infinitive absolute appears before the finite verb for emphasis.

²¹ tn Heb “my being is happy in my God”; NAB “in my God is the joy of my soul.”

²² tn Heb “robe of vindication”; KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV “robe of righteousness.”

²³ tn Heb “like a bridegroom [who] acts like a priest [by wearing] a turban, and like a bride [who] wears her jewelry.” The words “I look” are supplied for stylistic reasons and clarification.

²⁴ tn Or perhaps, “righteousness,” but the context seems to emphasize deliverance and restoration (see v. 10 and 62:1).

²⁵ tn Heb “and praise before all the nations.”

²⁶ map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

²⁷ tn Heb “goes forth like brightness.”

²⁸ tn Heb “which the mouth of the LORD will designate.”

62:3 You will be a majestic crown in the hand of the LORD,
a royal turban in the hand of your God.
62:4 You will no longer be called, “Abandoned,”
and your land will no longer be called “Desolate.”
Indeed,¹ you will be called “My Delight is in Her,”²
and your land “Married.”³
For the LORD will take delight in you,
and your land will be married to him.⁴
62:5 As a young man marries a young woman,
so your sons⁵ will marry you.
As a bridegroom rejoices over a bride,
so your God will rejoice over you.
62:6 I⁶ post watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;
they should keep praying all day and all night.⁷
You who pray to⁸ the LORD, don’t be silent!
62:7 Don’t allow him to rest until he reestablishes Jerusalem,⁹
until he makes Jerusalem the pride¹⁰ of the earth.
62:8 The LORD swears an oath by his right hand,
by his strong arm:¹¹

“I will never again give your grain to your enemies as food,
and foreigners will not drink your wine, which you worked hard to produce.

62:9 But those who harvest the grain¹² will eat it,
and will praise the LORD.

Those who pick the grapes will drink the wine¹³
in the courts of my holy sanctuary.”

62:10 Come through! Come through the gates!

Prepare the way for the people!
Build it! Build the roadway!

Remove the stones!

Lift a signal flag for the nations!

62:11 Look, the LORD announces to the entire earth:¹⁴

“Say to Daughter Zion,
‘Look, your deliverer comes!
Look, his reward is with him
and his reward goes before him!’”¹⁵

62:12 They will be called, “The Holy People,
the Ones Protected¹⁶ by the LORD.”
You will be called, “Sought After,
City Not Abandoned.”

The Victorious Divine Warrior

63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom,¹⁷
dressed in bright red, coming from Bozrah?¹⁸

Who¹⁹ is this one wearing royal attire,²⁰
who marches confidently²¹ because of his great strength?

“It is I, the one who announces vindication,
and who is able to deliver!”²²

63:2 Why are your clothes red?
Why do you look like someone who has stomped on grapes in a vat?²³

63:3 “I have stomped grapes in the wine-press all by myself;

¹ tn Or “for”; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV “but.”

² tn Hebrew חַנְצִיכָה (khetztsi-vah), traditionally transliterated “Hephzibah” (so KJV, ASV, NIV).

³ tn Hebrew בֵּעַלְהָה (be'ulah), traditionally transliterated “Beulah” (so KJV, ASV, NIV).

⁴ tn That is, the land will be restored to the LORD’s favor and once again enjoy his blessing and protection. To indicate the land’s relationship to the LORD, the words “to him” have been supplied at the end of the clause.

⁵ tc The Hebrew text has “your sons,” but this produces an odd metaphor and is somewhat incongruous with the parallelism. In the context (v. 4b, see also 54:5-7) the LORD is the one who “marries” Zion. Therefore several prefer to emend “your sons” to בְּנוֹת (bonayikh, “your builder”; e.g., NRSV). In Ps 147:2 the LORD is called the “builder of Jerusalem.” However, this emendation is not the best option for at least four reasons. First, although the Lord is never called the “builder” of Jerusalem in Isaiah, the idea of Zion’s children possessing the land does occur (Isa 49:20; 54:3; cf. also 14:1; 60:21). Secondly, all the ancient versions support the MT reading. Thirdly, although the verb בָּאֵל (ba'al) can mean “to marry,” its basic idea is “to possess.” Consequently, the verb stresses a relationship more than a state. All the ancient versions render this verb “to dwell in” or “to dwell with.” The point is not just that the land will be re inhabited, but that it will be in a relationship of “belonging” to the Israelites. Hence a relational verb like בָּנֵי is used (J. N. Oswalt, *Isaiah* [NICOT], 2:581). Finally, “sons” is a well-known metaphor for “inhabitants” (J. de Waard, *Isaiah*, 208).

⁶ sn The speaker here is probably the prophet.

⁷ tn Heb “all day and all night continually they do not keep silent.” The following lines suggest that they pray for the Lord’s intervention and restoration of the city.

⁸ tn Or “invoke”; NIV “call on”; NASB, NRSV “remind.”

⁹ tn “Jerusalem” is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons; note the following line.

¹⁰ tn Heb “the object of praise.”

¹¹ tn The Lord’s right hand and strong arm here symbolize his power and remind the audience that his might guarantees the fulfillment of the following promise.

¹² tn Heb “it,” the grain mentioned in v. 8a.

¹³ tn Heb “and those who gather it will drink it.” The masculine singular pronominal suffixes attached to “gather” and “drink” refer back to the masculine noun תִּירוֹשׁ (*tirosh*, “wine”) in v. 8b.

¹⁴ tn Heb “to the end of the earth” (so NASB, NRSV).

¹⁵ sn As v. 12 indicates, the returning exiles are the Lord’s reward/prize. See also 40:10 and the note there.

¹⁶ tn Or “the redeemed of the Lord” (KJV, NAB).

¹⁷ sn Edom is here an archetype for the Lord’s enemies. See 34:5.

¹⁸ tn Heb “[in] bright red garments, from Bozrah.”

¹⁹ tn The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis; note the first line of the verse.

²⁰ tn Heb “honored in his clothing”; KJV, ASV “glorious in his apparel.”

²¹ tc The Hebrew text has צָאֵה (*tsa'ah*), which means “stoop, bend” (51:14). The translation assumes an emendation to צָאָד (*tsa'ad*, “march”; see BDB 858 s.v. צָאָד).

²² tn Heb “I, [the one] speaking in vindication [or “righteousness”], great to deliver.”

²³ tn Heb “and your garments like one who treads in a vat?”

no one from the nations joined me.
I stomped on them¹ in my anger;
I trampled them down in my rage.
Their juice splashed on my garments,
and stained² all my clothes.
63:4 For I looked forward to the day of
vengeance,
and then payback time arrived.³
63:5 I looked, but there was no one to
help;
I was shocked because there was no one
offering support.⁴
So my right arm accomplished deliver-
ance;
my raging anger drove me on.⁵
63:6 I trampled nations in my anger,
I made them drunk⁶ in my rage,
I splashed their blood on the ground.⁷

A Prayer for Divine Intervention

63:7 I will tell of the faithful acts of the
LORD,
of the LORD's praiseworthy deeds.
I will tell about all⁸ the LORD did for us,
the many good things he did for the fam-
ily of Israel,⁹
because of¹⁰ his compassion and great
faithfulness.
63:8 He said, "Certainly they will be my
people,
children who are not disloyal."¹¹
He became their deliverer.
63:9 Through all that they suffered, he
suffered too.¹²

1 sn Nations, headed by Edom, are the object of the LORD's anger (see v. 6). He compares military slaughter to stomping on grapes in a vat.

2 tn Heb "and I stained." For discussion of the difficult verb form, see HALOT 170 s.v. II בָּשַׂר. Perhaps the form is mixed, combining the first person forms of the imperfect (note the alef prefix) and perfect (note the תְּנִן ending).

3 tn Heb "for the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my revenge came." The term לְעֵילָאֵל (gē'ulai) is sometimes translated here "my redemption," for the verbal root לְעֵילָאֵל often means "deliver, buy back." A לְעֵילָאֵל (go'el, "kinsman-redeemer") was responsible for protecting the extended family's interests, often by redeeming property that had been sold outside the family. However, the responsibilities of a לְעֵילָאֵל extended beyond financial concerns. He was also responsible for avenging the shed blood of a family member (see Num 35:19-27; Deut 19:6-12). In Isa 63:4, where vengeance is a prominent theme (note the previous line), it is probably this function of the family protector that is in view. The LORD pictures himself as a blood avenger who waits for the day of vengeance to arrive and then springs into action.

4 tn See Isa 59:16 for similar language.

5 tn Heb "and my anger, it supported me"; NIV "my own wrath sustained me."

6 sn See Isa 49:26 and 51:23 for similar imagery.

7 tn Heb "and I brought down to the ground their juice."
"Juice" refers to their blood (see v. 3).

8 tn Heb "according to all which."

9 tn Heb "greatness of goodness to the house of Israel which he did for them."

10 tn Heb "according to."

11 tn Heb "children [who] do not act deceitfully." Here the verb refers to covenantal loyalty.

12 tn Heb "in all their distress, there was distress to him"
(reading יְהֹוָה [lo] with the margin/Qere).

The messenger sent from his very pres-
ence¹³ delivered them.
In his love and mercy he protected¹⁴ them;
he lifted them up and carried them
throughout ancient times.¹⁵

63:10 But they rebelled and offended¹⁶ his
holy Spirit,¹⁷

so he turned into an enemy
and fought against them.

63:11 His people remembered the ancient
times.¹⁸

Where is the one who brought them up
out of the sea,

along with the shepherd of¹⁹ his flock?
Where is the one who placed his holy

Spirit among them,²⁰

63:12 the one who made his majestic
power available to Moses,²¹

who divided the water before them,
gaining for himself a lasting reputation,²²

63:13 who led them through the deep
water?

Like a horse running on flat land²³ they
did not stumble.

63:14 Like an animal that goes down into
a valley to graze,²⁴
so the Spirit of the LORD granted them
rest.

In this way²⁵ you guided your people,

13 tn Heb "the messenger [or "angel"] of his face"; NIV "the angel of his presence."

14 tn This may refer to the "angel of God" mentioned in Exod 14:19, who in turn may be identical to the divine "presence" (literally, "face") referred to in Exod 33:14-15 and Deut 4:37. Here in Isa 63 this messenger may be equated with God's "holy Spirit" (see vv. 10-11) and "the Spirit of the LORD" (v. 14). See also Ps 139:7, where God's "Spirit" seems to be equated with his "presence" (literally, "face") in the synonymous parallelistic structure.

15 tn Or "redeemed" (KJV, NAB, NIV), or "delivered."

15 tn Heb "all the days of antiquity"; KJV, NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV "days of old."

16 tn Or "grieved, hurt the feelings of."

17 tn The phrase "holy Spirit" occurs in the OT only here (in v. 11 as well) and in Ps 51:11 (51:13 HT), where it is associated with the divine presence.

18 tn Heb "and he remembered the days of antiquity, Moses, his people." The syntax of the statement is unclear. The translation assumes that "his people" is the subject of the verb "remembered." If original, "Moses" is in apposition to "the days of antiquity," more precisely identifying the time period referred to. However, the syntactical awkwardness suggests that "Moses" may have been an early marginal note (perhaps identifying "the shepherd of his flock" two lines later) that has worked its way into the text.

19 tn The Hebrew text has a plural form, which if retained and taken as a numerical plural, would probably refer to Moses, Aaron, and the Israelite tribal leaders at the time of the Exodus. Most prefer to emend the form to the singular (מֹשֶׁה, rā'ah) and understand this as a reference just to Moses.

20 tn See the note at v. 10.

21 tn Heb "who caused to go at the right hand of Moses the arm of his splendor."

22 tn Heb "making for himself a lasting name."

23 tn Heb "in the desert [or "steppe"]."

24 tn The words "to graze" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

25 tn Or "so" (KJV, ASV), or "thus" (NAB, NRSV).

gaining for yourself an honored reputation.¹

63:15 Look down from heaven and take notice,
from your holy, majestic palace!
Where are your zeal² and power?
Do not hold back your tender compassion!³

63:16 For you are our father,
though Abraham does not know us
and Israel does not recognize us.
You, LORD, are our father;
you have been called our protector from
ancient times.⁴

63:17 Why, LORD, do you make us stray⁵
from your ways,⁶
and make our minds stubborn so that we
do not obey you?⁷
Return for the sake of your servants,
the tribes of your inheritance!

¹ tn Heb “making for yourself a majestic name.”

² tn This probably refers to his zeal for his people, which motivates him to angrily strike out against their enemies.

³ tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “the agitation of your intestines and your compassion to me they are held back.” The phrase “agitation of your intestines” is metonymic, referring to the way in which one’s nervous system reacts when one feels pity and compassion toward another. ‘לְךָ’ (*elay*, “to me”) is awkward in this context, where the speaker represents the nation and, following the introduction (see v. 7), utilizes first person plural forms. The translation assumes an emendation to the negative particle ‘אַנְךָ’ (*anekha*) or ‘אַתָּה’ (*atah*) also occurs in 42:14.

⁴ tn Heb “our protector [or “redeemer”] from antiquity [is] your name.”

⁵ tn Some suggest a tolerative use of the Hiphil here, “[why do] you allow us to stray?” (cf. NLT). Though the Hiphil of הָאָה (*ha’ah*) appears to be tolerative in Jer 50:6, elsewhere it is preferable or necessary to take it as causative. See Isa 3:12; 9:15; and 30:28, as well as Gen 20:13; 2 Kgs 21:9; Job 12:24-25; Prov 12:26; Jer 23:13, 32; Hos 4:12; Amos 2:4; Mic 3:5.

⁶ tn This probably refers to God’s commands.

⁷ tn Heb “[Why do] you harden our heart[s] so as not to fear you.” The interrogative particle is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line).

sn How direct this hardening is, one cannot be sure. The speaker may envision direct involvement on the LORD’s part. The LORD has brought the exile as judgment for the nation’s sin and now he continues to keep them at arm’s length by blinding them spiritually. The second half of 64:7 might support this, though the precise reading of the final verb is uncertain. On the other hand, the idiom of lament is sometimes ironic and hyperbolically deterministic. For example, Naomi lamented that Shaddai was directly opposing her and bringing her calamity (Ruth 1:20-21), while the author of Ps 88 directly attributes his horrible suffering and loneliness to God (see especially vv. 6-8, 16-18). Both individuals make little, if any, room for intermediate causes or the principle of sin and death which ravages the human race. In the same way, the speaker in Isa 63:17 (who evidences great spiritual sensitivity and is anything but “hardened”) may be referring to the hardships of exile, which discouraged and even embittered the people, causing many of them to retreat from their Yahwistic faith. In this case, the “hardening” in view is more indirect and can be lifted by the LORD’s intervention. Whether the hardening here is indirect or direct, it is important to recognize that the speaker sees it as one of the effects of rebellion against the LORD (note especially 64:5-6).

63:18 For a short time your special⁸ nation possessed a land,⁹
but then our adversaries knocked down¹⁰
your holy sanctuary.

63:19 We existed from ancient times,¹¹
but you did not rule over them,
they were not your subjects.¹²

64:1 (63:19b)¹³ If only you would tear apart
the sky¹⁴ and come down!
The mountains would tremble¹⁵ before
you!

64:2 (64:1) As when fire ignites dry wood,
or fire makes water boil,
let your adversaries know who you are,¹⁶
and may the nations shake at your presence!

64:3 When you performed awesome deeds
that took us by surprise,¹⁷
you came down, and the mountains trembled¹⁸ before you.

64:4 Since ancient times no one has heard
or perceived,¹⁹
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who intervenes for those who wait for
him.

64:5 You assist²⁰ those who delight in doing
what is right,²¹
who observe your commandments.²²

⁸ tn Or “holy” (ASV, NASB, NRSV, TEV, NLT).

⁹ tn Heb “for a short time they had a possession, the people of your holiness.”

¹⁰ tn Heb “your adversaries trampled on.”

¹¹ tn Heb “we were from antiquity” (see v. 16). The collocation תִּיןְ + מִן + קָדְשָׁךְ (*hayah + min + ’olam*) occurs only here.

¹² tn Heb “you did not rule them, your name was not called over them.” The expression “the name is called over” indicates ownership; see the note at 4:1. As these two lines stand they are very difficult to interpret. They appear to be stating that the adversaries just mentioned in v. 18 have not been subject to the LORD’s rule in the past, perhaps explaining why they could commit the atrocity described in v. 18b.

¹³ sn In BHS the chapter division occurs in a different place from the English Bible: 64:1 ET (63:19b HT) and 64:2-12 (64:1-11 HT). Beginning with 65:1 the verse numbers in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible are again the same.

¹⁴ tn Or “the heavens.” The Hebrew term שָׁמָיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated “heavens” or “sky” depending on the context.

¹⁵ tn Or “quake.” נִזְלֹלֶת (*nazolleth*) is from the verbal root נִזְלָל (*zalal*, “quake”; see HALOT 272 s.v. II זָלַל). Perhaps there is a verbal allusion to Judg 5:5, the only other passage where this verb occurs. In that passage the poet tells how the LORD’s appearance to do battle caused the mountains to shake.

¹⁶ tn Heb “to make known your name to your adversaries.” Perhaps the infinitive construct with preposition לְ (*lamed*) should be construed with “come down” in v. 1a, or subordinated to the following line: “To make known your name to your adversaries, let the nations shake from before you.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “[for which] we were not waiting.”

¹⁸ tn See the note at v. 1.

¹⁹ tn Heb “from ancient times they have not heard, they have not listened.”

²⁰ tn Heb “meet [with kindness].”

²¹ tn Heb “the one who rejoices and does righteousness.”

²² tn Heb “in your ways they remember you.”

Look, you were angry because we violated them continually.

How then can we be saved?⁷

64:6 We are all like one who is unclean, all our so-called righteous acts are like a menstrual rag in your sight.²

We all wither like a leaf; our sins carry us away like the wind.

64:7 No one invokes³ your name, or makes an effort⁴ to take hold of you.

For you have rejected us⁵ and handed us over to our own sins.⁶

64:8 Yet,⁷ LORD, you are our father.

We are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the product of your labor.⁸

64:9 LORD, do not be too angry!

Do not hold our sins against us continually!¹⁹

Take a good look at your people, at all of us!¹⁰

64:10 Your chosen¹¹ cities have become a desert;

Zion has become a desert,

Jerusalem¹² is a desolate ruin.

64:11 Our holy temple, our pride and joy,¹³ the place where our ancestors praised you, has been burned with fire;

1 tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “look, you were angry and we sinned against them continually [or perhaps, “in ancient times”] and we were delivered.” The statement makes little sense as it stands. The first vav [ו] consecutive (“and we sinned”) must introduce an explanatory clause here (see Num 1:48 and Isa 39:1 for other examples of this relatively rare use of the vav [ו] consecutive). The final verb (if rendered positively) makes no sense in this context – God’s anger at their sin resulted in judgment, not deliverance. One of the alternatives involves an emendation to יָנִישָׁה (yāniššāh, “and we were evil”; LXX, NRSV, TEV). The Vulgate and the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a support the MT reading. One can either accept an emendation or cast the statement as a question (as above).

2 tn Heb “and like a garment of menstruation [are] all our righteous acts”; KJV, NIV “filthy rags”; ASV “a polluted garment.”

3 tn Or “calls out in”; NASB, NIV, NRSV “calls on.”

4 tn Or “rouses himself”; NASB “arouses himself.”

5 tn Heb “for you have hidden your face from us.”

6 tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “and you caused us to melt in the hand of our sin.” The verb מְגַנֵּן (vattēmugnenū) is a Qal preterite 2nd person masculine singular with a 1st person common plural suffix from the root מָגַן (mug, “melt”). However, elsewhere the Qal of this verb is intransitive. If the verbal root מָגַן (mug) is retained here, the form should be emended to a Polel pattern (מְגַנְּנֶה, vattēmagēnenu). The translation assumes an emendation to מְגַנְּנֶה (vattēmagēnenu, “and you handed us over”). This form is a Piel preterite 2nd person masculine singular with a 1st person common plural suffix from the verbal root מְגַנֵּן (miggen, “hand over, surrender”; see HALOT 545 s.v. מָגַן and BDB 171 s.v. מָגַן). The point is that God has abandoned them to their sinful ways and no longer seeks reconciliation.

7 tn On the force of שְׁתָחַת (v^eattah) here, see HALOT 902 s.v. שְׁתָחַת.

8 tn Heb “the work of your hand.”

9 tn Heb “do not remember sin continually.”

10 tn Heb “Look, gaze at your people, all of us.” Another option is to translate, “Take a good look! We are all your people.”

11 tn Heb “holy” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV, NLT); NIV “sacred.”

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

13 tn Heb “our source of pride.”

all our prized possessions have been destroyed.¹⁴

64:12 In light of all this,¹⁵ how can you still hold back, LORD?

How can you be silent and continue to humiliate us?

The Lord Will Distinguish Between Sinners and the Godly

65:1 “I made myself available to those who did not ask for me;¹⁶

I appeared to those who did not look for me.¹⁷

I said, ‘Here I am! Here I am!’ to a nation that did not invoke¹⁸ my name.

65:2 I spread out my hands all day long to my rebellious people, who lived in a way that is morally unacceptable, and who did what they desired.¹⁹

65:3 These people continually and blatantly offend me²⁰ as they sacrifice in their sacred orchards²¹ and burn incense on brick altars.²²

65:4 They sit among the tombs²³ and keep watch all night long.²⁴

They eat pork,²⁵ and broth²⁶ from unclean sacrificial meat is in their pans.

65:5 They say, ‘Keep to yourself! Don’t get near me, for I am holier than you!’

These people are like smoke in my nostrils, like a fire that keeps burning all day long.

65:6 Look, I have decreed.²⁷

I will not keep silent, but will pay them back;

I will pay them back exactly what they deserve,²⁸

14 tn Or “all that we valued has become a ruin.”

15 tn Heb “because of these”; KJV, ASV “for these things.”

16 tn Heb “I allowed myself to be sought by those who did not ask.”

17 tn Heb “I allowed myself to be found by those who did not seek.”

18 tn Heb “call out in”; NASB, NIV, NRSV “call on.”

19 tn Heb “who walked [in] the way that is not good, after their thoughts.”

20 tn Heb “the people who provoke me to anger to my face continually.”

21 tn Or “gardens” (KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT).

22 tn Or perhaps, “on tiles.”

23 sn Perhaps the worship of underworld deities or dead spirits is in view.

24 tn The Hebrew text reads literally, “and in the watches they spend the night.” Some understand נִשְׁרָבָת (n̄ishrābat) as referring to “secret places” or “caves,” while others emend the text to בֵּין צָרִים (bein tsarim, “between the rocky cliffs”).

25 tn Heb “the flesh of the pig”; KJV, NAB, NASB “swine’s flesh.”

26 tn The marginal reading (Qere), supported by the Qumran scroll 1QIsa^a, reads כְּפָקָד (m̄raq, “broth”), while the consonantal text (Kethib) has כְּפָקָד (feraq, “fragment”).

27 tn Heb “Look, it is written before me.”

28 tn Heb “I will pay back into their lap.”

65:7 for your sins and your ancestors' sins,¹ says the LORD.

"Because they burned incense on the mountains and offended² me on the hills, I will punish them in full measure."³

65:8 This is what the LORD says: "When⁴ juice is discovered in a cluster of grapes, someone says, 'Don't destroy it, for it contains juice.'⁵

So I will do for the sake of my servants – I will not destroy everyone.⁶

65:9 I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah people to take possession of my mountains. My chosen ones will take possession of the land;⁷ my servants will live there.

65:10 Sharon⁸ will become a pasture for sheep, and the Valley of Achor⁹ a place where cattle graze;¹⁰ they will belong to my people, who seek me.¹¹

65:11 But as for you who abandon the LORD and forget about worshiping at¹² my holy mountain, who prepare a feast for the god called 'Fortune,'¹³ and fill up wine jugs for the god called 'Destiny'¹⁴ –

65:12 I predestine you to die by the sword,¹⁵

¹ tn Heb "the iniquities of your fathers."

² tn Or perhaps, "taunted"; KJV "blasphemed"; NAB "disgraced"; NASB "scorned"; NIV "defied"; NRSV "reviled."

³ tn Heb "I will measure out their pay [from the] beginning into their lap," i.e., he will give them everything they have earned.

⁴ tn Heb "just as." In the Hebrew text the statement is one long sentence, "Just as..., so I will do...."

⁵ tn Heb "for a blessing is in it."

⁶ tn Heb "by not destroying everyone."

⁷ tn Heb "it." The third feminine singular pronominal suffix probably refers to the land which contains the aforementioned mountains.

⁸ sn Sharon was a plain located to the west, along the Mediterranean coast north of Joppa and south of Carmel.

⁹ sn The Valley of Achor ("Achor" means "trouble" in Hebrew) was the site of Achan's execution. It was located to the east, near Jericho.

¹⁰ tn Heb "a resting place for cattle"; NASB, NIV "for herds."

¹¹ tn Heb "for my people who seek me."

¹² tn The Hebrew text has simply, "forget." The words "about worshiping at" are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹³ tn The Hebrew has לְגַד (ləgad), "for Gad"), the name of a pagan deity. See HALOT 176 s.v. II יָגֵד.

¹⁴ tn The Hebrew has לְמַנִּי (lamni), "for Meni"), the name of a pagan deity. See HALOT 602 s.v. מַנִּי.

¹⁵ tn Heb "I assign you to the sword." Some emend the Qal verb form מַנִּית (maniti, "I assign") to the Piel (mānīti, "I ordain"). The verb sounds like the name of the god Meni (מַנִּי, mən̄i, "Destiny, Fate"). The sound play draws attention to the irony of the statement. The sinners among God's people wor-

all of you will kneel down at the slaughtering block,¹⁶ because I called to you, and you did not respond, I spoke and you did not listen. You did evil before me;¹⁷ you chose to do what displeases me."

65:13 So this is what the sovereign LORD says:

"Look, my servants will eat, but you will be hungry!

Look, my servants will drink, but you will be thirsty!

Look, my servants will rejoice, but you will be humiliated!

65:14 Look, my servants will shout for joy as happiness fills their hearts!¹⁸

But you will cry out as sorrow fills your hearts;¹⁹ you will wail because your spirits will be crushed.²⁰

65:15 Your names will live on in the curse formulas of my chosen ones.²¹

The sovereign LORD will kill you, but he will give his servants another name.

65:16 Whoever pronounces a blessing in the earth²²

will do so in the name of the faithful God;²³

whoever makes an oath in the earth will do so in the name of the faithful God.²⁴

For past problems will be forgotten; I will no longer think about them.²⁵

65:17 For look, I am ready to create new heavens and a new earth!²⁶

The former ones²⁷ will not be remembered; no one will think about them anymore.²⁸

ship the god Meni, apparently in an effort to ensure a bright destiny for themselves. But the LORD is the one who really determines their destiny and he has decreed their demise.

¹⁶ tn Or "at the slaughter"; NIV "for the slaughter"; NLT "before the executioner."

¹⁷ tn Heb "that which is evil in my eyes."

¹⁸ tn Heb "from the good of the heart."

¹⁹ tn Heb "from the pain of the heart."

²⁰ tn Heb "from the breaking of the spirit."

²¹ tn Heb "you will leave your name for an oath to my chosen ones."

²² tn For an example of such a curse formula see Jer 29:22.

²³ tn Or "in the land" (NIV, NCV, NRSV). The same phrase occurs again later in this verse, with the same options.

²⁴ tn Heb "will pronounce a blessing by the God of truth."

²⁵ tn Heb "for the former distresses will be forgotten, and they will be hidden from my eyes."

²⁶ tn This hyperbolic statement likens the coming transformation of Jerusalem (see vv. 18-19) to a new creation of the cosmos.

²⁷ tn Or perhaps, "the former things" (so ASV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); TEV "The events of the past."

²⁸ tn Heb "and they will not come up on the mind."

65:18 But be happy and rejoice forever-more
over what I am about to create!
For look, I am ready to create Jerusalem¹
to be a source of joy,²
and her people to be a source of happiness.³

65:19 Jerusalem will bring me joy,
and my people will bring me happiness.⁴
The sound of weeping or cries of sorrow
will never be heard in her again.

65:20 Never again will one of her infants
live just a few days⁵
or an old man die before his time.⁶
Indeed, no one will die before the age of
a hundred,⁷
anyone who fails to reach⁸ the age of a
hundred will be considered cursed.

65:21 They will build houses and live in
them;
they will plant vineyards and eat their
fruit.

65:22 No longer will they build a house
only to have another live in it,⁹
or plant a vineyard only to have another
eat its fruit,¹⁰
for my people will live as long as trees,¹¹
and my chosen ones will enjoy to the
fullest what they have produced.¹²

65:23 They will not work in vain,
or give birth to children that will experi-
ence disaster.¹³
For the LORD will bless their children
and their descendants.¹⁴

65:24 Before they even call out,¹⁵ I will
respond;

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

2 tn Heb "Jerusalem, joy." The next verse suggests the meaning: The Lord will create Jerusalem to be a source of joy to himself.

3 tn Heb "her people, happiness." See the preceding note.

4 tn Heb "and I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and be happy in my people."

5 tn Heb "and there will not be from there again a nursing infant of days," i.e., one that lives just a few days.

6 tn Heb "or an old [man] who does not fill out his days."

7 tn Heb "for the child as a son of one hundred years will die." The point seems to be that those who die at the age of a hundred will be considered children, for the average life span will be much longer than that. The category "child" will be re-defined in light of the expanded life spans that will characterize this new era.

8 tn Heb "the one who misses." קַהְתָּא (*khatā*) is used here in its basic sense of "miss the mark." See HALOT 305 s.v. קַהְתָּא. Another option is to translate, "and the sinner who reaches the age of a hundred will be cursed."

9 tn Heb "they will not build, and another live [in it]."

10 tn Heb "they will not plant, and another eat."

11 tn Heb "for like the days of the tree [will be] the days of my people."

12 tn Heb "the work of their hands" (so KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV); NLT "their hard-won gains."

13 tn Heb "and they will not give birth to horror."

14 tn Heb "for offspring blessed by the Lord they [will be], and their descendants along with them."

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

while they are still speaking, I will hear.

65:25 A wolf and a lamb will graze to-
gether;¹⁶

a lion, like an ox, will eat straw,¹⁷

and a snake's food will be dirt.¹⁸

They will no longer injure or destroy
on my entire royal mountain,"¹⁹ says the
LORD.

66:1 This is what the LORD says:

"The heavens are my throne
and the earth is my footstool.

Where then is the house you will build
for me?

Where is the place where I will rest?

66:2 My hand made them;²⁰
that is how they came to be,"²¹ says the
LORD.

I show special favor²² to the humble and
contrite,
who respect what I have to say.²³

66:3 The one who slaughters a bull also
strikes down a man,²⁴
the one who sacrifices a lamb also breaks
a dog's neck.²⁵

16 sn A similar statement appears in 11:6.

17 sn These words also appear in 11:7.

18 sn Some see an allusion to Gen 3:14 (note "you will eat dirt"). The point would be that even in this new era the snake (often taken as a symbol of Satan) remains under God's curse. However, it is unlikely that such an allusion exists. Even if there is an echo of Gen 3:14, the primary allusion is to 11:8, where snakes are pictured as no longer dangerous. They will no longer attack other living creatures, but will be content to crawl along the ground. (The statement "you will eat dirt" in Gen 3:14 means "you will crawl on the ground." In the same way the statement "dirt will be its food" in Isa 65:25 means "it will crawl on the ground.")

19 tn Heb "in all my holy mountain." These same words appear in 11:9. See the note there.

sn As in 11:1-9 the prophet anticipates a time when the categories predator-prey no longer exist. See the note at the end of 11:8.

20 tn Heb "all these." The phrase refers to the heavens and earth, mentioned in the previous verse.

21 tn Heb "and all these were." Some prefer to emend וְיִהְיוּ ("vayiyahu, "and they were") to וְלֹא יִהְיוּ (*v'lo hayu*, "and to me they were"), i.e., "and they belong to me."

22 tn Heb "and to this one I look" (KJV and NASB both similar).

23 tn Heb "to the humble and the lowly in spirit and the one who trembles at my words."

24 tn Heb "one who slaughters a bull, one who strikes down a man." Some understand a comparison here and in the following lines. In God's sight the one who sacrifices is like (i.e., regarded as) a murderer or one whose worship is ritually defiled or idolatrous. The translation above assumes that the language is not metaphorical, but descriptive of the sinners' hypocritical behavior. (Note the last two lines of the verse, which suggests they are guilty of abominable practices.) On the one hand, they act pious and offer sacrifices, but at the same time they commit violent crimes against men, defile their sacrifices, and worship other gods.

25 tn Heb "one who sacrifices a lamb, one who breaks a dog's neck." Some understand a comparison, but see the previous note.

sn The significance of breaking a dog's neck is uncertain, though the structure of the statement when compared to the preceding and following lines suggests the action is viewed in a negative light. According to Exod 13:13 and 34:20, one was to "redeem" a firstborn donkey by offering a lamb; if one did not "redeem" the firstborn donkey in this way, then its neck must be broken. According to Deut 21:1-9 a heifer's neck was

the one who presents an offering includes pig's blood with it;¹
 the one who offers incense also praises an idol.²
 They have decided to behave this way;³
 they enjoy these disgusting practices.⁴
66:4 So I will choose severe punishment⁵
 for them;
 I will bring on them what they dread,
 because I called, and no one responded,
 I spoke and they did not listen.
 They did evil before me;⁶
 they chose to do what displeases me.”
66:5 Hear the word of the LORD,
 you who respect what he has to say!⁷
 Your countrymen,⁸ who hate you
 and exclude you, supposedly for the sake
 of my name,
 say, “May the LORD be glorified,
 then we will witness your joy.”⁹
 But they will be put to shame.
66:6 The sound of battle comes from the city;
 the sound comes from the temple!
 It is the sound of the LORD paying back his enemies.
66:7 Before she goes into labor, she gives birth!
 Before her contractions begin, she delivers a boy!
66:8 Who has ever heard of such a thing?
 Who has ever seen this?
 Can a country¹⁰ be brought forth in one day?
 Can a nation be born in a single moment?
 Yet as soon as Zion goes into labor she gives birth to sons!

66:9 “Do I bring a baby to the birth opening and then not deliver it?” asks the LORD.
 “Or do I bring a baby to the point of delivery and then hold it back?” asks your God.¹¹
66:10 Be happy for Jerusalem and rejoice with her, all you who love her!
 Share in her great joy,
 all you who have mourned over her!
66:11 For¹² you will nurse from her satisfying breasts and be nourished;¹³
 you will feed with joy from her milk-filled breasts.¹⁴
66:12 For this is what the LORD says:
 “Look, I am ready to extend to her prosperity that will flow like a river,
 the riches of nations will flow into her like a stream that floods its banks.¹⁵
 You will nurse from her breast¹⁶ and be carried at her side;
 you will play on her knees.
66:13 As a mother consoles a child,¹⁷
 so I will console you,
 and you will be consoled over Jerusalem.”
66:14 When you see this, you will be happy,¹⁸
 and you will be revived.¹⁹
 The LORD will reveal his power to his servants
 and his anger to his enemies.²⁰
66:15 For look, the LORD comes with fire,
 his chariots come like a windstorm,²¹
 to reveal his raging anger,
 his battle cry, and his flaming arrows.²²
66:16 For the LORD judges all humanity²³
 with fire and his sword;
 the LORD will kill many.²⁴

to be broken as part of the atonement ritual to purify the land from the guilt of bloodshed. It is not certain if these passages relate in any way to the action described in Isa 66:3.

¹ tn Heb “one who offers an offering, pig’s blood.” Some understand a comparison, but see the note at the end of the first line.

² tn Heb “one who offers incense as a memorial offering, one who blesses something false.” Some understand a comparison, but see the note at the end of the first line. תְּנָשׁ (‘aven), which has a wide variety of attested nuances, here refers metonymically to an idol. See HALOT 22 s.v. and BDB 20 s.v. 2.

³ tn Heb “also they have chosen their ways.”

⁴ tn Heb “their being [or “soul”] takes delight in their disgusting [things].”

⁵ tn The precise meaning of the noun is uncertain. It occurs only here and in 3:4 (but see the note there). It appears to be derived from the verbal root בָּזַב (‘alab), which can carry the nuance “deal severely.”

⁶ tn Heb “that which is evil in my eyes.”

⁷ tn Heb “who tremble at his word.”

⁸ tn Heb “brothers” (so NASB, NIV); NRSV “Your own people”; NLT “Your close relatives.”

⁹ tn Or “so that we might witness your joy.” The point of this statement is unclear.

¹⁰ tn Heb “land,” but here אֶרֶת (‘erets) stands metonymically for an organized nation (see the following line).

¹¹ sn The rhetorical questions expect the answer, “Of course not!”

¹² tn Or “in order that”; ASV, NRSV “that.”

¹³ tn Heb “you will suck and be satisfied, from her comforting breast.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “you will slurp and refresh yourselves from her heavy breast.”

¹⁵ tn Zion’s residents will benefit from and enjoy her great material prosperity. See v. 12.

¹⁶ tn Heb “Look, I am ready to extend to her like a river prosperity [or “peace”], and like an overflowing stream, the riches of nations.”

¹⁷ tn The words “from her breast” are supplied in the translation for clarification (see v. 11).

¹⁸ tn Heb “like a man whose mother comforts him.”

¹⁹ tn “and you will see and your heart will be happy.”

²⁰ tn Heb “and your bones like grass will sprout.”

²¹ tn Heb “and the hand of the Lord will be made known to his servants, and anger to his enemies.”

²² tn Chariots are like a windstorm in their swift movement and in the way that they kick up dust.

²³ tn Heb “to cause to return with the rage of his anger, and his battle cry [or “rebuke”] with flames of fire.”

²⁴ tn Heb “flesh” (so KJV, NASB, NRSV); NIV “upon all men”; TEV “all the people of the world.”

²⁵ tn Heb “many are the slain of the Lord.”

66:17 “As for those who consecrate and ritually purify themselves so they can follow their leader and worship in the sacred orchards,¹ those who eat the flesh of pigs and other disgusting creatures, like mice² – they will all be destroyed together,”³ says the LORD. **66:18** “I hate their deeds and thoughts! So I am coming⁴ to gather all the nations and ethnic groups,⁵ they will come and witness my splendor. **66:19** I will perform a mighty act among them⁶ and then send some of those who remain to the nations – to Tarshish, Pul,⁷ Lud⁸ (known for its archers⁹), Tubal, Javan,¹⁰ and to the distant coastlands¹¹ that have not heard about me or seen my splendor. They will tell the nations of my splendor. **66:20** They will bring back all your countrymen¹² from all the nations as an offering to the LORD. They will bring them¹³ on horses, in

chariots, in wagons, on mules, and on camels¹⁴ to my holy hill Jerusalem,” says the LORD, “just as the Israelites bring offerings to the LORD’s temple in ritually pure containers. **66:21** And I will choose some of them as priests and Levites,” says the LORD. **66:22** “For just as the new heavens and the new earth I am about to make will remain standing before me,” says the LORD, “so your descendants and your name will remain. **66:23** From one month¹⁵ to the next and from one Sabbath to the next, all people¹⁶ will come to worship me,”¹⁷ says the LORD. **66:24** “They will go out and observe the corpses of those who rebelled against me, for the maggots that eat them will not die,¹⁸ and the fire that consumes them will not die out.¹⁹ All people will find the sight abhorrent.”²⁰

¹ **tn** Heb “the ones who consecrate themselves and the ones who purify themselves toward the orchards [or “gardens”] after the one in the midst.” The precise meaning of the statement is unclear, though it is obvious that some form of idolatry is in view.

² **tn** Heb “ones who eat the flesh of the pig and the disgusting thing and the mouse.”

³ **tn** Heb “together they will come to an end.”

⁴ **tc** The Hebrew text reads literally “and I, their deeds and their thoughts, am coming.” The syntax here is very problematic, suggesting that the text may have suffered corruption. Some suggest that the words “their deeds and their thoughts” have been displaced from v. 17. This line presents two primary challenges. In the first place, the personal pronoun “I” has no verb after it. Most translations insert “know” for the sake of clarity (NASB, NRSV, NLT, ESV). The NIV has “I, because of their actions and their imaginations...” Since God’s “knowledge” of Israel’s sin occasions judgment, the verb “hate” is an option as well (see above translation). The feminine form of the next verb (**תָּאַהֵה**, *ba’ah*) could be understood in one of two ways. One could provide an implied noun “time” (**תְּעֵת**, ‘er) and render the next line “the time is coming/has come” (NASB, ESV). One could also emend the feminine verb to the masculine **בָּאֵה** (*ba’eh*) and have the “I” at the beginning of the line govern this verb as well (for the LORD is speaking here): “I am coming” (cf. NIV, NCV, NRSV, TEV, NLT).

⁵ **tn** Heb “and the tongues”; KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV “and tongues.”

⁶ **tn** Heb “and I will set a sign among them.” The precise meaning of this statement is unclear. Elsewhere “to set a sign” means “perform a mighty act” (Ps 78:43; Jer 32:20), “make [someone] an object lesson” (Ezek 14:8), and “erect [literal] standard” (Ps 74:4).

⁷ **tn** Some prefer to read “Put” (i.e., Libya).

⁸ **sn** That is, Lydia (in Asia Minor).

⁹ **tn** Heb “drawers of the bow” (KJV and ASV both similar).

¹⁰ **sn** Javan is generally identified today as Greece (so NIV, NCV, NLT).

¹¹ **tn** Or “islands” (NIV).

¹² **tn** Heb “brothers” (so NIV); NCV “fellow Israelites.”

¹³ **tn** The words “they will bring them” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁴ **tn** The precise meaning of this word is uncertain. Some suggest it refers to “chariots.” See HALOT 498 s.v. **כְּרָמִים**.

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

¹⁶ **tn** Heb “all flesh” (so KJV, ASV, NRSV); NAB, NASB, NIV “all mankind”; NLT “All humanity.”

¹⁷ **tn** Or “bow down before” (NASB).

¹⁸ **tn** Heb “for their worm will not die.”

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “and their fire will not be extinguished.”

²⁰ **tn** Heb “and they will be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

^{sn} This verse depicts a huge mass burial site where the seemingly endless pile of maggot-infested corpses are being burned.