

## JESUS LAW PROPHETS

### “Jesus, the Man from Heaven, for Everyone, Everywhere!”

Here is a STUDY GUIDE with a SELECTION OF VERSES AND PARAPHRASES from the pages of the OLD and NEW TESTAMENTS of the BIBLE selected from the four GOSPELS of MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE and JOHN and the MAJOR and MINOR PROPHETS – AMOS, HOSEA, ISAIAH, MICAH, NAHUM, ZEPHANIAH, HABAKKUK, JEREMIAH, DANIEL, EZEKIEL, OBADIAH, ZECHARIAH, HAGGAI, JOEL, and MALACHI, who lived and worked between 800 and 450 B.C.

A PROPHET is an inspired teacher or a proclaimer of the will of God.

During the Ministry of Jesus, many references were made to the Old Testament Laws of Moses and the Teachings, Demands and Warnings of the Prophets. In retrospect, on many occasions, Jesus emphasized that his appearance on earth was in fulfillment of what had been prophesied many years before about the “Coming One”. In this Study Guide we review the importance and significance of these matters to Jesus and ourselves, as they are drawn from the entire course of his Ministry.

It is a companion to on line documents: [www.jesusplanandprogram.info](http://www.jesusplanandprogram.info)  
[www.christianaffirmations.info](http://www.christianaffirmations.info)  
[www.justwithjesus.info](http://www.justwithjesus.info)  
[www.untiljesusreappears.info](http://www.untiljesusreappears.info)

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Edited and published by Geoffrey J. Ward

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CHAPTER 1 JESUS AND THE LAWS OF MOSES  
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THE LAW FROM EXODUS 20:3-17 – OLD TESTAMENT 3

Then God issued this edict:

“I am Jehovah your God who liberated you from your slavery in Egypt.

ONE: “You may worship no other God than me.”

TWO: “You shall not make yourselves any idols: any images resembling animals, birds, or fish. You must never bow to an image or worship it in any way; for I the Lord your God, am very possessive. I will not share your affection with any other god.”

“And when I punish the people for their sins, the punishment continues upon their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of those who hate me; but I lavish my love upon thousands of those who love me and obey my commandments.”

THREE: “You shall not use the name of Jehovah your God irreverently, nor use it to swear to a falsehood. You will not escape punishment if you do.”

FOUR: “Remember to observe the Sabbath as a holy day. Six days a week are for your daily duties and your regular work, but the seventh day is a day of Sabbath rest before the Lord your God. On that day you are to do no work of any kind, nor shall your son, daughter, or slaves – whether men or women – or your cattle or your house guests. For in six days the Lord made heaven, earth, and sea, and everything in them, and rested the seventh day; so he blessed the Sabbath day and set it aside for rest.”

FIVE: “Honor your father and mother, that you may have a long, good life in the land the Lord your God will give you.”

SIX: “You must not murder.”

SEVEN: “You must not commit adultery.”

EIGHT: “You must not steal.”

NINE: “You must not lie.”

TEN: “You must not be envious of your neighbor’s house, or want to sleep with his wife, or want to own his slaves, oxen, donkeys, or anything else he has.”

#### THE LAW FROM DEUTERONOMY 5:6-21 – OLD TESTAMENT 4

“I am Jehovah your God who rescued you from slavery in Egypt.”

ONE: “Never worship any god but me.”

TWO: “Never make idols; don’t worship images, whether of birds, animals or fish. You shall not bow down to any images nor worship them in any way, for I am the Lord your God. I am a jealous God, and I will bring the curse of a father’s sins upon even the third and fourth generation of the children of those who hate me; but I will show kindness to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

THREE: “You must never use my name to make a vow you don’t intend to keep. I will not overlook that.”

FOUR: “Keep the Sabbath day holy. This is my command. Work the other six days, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; no work shall be done that day by you or by any of your household – your sons, daughters, servants, oxen, donkeys or cattle; even foreigners living among you must obey this law. Everybody must rest as you do. Why should you keep the Sabbath? It is because you were slaves in Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out with a great display of miracles.”

FIVE: “Honor your father and mother (remember that this is a commandment of the Lord your God); if you do so, you shall have a long prosperous life in the land he is giving you.”

SIX: “You must not murder.”

SEVEN: “You must not commit adultery.”

EIGHT: “You must not steal.”

NINE: “You must not tell lies.”

TEN: You must not burn with desire for another man’s wife, nor envy him for his home, land, servants, oxen, donkeys, nor anything else he owns.”

#### Short Summary of Christian Affirmations arising out of the Law 4-5

In the power of the Holy Spirit, I drive out evil thoughts, speech and actions.

Commandment 6

Promote proper respect for and care of everyone, instead of murder.

Commandment 6

Promote preservation of life, instead of killing.

Commandment 7

Promote faithfulness in marriage, instead of adultery.

Promote purity of living, instead of fornication.

Promote respectable conduct, instead of indecency.

Commandment 8

Promote honesty, instead of thieving and stealing

Commandment 9

Promote truthfulness, instead of lying.

Promote goodness and godliness, instead of wickedness and going against God’s Laws.

Promote encouragement and praise, instead of slander.

Promote integrity and uprightness, instead of deceit.

Commandment 10

Promote contentment and peace, harmony and friendship, instead of envy, and wanting what belongs to others, other people.

Promote humility and gentleness, instead of pride and arrogance.

Promote wisdom and good sense, instead of all other folly and foolishness.

In everything and with everyone,

Promote a liking and love for God and a liking and love for my neighbor, everyone around me, both near and far, with trust, justice and mercy.

With TRUST, that is a firm relying faith, belief, assurance, confidence, reliance, dependence, expectation and hope in Jesus and fidelity, allegiance, obedience, obligation, loyalty, truth and truthfulness to Jesus.

With JUSTICE, that is, equity, fairness, honesty, impartiality, integrity, justness, law, reasonableness, rectitude, moral uprightness and right and the liking, love, warm affection and friendship of God, with agreement, harmony and peace.

With MERCY, that is sympathy, pity, compassion, kindness, tenderness and consideration for the poor, the weak and the sick.

Don't make any vows 5

MATTHEW 5:33-37

Jesus said, "Again the Law of Moses says, 'You shall not break your vows to God, but must fulfill them all.' But I say: Don't make any vows! And even to say 'By heavens!' is a sacred vow to God, for the heavens are God's throne. And if you say 'By the earth!' it is a sacred vow, for the earth is his footstool. And don't swear 'By Jerusalem!' for Jerusalem is the capital of the great King. Don't even swear 'By my head!' for you can't turn one hair white or black. Say just a simple 'Yes I will' or 'No, I won't.' Your word is enough. To strengthen your promise with a vow shows that something is wrong."

The Most Important Commandment 5-6

MATTHEW 22:34-40

One of the Pharisees, a lawyer, spoke up: "Sir, which is the most important command in the Law of Moses?"

Jesus replied, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: 'Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.' All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws and are fulfilled if you obey them. Keep only these and you will find that you are obeying all the others."

MARK 12:28-31

One of the teachers of religion who was standing there listening to the discussion realized that Jesus had answered well. So he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

Jesus replied, "The one that says, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only God. And you must love him with all your heart and soul and mind and strength.'"

"The second is: 'You must love others as much as yourself.' No other commandments are greater than these."

MARK 12:32-34

The teacher of religion replied, “Sir, you have spoken a true word in saying that there is only one God and no other. And I know that it is far more important to love him with all my heart and understanding and strength, and to love others as myself, than to offer all kinds of sacrifices on the altar of the temple.”

Realizing this man’s understanding, Jesus said to him, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.” And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

LUKE 20:40

And that ended their questions, for they dared ask no more.

Teaching and obeying God’s Laws 6

MATTHEW 5:17-20

Jesus said, “Don’t misunderstand why I have come – it isn’t to cancel the Laws of Moses and the warnings of the prophets. No, I came to fulfill them, and to make them all come true. With all the earnestness I have I say: Every Law in the Book will continue until its purpose is achieved. And so if anyone breaks the least commandment, and teaches others to, he shall be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But those who teach God’s Laws *and obey them* will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven.”

“But I warn you – unless your goodness is greater than that of the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders, you can’t get into the Kingdom of Heaven at all!”

An addition to the rule under the Laws of Moses regarding ANGER 6

MATTHEW 5:21-26

“Under the Laws of Moses the rule was, ‘If you kill, you must die.’ But I have added to that rule, and tell you that if you are only *angry* (having a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure or hostility), even in your own home, you are in danger of judgment! If you call your friend an idiot (a stupid person), you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse him (say that you wish him harm or misery), you are in danger of the fires of hell.”

“So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and suddenly remember that a friend has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar and go and apologize and be reconciled to him, and then come and offer your sacrifice to God. Come to terms quickly with your enemy before it is too late and he drags you into court and you are thrown into a debtor’s cell, for you will stay there until you have paid the last amount of money due.”

God knows our evil hearts 6

LUKE 16:14-15

The Pharisees, who dearly loved their money, naturally scoffed at all this.

Then Jesus said to them. “You wear a noble, pious expression in public, but God knows your evil hearts. Your pretence brings you honor from the people, but it is an abomination (a cause of distrust or hatred) in the sight of God.”

The strength and power of the Law 6

LUKE 16:16-18

“Until John the Baptist began to preach, the Laws of Moses and the messages of the prophets were your guides. But John introduced the Good News that the Kingdom of God would come soon. And now eager multitudes are pressing in. But that doesn’t mean that the Law has lost its force in even the smallest point. It is as strong and unshakable as heaven and earth.”

“So anyone who divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

Further to the Law, “You shall not commit Adultery” 7

MATTHEW 5:27-30

“The Laws of Moses said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say: Anyone who even looks at a woman with lust (strong sexual desire) in his eye has already committed adultery with her in his heart. So if your eye – even if it is your best eye! – causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. Better for part of you to be destroyed than for all of you to be cast into hell. And if your hand – even your right hand – causes you to sin (to disobey God’s Laws), cut it off and throw it away. Better that than find yourself in hell.”

(Note: A figure of speech – get rid of sinful (ungodly) thoughts to obey God. The eye stands for – desire and the hand – action.)

MATTHEW 5:31-32

“The Law of Moses says, ‘if anyone wants to be rid of his wife, he can divorce her merely by giving her a letter of dismissal.’ But I say that a man who divorces his wife, except for unfaithfulness (sexual immorality), causes her to commit adultery. And he who marries her commits adultery.”

Jesus speaks about divorce 7-8

MATTHEW 19:3-6

Some of the Pharisees came to interview Jesus. “Do you permit divorce?” they asked.

“Don’t you read the Scriptures?” he replied. “In them it is written that at the beginning God created man and woman, and that a man should leave his father and mother, and be forever united to his wife. The two shall become one – no longer two, but one. No man may divorce (legally dissolve or close down one’s marriage) from what God has joined together.”

MARK 10:2-9

Some Pharisees came and asked him, “Do you permit divorce?”

“What did Moses say about divorce?” Jesus asked them.

“He said it was all right,” they replied. “He said that all a man has to do is write his wife a letter of dismissal.”

“And why did he say that?” Jesus asked. “I’ll tell you why – it was a concession to your hardheartedness. But it certainly isn’t God’s way. From the very first he made man and woman to be joined together permanently in marriage: therefore a man is to leave his father and mother, and he and his wife are united so that they are no longer two, but one. And no man may separate what God has joined together.”

MATTHEW 19:7-9

“Then, why,” they asked, “did Moses say a man may divorce his wife by merely writing her a letter of dismissal?”

Jesus replied, "Moses did that in recognition of your hard and evil hearts, but it was not what God had originally intended. And I tell you this, that anyone who divorces his wife, except for fornication (sexual intercourse between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman) and marries another, commits adultery."

MARK 10:11-12

"When a man divorces his wife to marry someone else, he commits adultery against her. And if a wife divorces her husband and remarries, she, too, commits adultery."

MATTHEW 19:10-12

Jesus' disciples then said to him, "If that is how it is it is better not to marry!"

"Not everyone can accept this statement," Jesus said. "Only those whom God helps. Some are born without the ability to marry, and some are disabled men, and some refuse to marry for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let anyone who can, accept my statement."

What to do to live forever in heaven 8

LUKE 10:25-29

One day an expert on Moses' Laws came to test Jesus' orthodoxy (his straight or right opinions about customary beliefs) by asking him this question: "Teacher, what does a man or woman need to do to live forever in heaven?"

Jesus replied, "What does Moses' Law say about it?"

"It says," he replied, "that you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind. And you must love your neighbor just as much as you love yourself."

"Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you shall live!"

The man wanted to justify (his lack of love for some kinds of people) so he asked, "Which neighbors?"

Which neighbors must I love as much as I love myself? 8

LUKE 10:30-37

Jesus replied with an illustration: "A Jew going on a trip from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes and money and beat him up and left him lying half dead beside the road."

"By chance a Jewish priest came along: and when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Jewish Temple-Assistant did the same thing; he, too, left him lying there."

"But a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw him, he felt deep pity. Kneeling beside him the Samaritan soothed his wounds with medicine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his donkey and walked along beside him till they came to an inn, where he nursed him through the night. The next day he handed the innkeeper a sum of money and told him to take care of the man. 'If his bill comes to more than the sum of money,' he said, 'I'll pay the difference the next time I am here.' Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the bandit's victim?"

The man replied, "The one who showed him some pity."

Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

The most important matter 8-9

MATTHEW 7:21-23

“Not all who talk like godly people are godly. They may refer to me as ‘Lord’, but still won’t get to heaven. For the decisive question is whether they obey my Father, in heaven.”

“At the Judgment many will tell me, ‘Lord, Lord, we told others about you and used your name to cast out demons and to do many other great miracles.’ But I will reply, ‘You have never been mine. Go away, for your deeds are evil.’”

LUKE 6:46

“So why do you call me ‘Lord’ when you won’t obey me?”

Get rich in heaven 9

LUKE 12:13-21

Then someone called from the crowd, “Sir, please tell my brother to divide my father’s estate with me.”

But Jesus replied, “Man, who made me a judge over you to decide such things as that? Beware! Don’t always be wishing for what you don’t have.”

Then Jesus gave an illustration: “A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. In fact, his barns were full to overflowing – he couldn’t get everything in. He thought about his problem, and finally exclaimed, ‘I know – I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I’ll have room enough. And I’ll sit back and say to myself, Friend; you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy – wine, women and song for you!’”

“But God said to him, ‘Fool! Tonight you die. Then who will get it all?’”

“Yes, every man is a fool who gets rich on earth but not in heaven.”

A New Commandment – love each other 9

JOHN 13:34-35

Jesus said, “And so I am giving a new commandment to you now – love each other just as much as I love you. Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

## CHAPTER 2 JESUS AND THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

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The risen Lord appears 11

Fulfillment of the Law 10

MATTHEW 5:17-20

Jesus said, “Don’t misunderstand why I have come – it isn’t to cancel the Laws of Moses and the warnings of the prophets. No, I came to fulfill them, and to make them all come true. With all the earnestness I have I say: Every Law in the Book will continue until its purpose is achieved. And so if anyone breaks the least commandment, and teaches others to, he shall be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But those who teach God’s Laws *and obey them* will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Most Important Command 10

MATTHEW 22:36-40

A lawyer spoke up: “Sir, which is the most important command in the Laws of Moses?” Jesus replied, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. The second most important is similar: ‘Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.’ All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets stem from these two laws and are fulfilled if you obey them. Keep only these and you will find that you are obeying all the others.”

The Golden Rule 10

MATTHEW 7:12

Jesus said, “Do for others what you want them to do for you. This is the teaching of the Laws of Moses in a nutshell.”

LUKE 6:31

Jesus said, “Treat others as you want them to treat you.”

John the Baptist appeared! 10

MATTHEW 11:11-15

Jesus said, “Truly, of all men ever born, none shines more brightly than John the Baptist. And yet, even the lesser lights in the Kingdom of Heaven will be greater than he is! And from the time John the Baptist began preaching and baptizing until now, ardent (enthusiastic) multitudes have been crowding towards the Kingdom of Heaven, for all the laws and prophets looked forward [to the Messiah]. Then John appeared, and if you are willing to understand what I mean, he is Elijah; the one the prophets said would come [at the time the Kingdom begins]. If ever you were willing to listen, listen now!”

The Law is as unshakable as heaven and earth 10

LIKE 16:16-17

Jesus said, “Until John the Baptist began to preach, the Laws of Moses and the messages of the prophets were your guides. But John introduced the Good News that the Kingdom of God would come soon. And now eager (enthusiastic) multitudes are pressing in. But that doesn’t mean that the Law has lost its force in even the smallest point. It is as strong and unshakable as heaven and earth.”

The rich man in torment 10-11

LUKE 16:27-31

“Then the rich man said, ‘O Father Abraham, then please send him to my father’s home – for I have five brothers – to warn them about this place of torment lest they come here when they die.’”

“But Abraham said, ‘The Scriptures have warned them again and again. Your brothers can read them any time they want to.’”

“The rich man replied, ‘No, Father Abraham, they won’t bother to read them. But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will turn from their sins (their disobedience of God’s Laws).’”

“But Abraham said, ‘If they won’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they won’t listen even though someone rises from the dead.’”

Philip and Nathanael find Jesus 11

JOHN 1:45

Philip now went off to look for Nathanael and told him, “We have found the Messiah – the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.”

The risen Lord on the Emmaus road 11

LUKE 24:27

Then Jesus quoted them passage after passage from the writings of the prophets, beginning with the Book of Genesis and going right on through the Scriptures, explaining what the passages meant and what they said about himself.

The risen Lord appears 11

LUKE 24:44-48

Then Jesus said, “When I was with you before, don’t you remember my telling you that everything written about me by Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must all come true?” Then he opened their minds to understand at last these many Scriptures. And he said, “Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah must suffer and die and rise again from the dead on the third day; and that this message of salvation should be taken from Jerusalem to all the nations: *There is forgiveness of sins (disobedience of God’s Laws) for all who turn to me.* You have seen these prophecies come true.”

JOHN 1:17

For Moses gave us only the Law with its rigid demands and merciless justice, while Jesus Christ brought us loving forgiveness as well.

## CHAPTER 3 JESUS AND THE ROLE OF THE PROPHETS

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A Mighty Savior 12

LUKE 1:67-71

Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and gave this prophecy: “Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has come to visit his people and has redeemed (regained and purchased the freedom of) them. He is sending us a Mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David, just as he promised through his holy prophets long ago – someone to save us from our enemies, from all who hate us.”

Jesus shall be called a Nazarene 12

MATTHEW 2:19-23

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and told him, “Get up and take the baby and his mother back to Israel, for those who were trying to kill the child are dead.” So Joseph returned immediately to Israel with Jesus and his mother. But on the way he was frightened to learn that the new king was Herod’s son, Archelaus. Then, in another dream, Joseph was warned not to go to Judea, so they went to Galilee instead, and lived in Nazareth. This fulfilled the prediction of the prophets concerning the Messiah, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

The Ancient Prophets were persecuted too 12

MATTHEW 5:10-12

Jesus said “Happy are those who are persecuted because they are good, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.” “When you are reviled and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers – wonderful! Be *happy* about it! Be *very glad!* For a *tremendous reward* awaits you up in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted too.”

They shall all be taught of God 12

JOHN 6:45-46

Jesus said, “As it is written in the Scriptures, ‘They shall all be taught of God.’ Those the Father speaks to, who learn the truth from him, will be attracted to me (Jesus). (Not that anyone actually sees the Father, for only I have seen him.)”

A Prophet’s reward 12-13

MATTHEW 10:40-42

Jesus said, “Those who welcome you are welcoming me. And when they welcome me they are welcoming God who sent me. If you welcome a prophet because he is a man of God, you will be given the same reward a prophet gets. And if you welcome good and godly men because of their godliness, you will be given a reward like theirs. And if, as my representatives, you give a cup of cold water to a little child, you will surely be

rewarded.” (Note: God in his love and mercy confers his greatest blessings as rewards upon those who don’t really deserve them.)

The use of obscure stories 13

MATTHEW 13:10-17

Jesus’ disciples came and asked him, “Why do you always use these obscure stories?”

Then he explained to them that only they were permitted to understand about the Kingdom of Heaven, and others were not.

“For to him who has will more be given,” he told them, “and he will have great plenty; but from him who has not, even the little he has will be taken away. That is why I use these stories, so that people will hear and see but not understand. This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah, ‘They hear, but don’t understand; they look, but don’t see! For their hearts are fat and heavy, and their ears are dull, and they have closed their eyes in sleep, so they won’t see and hear and understand and turn to God again, and let me heal them.’ But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. Many a prophet and godly man has longed to see what you have seen, and hear what you have heard, but couldn’t.”

The Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God 13

MATTHEW 16:13-16

When Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who are the people saying I am?”

“Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist; some Elijah; some, Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

Then Jesus asked them, “Who do *you* think I am?”

Simon Peter answered, “The Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

The Messiah – the Christ of God 13

LUKE 9:18-20

One day as Jesus was alone, praying, with his disciples nearby, he came over and asked them, “Who are the people saying I am?”

“John the Baptist,” they told him, “or perhaps Elijah or one of the other ancient prophets risen from the dead.”

Then Jesus asked them, “Who do you think I am?”

Peter replied, “The Messiah – the Christ of God!”

You are the Messiah 13

MARK 8:27-30

Jesus and his disciples now left Galilee and went out to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. As they were walking along Jesus asked them, “Who do the people think I am? What are they saying about me?”

“Some of them think you are John the Baptist,” the disciples replied, “and others say you are Elijah or some other ancient prophet come back to life again.”

Then Jesus asked, “Who do you think I am?” Peter replied, “You are the Messiah.” But Jesus warned them not to tell anyone.

A new Prophet? 13-14

MARK 6:14-15

King Herod soon heard about Jesus, for his miracles were talked about everywhere. The king thought Jesus was John the Baptist come back to life again. So the people were saying, “No wonder he can do such miracles.” Others thought Jesus was Elijah the

ancient prophet, now returned to life again; still others claimed he was a new prophet like the great ones of the past.

What happiness there is! 14

LUKE 6:20-23

Then Jesus turned to his disciples and said, “What happiness there is for you who are poor, for the Kingdom of God is yours! What happiness there is for you who are now hungry, for you are going to be satisfied. What happiness there is for you who weep, for the time will come when you shall laugh with joy. What happiness it is when others hate you and exclude you and insult you and smear your name (damaging your reputation by false and unwarranted accusations) because you are mine! When that happens, rejoice! Yes, leap for joy! For you will have a great reward awaiting you in heaven. And you will be in good company – the ancient prophets were treated that way too.”

How privileged you are! 14

LUKE 10:23-24

Then, turning to the twelve disciples, Jesus said quietly, “How privileged you are to see what you have seen. Many a prophet and king of old has longed for these days, to see and hear what you have seen and heard.”

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day 14

JOHN 8:52-58

The leaders of the Jews said, “Now we know you are possessed by a demon. Even Abraham and the mightiest prophets died, and yet you say that obeying you will keep a man from dying. So you are greater than our father Abraham, who died? And greater than the prophets, who died? Who do you think you are?”

Then Jesus told them this: “If I were merely boasting about myself, it would not count. But it is my Father – and you claim him as your God – who is saying these glorious things about me. But you do not even know him. If I said otherwise, I would be as great a liar as you. But it is true – I know him and fully obey him. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He knew I was coming and was glad.”

The Jewish leaders said: “You aren’t even fifty years old – and you’ve seen Abraham?”

Jesus replied: “The absolute truth is that I was in existence before Abraham was ever born!”

How shall you escape the judgment of hell? 14-15

MATTHEW 23:29-39

“Yes, woe (distress, sorrow and suffering) to you, Pharisees, and you religious leaders – hypocrites! For you build monuments to the prophets killed by your fathers and lay flowers on the graves of godly men they destroyed, and say, ‘We certainly would never have acted as our fathers did.’”

“In saying that, you are accusing yourselves of the being sons of wicked men. And you are following in their steps, filling up the full measure of their evil. Snakes! Sons of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of hell?”

“I will send you prophets, and Spirit-filled men, and inspired writers, and you will kill some by crucifixion, and rip open the backs of others with whips in your synagogues, and hound them from city to city, so that you will become guilty of all the blood of murdered godly men from righteous Abel (son of Adam and Eve and brother of Cain) to Zechariah (son of Barachiah), slain by you in the Temple between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes,

all the accumulated judgment of the centuries shall break upon the heads of this very generation.”

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets, and stones all those God sends to her! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let me. And now your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you this, you will never see me again until you are ready to welcome the one sent to you from God.”

This is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets 15

MATTHEW 26:55-56

Then Jesus spoke to the crowd. “Am I some dangerous criminal,” he asked, “that you had to arm yourselves with swords and clubs before you could arrest me? I was with you teaching daily in the Temple and you didn’t stop me then. But this is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures.”

At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled.

This generation will be held responsible 15

LUKE 11:45-50

“Sir,” said an expert in religious law who was standing there, “you have insulted my profession, too, in what you just said.”

“Yes,” said Jesus, “the same horrors await you! For you crush men beneath impossible religious demands – demands that you yourselves would never think of trying to keep. Woe (distress, sorrow and suffering) to you! For you are exactly like your ancestors who killed the prophets long ago. Murderers! You agree with your fathers that what they did was right – you would have done the same yourselves.”

“This is what God says about you: ‘I will send prophets and apostles to you, and you will kill some of them and chase away the others.’”

“And you of this generation will be held responsible for the murder of God’s servants from the founding of the world.”

Will only a few be saved? 15

LUKE 13:23-30

Someone asked Jesus, “Will only a few be saved?”

And Jesus replied, “The door to heaven is narrow. Work hard to get in, for the truth is that many will try to enter but when the head of the house has locked the door, it will be too late. Then if you stand outside knocking, and pleading, ‘Lord, open the door for us,’ he will reply, ‘I do not know you.’”

“‘But we ate with you, and you taught in our streets,’ you will say.” “And he (the Lord) will reply, “‘I tell you, I don’t know you. You can’t come in here, guilty as you are. Go away.’”

“And there will be great weeping and gnashing (grinding) of teeth (and bitter disappointment) as you stand outside and see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets within the Kingdom of God – for people will come from all over the world to take their places there. And note this: some who are despised now will be greatly honored then; and some who are highly thought of now will be least important then.”

Your house is left desolate 15-16

LUKE 13:34-35

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! The city that murders the prophets. The city that stones those sent to help her. How often I have wanted to gather your children together even as a hen

protects her broods under her wings, but you wouldn't let me. And now - now your house is left desolate. And you will never again see me until you say, 'Welcome to him who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus again predicts his death 16

LUKE 18:31-33

Gathering The Twelve around him he told them, "As you know we are going to Jerusalem. And when we get there, all the predictions of the ancient prophets concerning me will come true. I will be handed over to the Gentiles to be mocked and treated shamefully and spat upon, and lashed and killed. And the third day I will rise again."

Predicted by the Prophets 16

LUKE 24:25-27

Then Jesus said to them, "You are such foolish, foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted by the prophets that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his time of glory?"

Then Jesus quoted them passage after passage from the writings of the prophets, beginning with the Book of Genesis and going right on through the Scriptures, explaining what the passages meant and what they said about himself.

A tree and its fruit 16

MATTHEW 7:15-21

Jesus said, "Beware of false teachers who come disguised as harmless sheep, but are wolves and will tear you apart. You can detect them by the way they act, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit. You need never confuse grapevines with thorn bushes, or figs with thistles. Different kinds of fruit trees can quickly be identified by examining their fruit. A variety that produces delicious fruit never produces an inedible kind. And a tree producing an inedible kind can't produce what is good. So the trees having the inedible fruit are chopped down and thrown on the fire. Yes, the way to identify a tree or a person is by the kind of fruit produced."

"Not all who talk like godly people are godly. They may refer to me as 'Lord' but still won't get into heaven. For the decisive question is whether they obey my Father, in heaven."

Many false prophets 16

MATTHEW 24:11-13

Jesus said, "Many false prophets will appear and lead many astray. Sin (disobedience of God's Laws) will be rampant (uncontrollable and spreading unchecked) everywhere and will cool the love of many (making them unfriendly and unenthusiastic). But those enduring to the end shall be saved."

MATTHEW 24:24-25

Jesus said, "False Christs will arise, and false prophets, and will do wonderful miracles, so that if it were possible, even God's chosen ones would be deceived (mislead). See, I have warned you."

Many false Messiahs and false prophets 16

MARK 13:21-23

Jesus said, "If anyone tells you, 'This is the Messiah,' or 'That one is,' don't pay any attention. For there will be many false Messiahs and false prophets who will do

wonderful miracles that would deceive (mislead), if possible, even God's own children. Take care! I have warned you!"

Sadness is ahead 17

LUKE 6:26

Jesus said, "What sadness is ahead for those praised by the crowds – for false prophets have always been praised."

#### CHAPTER 4 JESUS AND THE ROLE OF THE PROPHET

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Anna – a prophetess, proclaiming the Messiah's arrival 18  
LUKE 2:36-38

Anna, a prophetess, was also in the Temple that day. She was the daughter of Phanuel, of the Jewish tribe of Asher, and was very old, for she had been a widow for eighty-four years following seven years of marriage. She never left the Temple but stayed there night and day, worshipping God by praying and often going without food.

She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she also began thanking God and publicly proclaiming the Messiah's arrival to everyone in Jerusalem who had been awaiting (and looking for) the coming of the Savior.

"Emmanuel" meaning "God is with us" 18

MATTHEW 1:20-23

Joseph fell into a dream, and saw an angel standing beside him.

"Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "don't hesitate to take Mary as your wife! For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you shall name him Jesus (meaning 'Savior') for he will save his people from their sins (their disobedience of God's Laws). This will fulfill God's message through his prophets, *Listen! The virgin shall conceive a child!* She shall give birth to a son, and he shall be called "Emmanuel" (meaning "God is with us").

The prophet Micah on Bethlehem 18

MATTHEW 2:4-6

King Herod called a meeting of the Jewish religious leaders.

"Did the prophets tell us where the Messiah would be born?" he asked.

"Yes, in Bethlehem," they said, "for this is what the prophet Micah wrote: 'O little town of Bethlehem, you are not just an unimportant Judean village, for a Governor shall rise from you to rule my people Israel'"

I have called my Son from Egypt 18

MATTHEW 2:13-15

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, "Get up and flee to Egypt with the baby and his mother," the angel said, "and stay there until I tell you to return, for King Herod is going to try to kill the child." That same night he left for Egypt with Mary and the baby, and stayed there until King Herod's death. This fulfilled the prophet's prediction, "I have called my Son from Egypt."

Screams of anguish come from Ramah 18-19

MATTHEW 2:16-18

King Herod was furious when he learned that the astrologers had disobeyed him. Sending soldiers to Bethlehem, he ordered them to kill every baby boy two years old and under, both in the town and on the nearby farms, for the astrologers had told him the star first appeared to them two years before. This brutal action of King Herod's fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah, "Screams of anguish come from Ramah, weeping unrestrained; Rachel, weeping for her children, uncomforted – for they are dead." (See - JEREMIAH 31:15)

John the Baptist questioned 19

## JOHN 1:19-27

The Jewish leaders sent priests and assistant priests from Jerusalem to ask John whether he claimed to be the Messiah.

He denied it flatly. "I am not the Christ," he said.

"Well then, who are you?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"

"No," he replied. "Are you the Prophet?" "No." "Then who are you? Tell us, so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you have to say for yourself?"

He replied, "I am a voice from the barren wilderness, shouting as Isaiah prophesied, 'Get ready for the coming of the Lord!'"

Then those who were sent by the Pharisees asked him, "If you aren't the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, what right do you have to baptize?"

John told them, "I merely baptize with water, but right here in the crowd is someone you have never met, who will soon begin his ministry among you, and I am not even fit to be his slave."

John the Baptist and the Prophet Isaiah 19

## MATTHEW 3:1-3

While they (Jesus, Joseph and Mary) were living in Nazareth, John the Baptist began preaching out in the Judean wilderness. His constant theme was, "Turn from your sins...turn to God...for the Kingdom of Heaven is coming soon." Isaiah the prophet had told about John's ministry centuries before. He had written, "I hear a shout from the wilderness, 'Prepare a road for the Lord – straighten out the path where he will walk.'" (See - ISAIAH 40)

Be ready for the Lord's arrival 19

## MARK 1:2-3

In the book written by the prophet Isaiah, God announced that he would send his Son to earth, and that a special messenger would arrive first to prepare the world for his coming. "This messenger will live in the barren wilderness," Isaiah said, "and will proclaim that everyone must straighten out his life to be ready for the Lord's arrival." (See – ISAIAH 40 and MALACHI 3:1)

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist 19

## LUKE 1:76-80

"And you, my little son, shall be called the prophet of the glorious God, for you will prepare the way for the Messiah. You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. All this will be because the mercy of our God is very tender, and heaven's dawn is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and death's shadow, and to guide us to the path of peace."

The little boy greatly loved God and when he grew up he lived out in the lonely wilderness until he began his public ministry to Israel.

John the Baptist – who is this man? 19-20

## LUKE 7:24-28

Jesus talked to the crowd about John. "Who is this man you went out into the Judean wilderness to see?" Jesus asked.

"Did you find him weak as grass, moved by every breath of wind? Did you find him dressed in expensive clothes? No, Men who live in luxury are found in palaces, not out in the wilderness. But did you find a prophet? Yes! And more than a prophet. He is the one to whom the Scriptures refer when they say, 'Look! I am sending my messenger ahead of

you, to prepare the way before you.’ In all humanity there is no one greater than John. And yet the least citizen of the Kingdom of God is greater than he.”

Was John the Baptist sent by God? 20

LUKE 20:1-8

On one of those days when Jesus was teaching and preaching the Good News in the Temple, he was confronted by the chief priests and other religious leaders and councilors. They demanded to know by what authority he had driven out the merchants from the Temple.

“I’ll ask you a question before I answer,” Jesus replied. “Was John sent by God, or was he merely acting under his own authority?”

They talked it over among themselves, “If we say his message was from heaven, then we are trapped because he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ But if we say John was not sent from God, the people will mob us, for they are convinced that he was a prophet.”

Finally they replied, “We do not know.”

And Jesus responded, “Then I won’t answer your question either.”

These Scriptures came true today 20

LUKE 4:16-21

When Jesus came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on Saturday, and stood up to read the Scriptures. The book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him, and he opened it to the place where it says:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor; he has sent me to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors, and that God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him.”

He closed the book and handed it back to the attendant and sat down, while everyone in the synagogue gazed at him intently. Then Jesus added, “These Scriptures came true today!”

Turn from sin and turn to God 20

MATTHEW 4:12-17

When Jesus heard that John (the Baptist) had been arrested, he left Judea and returned [home] to Nazareth in Galilee; but soon he moved to Capernaum, beside the Lake of Galilee, close to Zebulun and Naphtali. This fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy: “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, beside the Lake, and the countryside beyond the river Jordan, and Upper Galilee where so many foreigners live – there the people who sat in darkness have seen a great Light; they sat in the land of death, and the Light broke through upon them.” From then on, Jesus began to preach, “Turn from sin (from disobedience of God’s Laws), and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”

We have seen the hand of God at work today 20-21

LUKE 7:11-16

Not long afterwards Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, with the usual crowd at his heels. A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The boy who had died was the only son of his widowed mother, and many mourners from the village were with her.

When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with sympathy, “Don’t cry!” he said. Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. “Son,” he said, “come back to life again.”

Then the boy sat up and began to talk to those around him. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

A great fear swept the crowd, and they exclaimed with praises to God, “A mighty prophet has arisen among us,” and, “We have seen the hand of God at work today.”

A Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well 21

JOHN 4:16-19

Jesus told her to “Go and get your husband.”

“But I’m not married,” the woman replied.

“All too true!” Jesus said. “For you have had five husbands, and you aren’t even married to the man you’re living with now. [You couldn’t have spoken a truer word.]

“Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet.”

Five Thousand fed 21

JOHN 6:12-15

“Now gather the scraps,” Jesus told his disciples, “so that nothing is wasted.” And twelve baskets were filled with the left-overs.

When the people realized what a great miracle had happened, they exclaimed, “Surely, he is the Prophet we have been expecting!”

Division and Unbelief 21

JOHN 7:37-44

On the last day, the climax of the holidays, Jesus shouted to the crowds, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water shall flow from the inmost being of anyone who believes in me.”

(He was speaking of the Holy Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him; but the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet returned to his glory in heaven.)

When the crowds heard him say this some of them declared, “This man surely is the prophet who will come just before the Messiah.” Others said, “He *is* the Messiah.” Still others, “But he can’t be! Will the Messiah come from Galilee? For the Scriptures clearly state the Messiah will be born of the royal line of David, in Bethlehem, the village where David was born.” So the crowd was divided about him. And some wanted him arrested, but no one touched him.

He must be a prophet! 21

JOHN 9:16-17

Some of them (the Pharisees) said, “This fellow Jesus is not from God, because he is working on the Sabbath.”

Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miracles?” So there was a deep division of opinion among them.

Then the Pharisees turned on the man who had been blind and demanded, “This man who opened your eyes – who do you say he is?”

“I think he must be a prophet sent from God,” the man replied.

He took our sicknesses and bore our diseases 22

MATTHEW 8:16-17

Several demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus; and when he spoke a single word, all the demons fled; and all the sick were healed. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, “He took our sicknesses and bore our diseases.”

A prophet’s reward 22

MATTHEW 10:40-42

Jesus said, “Those who welcome you are welcoming me. And when they welcome me they are welcoming God who sent me. If you welcome a prophet because he is a man of God you will be given the same reward a prophet gets. And if you welcome good and godly men because of their godliness, you will be given a reward like theirs. And if, as my representatives, you give even a cup of cold water to a little child, you will surely be rewarded.”

A messenger to precede me 22

MATTHEW 11:7-10

When John the Baptist’s disciples had gone, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. “When you went out into the barren wilderness to see John, what did you expect him to be like? Grass blowing in the wind? Or were you expecting to see a man dressed as a prince in a palace? Or a prophet of God? Yes, and he is more than just a prophet. For John is the man mentioned in the Scriptures – a messenger to precede me, to announce my coming, and prepare people to receive me.”

The Prophet Jonah’s sign 22

MATTHEW 12:38-45

One day some of the Jewish leaders, including some Pharisees, came to Jesus asking to see a miracle to prove that he was really the Messiah.

But Jesus replied, “Only an evil, faithless nation would ask for further proof; and none will be given except what happened to Jonah the prophet! For as Jonah was in the great fish for three days and three nights, so I, the Son of Mankind, will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. The men of Nineveh shall arise against this nation at the judgment and condemn you. For when Jonah preached to them, they repented and turned to God from all their evil ways. And now a greater than Jonah is here – and you refuse to believe him. The Queen of Sheba shall rise against this nation in the judgment, and condemn it; for she came from a distant land to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and now a greater than Solomon is here – and you refuse to believe him.”

“This evil nation is like a man possessed by a demon. For if the demon leaves, it goes into the deserts for a while, seeking rest but finding none. Then it says, ‘I will return to the man I came from.’ So it returns and finds the man’s heart clean but empty! Then the demon finds seven other spirits more evil than itself, and all enter the man and live in him. And so he is worse off than before.”

Talking in parables 22

MATTHEW 13:34-35

Jesus constantly used these stories with a meaning when speaking to the crowds. In fact, because the prophets said that he would use so many, he never spoke to them without at least one story. For it had been prophesied, “I will talk in parables; I will explain mysteries hidden since the beginning of time.”

A prophet’s honor 23

MATTHEW 13:53-58

Jesus returned to his home town, Nazareth in Galilee, and taught there in the synagogue and astonished everyone with his wisdom and his miracles.

“How is this possible?” the people exclaimed. “He’s just a carpenter’s son, and we know Mary his mother and his brothers – James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. And his sisters – they all live here. How can he be so great?” And they became angry with him.

Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own country, and among his own people!” And so he did only a few miracles there, because of their unbelief.

A prophet is honored everywhere except in his home town 23

MARK 6:4-5

Jesus said, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his home town and among his relatives and by his own family.” And because of their unbelief he couldn’t do any mighty miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He could hardly accept the fact that they wouldn’t believe in him.

No prophet is accepted in his own home town 23

LUKE 4:24-27

Jesus said, “I solemnly declare to you that no prophet is accepted in his own home town. For example, remember how Elijah the prophet used a miracle to help the widow of Zarephath – a foreigner from the land of Sidon. There were many Jewish widows needing help in those days of famine, for there had been no rain for three and a half years, and hunger stalked the land; yet Elijah was not sent to them. Or think of the prophet Elisha, who healed Naaman, a Syrian, rather than the many Jewish lepers needing help.”

A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own country 23

JOHN 4:43-45

At the end of two days’ stay (at a Samaritan village) Jesus went on into Galilee, for as Jesus put it, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own country!” But the Galileans welcomed him with open arms, for they had been in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration and had seen some of his miracles.

What about John the Baptist? 23

MARK 11:26-33

As Jesus was walking through the Temple area, the chief priests and other Jewish leaders came up to him demanding, “What’s going on here? Who gave you the authority to drive out the merchants?”

Jesus replied, “I’ll tell you if you answer one question. What about John the Baptist? Was he sent by God, or not? Answer me!”

They talked it over among themselves. “If we reply that God sent him, then he will say, ‘All right, why didn’t you accept him?’ But if we say God didn’t send him, then the people will start a riot.” (For the people all believed strongly that John [the Baptist] was a prophet.) So they said, “We can’t answer. We don’t know.”

To which Jesus replied, “Then I won’t answer your question either!”

King Herod would have killed John the Baptist 23

MATTHEW 14:5

King Herod would have killed John (the Baptist) but was afraid of a riot, for all the people believed John was a prophet.

Proof given to the Prophet Jonah 24

MATTHEW 16:1-4

One day the Pharisees and Sadducees came to test Jesus' claim of being the Messiah by asking him to show them some great demonstration in the skies.

Jesus replied, "You are good at reading the weather signs of the skies – red sky tonight means fair weather tomorrow; red sky in the morning means foul weather all day – but you can't read the obvious signs of the times. This evil, unbelieving nation is asking for some strange sign in the heavens, but no further proof will be given except the kind given to Jonah." Then Jesus walked out on them.

Jesus the Prophet from Nazareth up in Galilee 24

MATTHEW 21:10-13

The entire city of Jerusalem was stirred as Jesus entered. "Who is this?" they asked.

And the crowds replied, "It's Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth up in Galilee."

Jesus went into the Temple, drove out the merchants, and knocked over the money-changers' tables and the stalls of those selling doves.

"The Scriptures say my Temple is a place of prayer," he declared, "but you have turned it into a den of thieves."

John the Baptist a Prophet? 24

MATTHEW 21:23-27

When Jesus had returned to the Temple and was teaching, the chief priests and other Jewish leaders came up to him and demanded to know by whose authority he had thrown out the merchants the day before.

"I'll tell you if you answer one question first," Jesus replied. "Was John the Baptist sent from God, or not?"

They talked it over among themselves. "If we say, 'From God,'" they said, "then he will ask why we didn't believe what John said. And if we deny that God sent him, we'll be mobbed, for this crowd all think he was a prophet." So they finally replied, "We don't know!"

And Jesus said, "Then I won't answer your question either."

Jesus as a Prophet! 24

MATTHEW 21:45-46

When the chief priests and other Jewish leaders realized that Jesus was talking about them – that they were the farmers in his story – they wanted to get rid of him, but were afraid to try because of the crowds, for they accepted Jesus as a prophet.

Daniel the Prophet 24

MATTHEW 24:14-18

Jesus said, "And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it, and then, finally, the end will come."

"So, when you see the horrible thing (told about by Daniel the prophet) standing in a holy place (Note to the reader: You know what is meant!) then those in Judea must flee into the Judean hills, those on their verandahs must not even go inside to pack before they flee, those in the fields should not return to their homes for their clothes."

(Note: "The Horrible Thing" – A pagan image set up in the Temple at Jerusalem by foreign conquerors – See Daniel 9:27)

A new prophet like the great ones of the past? 24-25

MARK 6:14-15

King Herod soon heard about Jesus, for his miracles were talked about everywhere. The king thought Jesus was John the Baptist come back to life again. So the people were

saying, “No wonder he can do such miracles.” Others thought Jesus was Elijah the ancient prophet, now returned to life again; still others claimed he was a new prophet like the great ones of the past.

A prophet of God killed in Jerusalem 25

LUKE 13:31-35

Some Pharisees said to Jesus, “Get out of here if you want to live, for King Herod is after you!”

Jesus replied, “Go tell that fox I will keep on casting out demons and doing miracles of healing today and tomorrow; and the third day I will reach my destination. Yes, today, tomorrow, and the next day! For it wouldn’t do for a prophet of God to be killed except in Jerusalem!”

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! The city that murders the prophets. The city that stones those sent to help her. How often I have wanted to gather your children together even as a hen protects her broods under her wings, but you wouldn’t let me. And now – now your house is left desolate. And you will never again see me until you say, ‘Welcome to him who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

The Prophet Isaiah’s prediction 25

JOHN 12:37-41

But despite all the miracles Jesus had done, most of the people would not believe he was the Messiah. This is exactly what Isaiah the prophet had predicted: “Lord, who will believe us? Who will accept God’s mighty miracles as proof?” But they couldn’t believe, for as Isaiah also said: “God has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so that they can neither see nor understand nor turn to me to heal them.” Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he made this prediction, for he had seen a vision of the Messiah’s glory.

Jesus on the Cross 25

MATTHEW 27:46-49

At about three o’clock, Jesus shouted, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for Elijah. One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine and put it on a stick and held it up to him to drink. But the rest said, “Leave him alone. Let’s see whether Elijah will come and save him.”

MARK 15:34-37

Then Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” (My God, my God, why have you deserted me?)

Some of the people standing there thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah. So one man ran and got a sponge and filled it with sour wine and held it up to him on a stick.

“Let’s see if Elijah will come and take him down!” he said.

Then Jesus uttered another loud cry, and dismissed his spirit.

Walking to the village of Emmaus 25

LUKE 24:19

“What things?” Jesus asked.

“The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth,” they said. “He was a Prophet who did incredible miracles and was a mighty Teacher, highly regarded by both God and man.

CHAPTER 5 THE TEACHINGS, DEMANDS  
AND WARNINGS OF THE PROPHETS

GOD'S NATURE AND PROGRAM

Pages 26- 32

God the Creator of everything 26-27  
The King of Heaven, the Judge of all 27  
God is the Living, Unchanging God 27  
God is with us 27-28  
God is no idol; no false god. He made everything there is 28  
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God is the Lord of Justice and Righteousness, Holy with Love and Truth 30  
God is the First and the Last 30-31  
Let all the people of the world look to God for Salvation 31  
The Lord is a Wonderful Teacher 31-32  
The Lord is closely watching all mankind, all the peoples on earth 32

[Note for the Reader: Quotations from the Prophets sometimes show the original text. Elsewhere they are given as first person responses to indicate the mode of obedience required.]

God the Creator of everything 26-27

ISAIAH 43:13

(adapted)

From eternity to eternity God is God. No one can oppose what he does.

ISAIAH 48:12-13

Listen to me my people, my chosen ones! I alone am God. I am the First; I am the Last. It was my hand that laid the foundations of the earth; the palm of my right hand spread out the heavens above; I spoke and they came into being.

JEREMIAH 10:12-13

...but our God formed the earth by his power and wisdom, and by his intelligence he hung the stars in space and stretched out the heavens. It is his voice that echoes in the thunder of the storm clouds. He causes mist to rise upon the earth; he sends the lightning and brings the rain, and from his treasuries he brings the wind.

ISAIAH 44:23-24

Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done this wonderful thing. Shout, O earth; break forth into song, O mountains and forests, yes, and every tree; for the Lord redeemed Jacob and is glorified in Israel! The Lord your Redeemer who made you, says, All things were made by me; I alone stretched out the heavens. By myself I made the earth and everything in it.

ISAIAH 45:6-8

...and all the world from east to west will know that there is no other God. I am Jehovah and there is no one else. I alone am God. I form the light and make the dark. I send good

times and bad. I, Jehovah, am he who does these things. Open up O heavens. Let the skies pour out their righteousness. Let salvation and righteousness sprout up together from the earth. I, Jehovah, created them.

JEREMIAH 27:5

By my great power I have made the earth and all mankind and every animal; and I give these things of mine to anyone I want to.

ZECHARIAH 12:1

...the Lord, who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth, and formed the spirit of man within him:

JEREMIAH 10:6-7

O Lord, there is no other god like you. For you are great and your name is full of power. Who would not fear you, O King of nations? (And that title belongs to you alone!) Among all the wise men of the earth and in all the kingdoms of the world there isn't anyone like you.

The King of Heaven, the Judge of all 27

DANIEL 4:34-37

“At the end of seven years I, Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon), looked up to heaven, and my sanity returned, and I praised and worshipped the Most High God and honored him who lives forever, whose rule is everlasting, and whose kingdom is for evermore. All the people of the earth are nothing when compared with him; he does whatever he thinks best among the company of heaven, as well as here among the inhabitants of earth. No one can stop him or challenge him, saying, ‘What do you mean by doing these things?’ When my mind returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My counselors and officers came back to me and I was re-established as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before.”

“Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of Heaven, the Judge of all, whose very act is right and good; for he is able to take those who walk proudly and push them into the dust!”

God is the Living, Unchanging God 27

DANIEL 6:25-27

Afterwards King Darius wrote this message addressed to everyone in his empire:

“Greetings! I decree that everyone shall tremble and fear before the God of Daniel in every part of my kingdom. For his God is the living, unchanging God whose kingdom shall never be destroyed and whose power shall never end. He delivers his people, preserving them from harm; he does great miracles in heaven and earth; it is he who delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.”

God is with us 27-28

JEREMIAH 32:27

I am the Lord, the God of all mankind; is there anything too hard for me?

ZECHARIAH 2:13

“Be silent, all mankind, before the Lord, for he has come to earth from heaven, from his holy home.”

ISAIAH 6:3

They sang to each other, “Holy, Holy, Holy (Faultless, Perfect and Complete) is the Lord of heaven’s armies; the whole earth is filled with his glory.”

HOSEA 11:9

(adapted)

God is God and not man; God is the holy one living among us.

ISAIAH 8:9-10

Immanuel – “God is with us.”

HABAKKUK 2:20

“But the Lord is in his Holy Temple; let all the earth be silent before him.”

EZEKIEL 43:12

... This is the basic law of the Temple: HOLINESS! – Godliness, Moral Purity and Righteousness!

ISAIAH 43:15

(adapted)

God is the Lord, Israel’s Holy One, Creator and King.

ISAIAH 10:17

God, the Light and the Holy One of Israel.

God is no idol, no false god. He made everything there is 28

JEREMIAH 51:15-19

God made the earth by his power and wisdom. He stretched out the heavens by his understanding. When he speaks there is thunder in the heavens and he causes the vapors to rise around the world; he brings the lightning with the rain and the winds from his treasuries. Compared with him, all men are stupid beasts. They have no wisdom – none at all! The silversmith is dulled by the images he makes, for in making them he lies; for he calls them gods, when there is not a breath of life in them all. Idols are nothing! They are lies. And the time is coming when God will come and see, and shall destroy them all. But the God of Israel in no idol! For he made everything there is, and Israel is his nation; the Lord of heaven’s armies is his name.

God is coming with Mighty Power 28-29

ISAIAH 40:1-31

Comfort, Oh, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and tell her that her sad days are gone. Her sins are pardoned, and the Lord will give her twice as many blessings as he gave her punishments before.

Listen! I hear the voice of someone shouting, “Make a road for the Lord through the wilderness; make him a straight, smooth road through the desert. Fill the valleys; level the hills; straighten out the crooked paths and smooth off the rough spots in the road. The glory of the Lord will be seen by all mankind together.” The Lord has spoken – it shall be.

The voice says, “Shout!”

“What shall I shout?” I asked.

“Shout that man is like the grass that dies away, and all his beauty fades like dying flowers. The grass withers, the flower fades beneath the breath of God. And so it is with fragile man. The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the Word of our God shall stand forever.”

O Crier of Good News, shout to Jerusalem from the mountain tops! Shout louder – don't be afraid – tell the cities of Judah, "Your God is coming!" Yes, the Lord God is coming with mighty power; he will rule with awesome strength. He will give everyone his just deserts. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will carry the lambs in his arms and gently lead the ewes with young.

Who else has held the oceans in his hands and measured off the heavens with his ruler? Who else knows the weight of all the earth and weighs the mountains and the hills? Who can advise the Spirit of the Lord or be his teacher or give him counsel?

Has he ever needed anyone's advice? Did he need instruction as to what is right and best? No, for all the peoples of the world are nothing in comparison with him – they are but a drop in the bucket, dust on the scales. He picks up the islands as though they had no weight at all. All of Lebanon's forests do not contain sufficient fuel to consume a sacrifice large enough to honor him, nor are all its animals enough to offer to our God. All the nations are as nothing to him; in his eyes they are less than nothing – mere emptiness and froth.

How can we describe God? With what can we compare him? With an idol? An idol, made from a mould, overlaid with gold, and with silver chains around its neck? The man too poor to buy expensive gods like that will find a tree free from rot and hire a man to carve a face on it, and that's his god – a god that cannot even move!

Are you ignorant? Are you so deaf to the words of God – the words he gave before the worlds began? Have you never heard nor understood? It is God who sits above the circle of the earth. (The people below must seem to him like grasshoppers!) He is the one who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and makes his tent from them. He dooms the great men of the world and brings them all to naught. They hardly get started, barely take root, when he blows on them and their work withers and the wind carries them off like straw.

"With whom will you compare me? Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One.

Look up into the heavens! Who created all these stars? As a shepherd leads his sheep, calling each by its pet name, and counts them to see that none are lost or strayed, so God does with stars and planets!

O Jacob, O Israel, how can you say that the Lord doesn't see your troubles and isn't being fair? Don't you yet understand? Don't you know by now that the everlasting God, the Creator of the farthest parts of the earth, never grows faint or weary? No one can fathom the depths of his understanding. He gives power to the tired and worn out, and strength to the weak. Even the youths shall be exhausted, and the young men will all give up. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall walk and not faint.

In Jerusalem the Lord is Judge, Lawgiver and King 29-30

ISAIAH 33:5-6

The Lord is very great, and lives in heaven. He will make Jerusalem the home of justice and goodness and righteousness. An abundance of salvation is stored up for Judah in a safe place, along with wisdom and knowledge and reverence for God.

ISAIAH 33:20-22

(Instead) you will see Jerusalem at peace, a place where God is worshipped, a city quiet and unmoved. The glorious Lord will be to us as a wide river of protection, and no enemy

can cross. For the Lord is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King; he will care for us and save us.

God wants his people to obey his Laws 30

ISAIAH 42:21-25

The Lord has magnified his law and made it truly glorious. Through it he had planned to show the world that he is righteous. But what a sight his people are – these who were to demonstrate to all the world the glory of his law; for they are robbed, enslaved, imprisoned, trapped, fair game for all, with no one to protect them. Won't even one of you apply these lessons from the past and see the ruin that awaits you up ahead? Who let Israel be robbed and hurt?

Did not the Lord? It is the Lord they sinned against, for they would not go where he sent them nor listen to his laws. That is why God poured out such fury and wrath on his people and destroyed them in battle. Yet, though set on fire and burned, they will not understand the reason why – that it is God, wanting them to repent.

God is the Lord of Justice and Righteousness, Holy with Love and Truth 30

JEREMIAH 9:23-24

The Lord says: Let the wise man not bask in his wisdom, nor the mighty man in his might, nor the rich man in his riches. Let them boast in this alone: That they truly know me, and understand that I am the Lord of Justice and of Righteousness whose love is steadfast; and that I love to be this way.

ISAIAH 5:16

The Lord of heaven's armies is exalted (raised high) above all, for he alone is holy, just and good.

ZECHARIAH 8:8

... I will be their God, just and true and yet forgiving them their sins.  
("I will be their God in truth and in righteousness.")

JEREMIAH 50:7

...The Lord, the God of Justice, the hope of their fathers.

ISAIAH 61:8

(adapted)

The Lord loves justice; he hates robbery and wrong.

JEREMIAH 10:10

But the Lord is the only true God, the living God, the everlasting King. The whole earth shall tremble at his anger; the world will hide at his displeasure.

ISAIAH 43:10-11

(adapted)

God alone is God. There is no other God; there never was and never will be. God is the Lord, and there is no other Savior.

God is the First and the Last 30-31

ISAIAH 44:6-8

The Lord, the King of Israel, says – yes, it is Israel's Redeemer, the Lord of the armies of heaven, who says it – I am the First and Last; there is no other God. Who else can tell you what is going to happen in the days ahead? Let them tell you if they can, and prove their

power. Let them do as I have done since ancient times. Don't, don't be afraid. Haven't I proclaimed from ages past [that I would save you]? You are my witnesses – is there any other God? No! None that I know about! There is no other Rock!

Let all the people of the world look to God for Salvation 31

ISAIAH 45:21b-23

For there is no other God but me – a just God and a Savior – no, not one! Let all the entire world look to me for salvation! For I am God; there is no other. I have sworn by myself and I will never go back on my word, for it is true – that every knee in all the world shall bow to me, and every tongue (every language) shall swear allegiance (swear loyalty) to my name.

HOSEA 13:4

(adapted)

God alone is God, our Lord, and has been ever since he brought Israel out from Egypt. We have no God but God, for there is no other Savior.

ISAIAH 45:15-19

Truly, O God of Israel, Savior, you work in strange mysterious ways. All who worship idols shall be disappointed and ashamed. But Israel shall be saved by Jehovah with eternal salvation; they shall never be disappointed in their God through all eternity. For Jehovah created the heavens and earth and put everything in place, and he made the world to be lived in, not to be an empty chaos. I am Jehovah, he says, and there is no other! I publicly proclaim bold promises; I do not whisper obscurities in some dark corner so that no one can know what I mean. And I didn't tell Israel to ask me for what I didn't plan to give! No, for I, Jehovah, speak only truth and righteousness.

JONAH 2:9

Deliverance comes from the Lord alone.

ISAIAH 51:6b

The Lord's salvation lasts forever; his righteous rule will never die nor end.

The Lord is a Wonderful Teacher 31-32

ISAIAH 28:29

The Lord of heaven's armies is a wonderful teacher and he gives the farmer wisdom.

ISAIAH 28:26

The farmer knows just what to do, for God has made him see and understand.

ISAIAH 52:6

(adapted)

The Lord will reveal his name to his people and they shall know the power in that name. Then at last they will recognize that it is he, yes, he, who speaks to them.

ISAIAH 8:16

Write down all these things I am going to do, says the Lord, and seal it up for the future. Entrust it to some godly man to pass it on down to godly men of future generations.

MALACHI 2:7

Priests' lips should flow with the knowledge of God so the people will learn God's laws. The priests are the messengers of the Lord of heaven's armies, and men should come to them for guidance.

ZECHARIAH 1:5-6

God's Word endures (remains in existence)!

ISAIAH 34:16

Search the Book of the Lord and see all that he will do; not one detail will he miss...the Lord has said it, and his Spirit will make it all come true.

EZEKIEL 12:25

For I am the Lord! What I threaten (I warn) always happens.

The Lord is closely watching all mankind, all the peoples on earth 32

JEREMIAH 23:23-24

Am I a God who is only in one place and cannot see what they are doing? Can anyone hide from me? Am I not everywhere in all of heaven and earth?

ZECHARIAH 9:1

...the Lord is closely watching all mankind (everyone, everywhere), not only Israel (for the cities of Syria belong to the Lord, as much as do the tribes of Israel).

DANIEL 4:25

"...the Most High God dominates the kingdoms of men, and gives power to anyone he chooses."

DANIEL 4:32

"...God parcels out the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he chooses."

DANIEL 4:17

"...the Most High dominates the kingdoms of the world, and gives them to anyone he wants to, even the lowliest of men!"

MALACHI 1:5

O Israel, lift your eyes to see what God is doing all around the world; then you will say, "Truly the Lord's great power goes far beyond our borders!"

MALACHI 1:11

"But my name will be honored by the Gentiles from morning till night. All around the world they will offer sweet incense and pure offerings in honor of my name. For my name shall be great among the nations," says the Lord of heaven's armies.

HABAKKUK 2:14

(The time will come when all the earth is filled, as the waters fill the sea, with an awareness of the glory of the Lord.)

JEREMIAH 29:10b-13

...But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and bring you home again. For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. You will find me when you seek me, if you look for me in earnest.

## CHAPTER 6 THE LAWS OF GOD

Pages 32-36

The Word of God 33

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Be fair and honest; love truth and peace 34

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God hates divorce and cruel men 35-36  
Understanding God's Will 36

The Word of God 33  
JEREMIAH 6:10

The Word of God has calmed me and I desire it completely.

God's contract with his people: obey every command 33  
JEREMIAH 11:1-7

Then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah once again and said:

Remind the men of Judah and all the people of Jerusalem that I made a contract with their fathers – and cursed (sent to destruction or punishment) is the man who does not heed it! For I told them at the time I brought them out of slavery in Egypt that if they would obey me and do whatever I commanded them, then they and all their children would be mine and I would be their God. And now, Israel, obey me, says the Lord, so that I can do for you the wonderful things I swore I would if you obeyed. I want to give you a land that “flows with milk and honey,” as it is today. Then I replied, “So be it, Lord!”

Then the Lord said: Broadcast this message in Jerusalem's streets – go from city to city throughout the land and say, Remember this agreement that your fathers made with God, and do all the things they promised him they would. For I solemnly said to your fathers when I brought them out of Egypt – and have kept on saying it over and over again until this day: Obey my every command.

MALACHI 4:4

Remember to obey the laws I gave all Israel through Moses my servant on Mount Horeb.

EZEKIEL 11:20

...so that you can obey my laws and be my people, and I will be your God.

JEREMIAH 7:23

God says, “Obey me and I will be your God and you shall be my people; only do as I say and all shall be well!

MALACHI 2:5-6

“The purpose of these laws was to give him (Levi) life and peace, to be a means of showing his respect and awe for me, by keeping them. He passed on to the people all the truth he got from me. He did not lie or cheat; he walked with me, living a good and righteous life, and turned many from their lives of sin (when they were found to be disobeying God's Laws).” (Note: Levi was a son of Jacob. Descendants of Levi were called Levites, priests and ministers who looked after the sanctuary of the chosen people, Israel.)

Refuse to work on the Sabbath Day and keep it separate, special and holy 33-34

JEREMIAH 17:21-27

The Lord says: Take warning and live; do no unnecessary work on the Sabbath day but make it a holy day (dedicated to God with moral purity and behavior). I gave this commandment to your fathers, but they didn't listen or obey. They stubbornly (willfully) refused to pay attention and be taught.

But if you obey me, says the Lord, and refuse to work on the Sabbath day and keep it separate, special and holy, then this nation shall continue forever. There shall always be descendants of David sitting on the throne here in Jerusalem; there shall always be kings and princes riding in pomp and splendor among the people, and this city shall remain forever. And from all around Jerusalem and from the cities of Judah and Benjamin, and from the Negeb, and from the lowlands west of Judah, the people shall come with their burnt offerings and grain offerings and incense, bringing their sacrifices to praise the Lord in his Temple.

But if you will not listen to me, if you refuse to keep the Sabbath holy, if on the Sabbath you bring in loads of merchandise through these gates of Jerusalem, just as on other days, then I will set fire to these gates. The fire shall spread to the palaces and utterly destroy them, and no one shall be able to put out the raging flames.

ISAIAH 58:13-14

(adapted)

I keep the Sabbath holy, by not having my own fun and business on that day. I enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the Lord's holy day, and honoring the Lord in what I do, not following my own desires and pleasure, nor talking idly. The Lord is my delight. The Lord sees to it that I ride high, and get my full share of the blessings.

A tithe – a tenth part of one's income 34

MALACHI 3:10

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so that there will be food enough in my Temple; if you do, I will open up the windows of heaven for you and pour out a blessing so great you won't have room enough to take it in!

“Try it! Let me prove it to you!”

Be fair and honest; love truth and peace 34

ZECHARIAH 8:16-17

“Tell the truth. Be fair. Live at peace with everyone. Don't plot harm to others; don't swear that something is true when it isn't! How I hate all that sort of thing!” says the Lord.

ZECHARIAH 8:19

“...love truth and peace.”

EZEKIEL 45:9

“Always be fair and honest.”

God's blessings are for Gentiles too 34-35

ISAIAH 56:1-8

Be just and fair to all, the Lord God says. Do what's right and good, for I am coming soon to rescue you. Blessed is the man, who refuses to work during my Sabbath days of rest, but honors them; and blessed is the man who checks himself from doing wrong.

And my blessings are for Gentiles, too, when they accept the Lord; don't let them think that I will make them second-class citizens. And this is for the eunuchs (the bedroom guards) too. They can be as much mine as anyone. For I say this to the eunuchs who keep his Sabbaths holy and choose the things that please him, and come to grips with his laws: I will give them – in my house, within my walls – a name far greater than the honor they

would receive from having sons and daughters. For the name that I will give them is an everlasting one; it will never disappear.

As for the Gentiles, the outsiders who join the people of the Lord and serve him and love his name, and are his servants and don't desecrate (treat with violent disrespect) the Sabbath, and have accepted his covenant and promises, I will bring them also to my holy mountain of Jerusalem, and make them full of joy within my House of Prayer.

I will accept their sacrifices and offerings, for my Temple shall be called "A House of Prayer for All People"! For the Lord God who brings back the outcasts of Israel says, I will bring others too besides my people Israel.

ZECHARIAH 7:8-10

(adapted)

...be honest and fair – and don't take bribes – and be merciful and kind to everyone. Stop oppressing widows and orphans, foreigners and poor people, and stop plotting evil against each other.

JEREMIAH 22:3-4

The Lord says: Be fair-minded. Do what is right! Help those in need of justice! Leave your evil deeds! Protect the rights of aliens and immigrants, orphans and widows; stop murdering the innocent! ...put an end to all these terrible deeds you are doing...

JEREMIAH 22:17

(adapted)

Don't be full of selfish greed and all dishonesty! Don't murder the innocent; don't oppress the poor; don't reign with ruthlessness.

God hates divorce and cruel men 35-36

MALACHI 2:14-16

"Why has God abandoned us?" you cry. I'll tell you why; it is because the Lord has seen your treachery in divorcing your wives who have been faithful to you through the years, the companions you promised to care for and keep. You were united to your wife by the Lord. In God's wise plan, when you married, the two of you became one person in his sight. And what does he want? Godly children from your union. Therefore guard your passions! Keep faith with the wife of your youth.

For the Lord, the God of Israel, says he hates divorce and cruel men. Therefore control your passions – let there be no divorcing of your wives.

MALACHI 3:5

(adapted)

(God) will move swiftly against wicked men who trick the innocent, against adulterers, and liars, against all those who cheat their employees, or oppress widows and orphans, or defraud (cheat) strangers, and do not fear (God).

MICAH 6:8

(adapted)

The Lord has told me what he wants, and this is all it is: to be fair and just and merciful, and to walk humbly (and respectfully) with my God.

ISAIAH 1:21-23

(adapted)

The people of the city of Jerusalem should be faithful to the Lord, be known to live in "The City of Fair Play" ("The City of Justice" "The Faithful Town"), be like sterling

silver, be so pure, whose leaders are loyal to the Lord, and avoid the company of thieves, and refuse to take bribes, and defend the widows and orphans.

Understanding God's Will 36

ISAIAH 50:4-11

The Lord God has given me his words of wisdom so that I may know what I should say to all these weary ones. Morning by morning he wakens me and opens my understanding to his will. The Lord God has spoken to me and I have listened; I do not rebel nor turn away. I give my back to the whip, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard. I do not hide from shame (and humiliation) – they spit in my face.

Because the Lord God helps me, I will not be dismayed; therefore, I have set my face (hard) like flint to do his will, and I know that I will triumph. He who gives me justice is near. Who will dare to fight against me now? Where are my enemies? Let them appear! See, the Lord God is for me! Who shall declare me guilty? All my enemies shall be destroyed like old clothes eaten up by moths!

Who among you fears the Lord and obeys his servant? If such men walk in darkness, without one ray of light, let them trust the Lord, let them rely upon their God. But see here, you who live in your own light, and warm yourselves from your own fires and not from God's (fires); you will live among sorrows.

## CHAPTER 7 FALSE PROPHETS AND IDOLS

Pages 36-38

Ask God alone about your future 36-37

The paths of the Lord are true and right 37-38

Ask God alone about your future 36-37

ISAIAH 2:22

(adapted)

I don't ever put my trust in puny (frail, weak) man, frail as his breath!

ISAIAH 2:6

(adapted)

I don't welcome and receive foreigners (from the East) who practice magic and communicate with evil spirits.

JEREMIAH 27:9

Don't listen to your false prophets, fortune-tellers, dreamers, mediums and magicians.

ZECHARIAH 10:2

Fortune-tellers' predictions are all a bunch of silly lies: what comfort is there in promises that don't come true?

ISAIAH 8:19-20

(adapted)

I am not trying to find out the future by consulting witches and mediums. I don't listen to their whisperings and mutterings. The living can't find out the future from the dead. I ask God alone about my future. I check the words of witches against the Word of God! If their messages are different from the Lord's, it is because he has not sent them; for they have no light or truth in them.

JEREMIAH 10:2-5

(adapted)

I don't act like the people who make horoscopes and try to read their fate and future in the stars! I am not frightened by predictions such as theirs, for it is all a pack of lies. Their ways are futile and foolish. They cut down a tree and carve an idol, and decorate it with gold and silver and fasten it securely in place with hammer and nails, so that it won't fall over, and there stands their god like a helpless scare-crow in a garden! It cannot speak, and it must be carried, for it cannot walk. I am not afraid of such a god for it can neither harm nor help, nor do any good.

The paths of the Lord are true and right 37-38

HOSEA 7:8

(adapted)

I don't mingle with the heathen (the ungodly) and I don't pick up their evil (disobedient) ways and I don't become as good-for-nothing as a half-baked cake.

HOSEA 7:9

(adapted)

I don't worship foreign gods. My strength therefore has not been sapped.

JONAH 2:8

Those who worship false gods have turned their backs on all the mercies waiting for them from the Lord.

JEREMIAH 10:16

But the God of Jacob is not like these foolish idols. He is the Creator of all, and Israel is his chosen nation. The Lord of Hosts (God as Lord over earthly or heavenly armies) is his name.

HOSEA 8:6

An idol! It is not God! Therefore, it must be smashed to bits.

JEREMIAH 22:9

...the people living here forgot the Lord their God and violated his agreement with them, for they worshipped idols.

HOSEA 4:7

(adapted)

I have not exchanged the glory (and honor) of God for the disgrace of idols.

HOSEA 8:4

(adapted)

I have not cut myself off from God's help by worshipping idols made from silver and gold.

HOSEA 12:11

(adapted)

I am not a fool who worships idols.

EZEKIEL 16:49-50

(adapted)

Sodom's sins were pride and laziness and too much food, while the poor and needy suffered outside her door. Sodom insolently worshipped many idols as the Lord God watched. Therefore he crushed her.

HOSEA 14:8-9

(adapted)

I stay away from idols! God is living and strong! God looks after me and cares for me. God is like an evergreen tree, yielding his fruit to me throughout the year. God's mercies never fail. I am wise and understand these things. I am intelligent and I listen. For the paths of the Lord are true and right, and good men (and women) walk along them. But sinners (who disobey God) trying it (that is, the path of the Lord) will fail.

HOSEA 4:11-12

(adapted)

I have not turned to wine, women and song and have not been robbed of my brains (my senses). I don't ask a piece of wood (an idol) to tell me what to do. I don't believe that "Divine Truth" comes to me through tea leaves! I don't long after idols and therefore I haven't become foolish. I haven't played the harlot (the prostitute) by serving other gods. I have not deserted God, but hold fast to him.

## CHAPTER 8 JUDGMENT

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The fall of Lucifer 38

ISAIAH 14:12-21

How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground – mighty though you were against the nations of the world. For you said to yourself, "I will ascend to heaven and rule the angels. I will take the highest throne. I will preside on the Mount of Assembly far away in the north. I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High."

But instead, you will be brought down to the pit of hell, down to its lowest depths. Everyone there will stare at you and ask, "Can this be the one who shook the earth and the kingdoms of the world? Can this be the one who destroyed the world and made it into a shambles (a chaotic state) and demolished its greatest cities and had no mercy on his prisoners?"

The kings of the nations lie in stately glory in their graves, but your body is thrown out like a broken branch; it lies in an open grave, covered with the dead bodies of those slain in battle. It lies as a carcass in the road, trampled and mangled by horses' hoofs. No monument will be given you, for you have destroyed your nation and slain your people. Your son will not succeed you as the king. Slay the children of this sinner. Do not let them rise and conquer the land nor rebuild the cities of the world.

Prepare to meet God in Judgment 38-39

ZECHARIAH 11:10

And I took my staff called “Grace” and snapped it in two, showing that I had broken my contract to lead and protect them. That was the end of the agreement.

ZECHARIAH 11:14

Then I broke my other staff, “Union,” to show that the bond of unity between Judah and Israel was broken.

HOSEA 12:10

I sent my prophets to warn you with many a vision and many a parable and dream.

MICAH 2:7

The threats (of the Spirit of the Lord) are for your good, to get you on the path again.

ISAIAH 23:9

Disasters – The Commander of the armies of heaven has done it to destroy your pride and to show his contempt for all the greatness of mankind.

ISAIAH 57:1-2

The good men perish; the godly die before their time and no one seems to care or wonder why. No one seems to realize that God is taking them away from evil days ahead. For the godly who die shall rest in peace.

HOSEA 7:2

(adapted)

I recognize that God is watching me.

AMOS 4:12-13

(adapted)

“I prepare to meet my God in judgment...For I am dealing with the one who formed the mountains and made the winds, and knows my every thought; he turns the morning to darkness and crushes down the mountains underneath his feet: Jehovah, the Lord, the God of heaven’s armies, is his name.”

EZEKIEL 31:14

“...let no other nation exult (rejoice at a triumph) with pride for its own prosperity, though it be higher than the clouds, for all are doomed and they will land in hell, along with all the proud men of the world.”

The situation without God and his commands 39

EZEKIEL 22:7-12

Fathers and mothers are contemptuously ignored (regarded as utterly worthless); immigrants and visitors are forced to pay you for your ‘protection’; orphans and widows are wronged and oppressed. The things of God are all despised; my Sabbaths are ignored. Prisoners are falsely accused and sent to their death. Every mountain top is filled with idols; lewdness (crude and offensive sexual behavior) is everywhere. There are men who commit adultery with their fathers’ wives and lie with menstruating women. Adultery with a neighbor’s wife, a daughter-in-law, a half sister – this is common. Hired murderers, loan racketeers and extortioners are everywhere. You never even think of me and my commands, the Lord God says.

God heaps upon us the full penalty for all our sins 39-40

EZEKIEL 22:24-31

“Son of dust, say to the people of Israel: In the day of my indignation you shall be like an uncleared wilderness, or a desert without rain. Your prophets have plotted against you

like lions stalking prey. They devour many lives; they seize treasures and extort wealth (that is by force or threats or other unfair means); they multiply the widows in the land. Your priests have violated my laws and defiled my Temple and my holiness. To them the things of God are no more important than any daily task. They have not taught my people the difference between right and wrong, and they disregard my Sabbaths, so my holy name is greatly defiled (polluted) among them. Your leaders are like wolves, who tear apart their victims, and they destroy lives for profit. Your ‘prophets’ describe false visions and speak false messages they claim are from God, when he hasn’t spoken one word to them at all. Thus they repair the walls with whitewash! Even the common people oppress and rob the poor and needy and cruelly extort from aliens (foreigners) (that is by force or threats or other unfair means).”

“I looked in vain for anyone who would build again the wall of righteousness that guards the land, who could stand in the gap and defend you from my just attacks, but I found not one. And so the Lord God says: I will pour out my anger upon you; I will consume you with the fire of my wrath. I have heaped upon you the full penalty for all your sins.”

DANIEL 4:27

“O King Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon), listen to me – stop sinning (stop disobeying God); do what you know is right; be merciful to the poor. Perhaps even yet God will spare you.”

EZEKIEL 34:4

You haven’t taken care of the weak nor tended the sick nor bound up the broken bones nor gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost. Instead you have ruled them with force and cruelty.

JEREMIAH 22:13

By not paying wages you are building injustice into its walls and oppression into its door-frames and ceilings.

JEREMIAH 5:5

(adapted)

I know the ways of the Lord and the judgment that follows sin (disobedience of God’s Laws).

AMOS 3:2

The Lord says, “How can we walk together with your sins between us?”

Our sins have cut us off from God 40-41-42

ISAIAH 59:1-21

Listen now! The Lord isn’t too weak to save you. And he isn’t getting deaf! He can hear you when you call! But the trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God. Because of sin (disobedience of God’s Laws) he has turned his face away from you and will not listen any more. For your hands are those of murderers and your fingers are filthy with sin. You lie and grumble and oppose the good. No one cares about being fair and true. Your law suits are based on lies; you spend your time plotting evil deeds and doing them. You spend your time and energy in spinning evil plans which end up in deadly actions. You cheat and shortchange everyone. Everything you do is filled with sin; violence is your trademark. Your feet run to do evil and rush to murder; your thoughts are only of sinning, and wherever you go you leave behind a trail of misery and death. You don’t

know what true peace is, nor what it means to be just and good; you continually do wrong and those who follow you won't experience any peace, either.

It is because of all this evil that you aren't finding God's blessings; that's why he doesn't punish those who injure you. No wonder you are in darkness when you expected light. No wonder you are walking in the gloom. No wonder you grope like blind men and stumble along in broad daylight, yes, even at brightest noontime, as though it were the darkest night! No wonder you are like corpses when compared with vigorous young men! You roar like hungry bears; you moan with mournful cries like doves. You look for God to keep you, but he doesn't. He has turned away. For your sins keep piling up before the righteous God, and testify against you.

Yes, we know what sinners we are. We know our disobedience; we have denied the Lord our God. We know what rebels we are and how unfair we are, for we carefully plan our lies. Our courts oppose the righteous man; fairness is unknown. Truth falls dead in the streets, and justice is outlawed.

Yes, truth is gone, and anyone who tries a better life is soon attacked. The Lord saw all the evil and was displeased to find no steps taken against sin. He saw no one was helping you, and wondered that no one intervened. Therefore he himself stepped in to save you through his mighty power and justice. He put on righteousness as armor and the helmet of salvation on his head. He clothed himself with robes of vengeance and of godly fury. He will repay his enemies for their evil deeds – fury for his foes in distant lands. Then at last they will reverence and glorify (and honor) the name of God from west to east. For he will come like a flood-tide driven by Jehovah's breath. He will come as a Redeemer to those in Zion who have turned away from sin.

“As for me, this is my promise to them,” says the Lord: “My Holy Spirit shall not leave them, and they shall want the good and hate the wrong – they and their children and their children's children forever.”

EZEKIEL 23:35

Because you have forgotten me and turned your backs upon me, therefore you must bear the consequence of all your sin (your disobedience of God's Laws).

AMOS 6:3

Jehovah, the Lord God of heaven's armies says, “You push away all thought of punishment awaiting you, but by your deeds you bring the Day of Judgment near.”

HOSEA 12:14

(adapted)

The Lord will sentence me to death as payment for my sins (my disobedience of God's Laws).

ISAIAH 48:22

But there is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked.

ISAIAH 3:11

I (the Lord) say to the wicked people, “Your doom (your death) is sure. You too shall get your just deserts. Your well earned punishment is on its way.”

HOSEA 5:2

(adapted)

The Lord will settle up with all of us for what we have done.

ISAIAH 22:12

(adapted)

The Lord of heaven's armies calls us to repent (to stop thinking, speaking and acting against God's Laws and to obey them instead), to weep and mourn and shave our heads in sorrow for our sins, and to wear clothes made of sackcloth (coarse fabric woven from flax or hemp) to show our remorse.

ISAIAH 1:28

(adapted)

All sinners who refuse to come to the Lord shall utterly perish (and die and cease to live and cease to be in existence).

ISAIAH 1:20

(adapted)

If I keep turning my back and refuse to listen to the Lord, I will be killed by my enemies.

The Lord has spoken.

ISAIAH 48:18

Oh, that you had listened to my laws! Then you would have had peace flowing like a gentle river, and great waves of righteousness.

Each one will be judged in accordance with his deeds 42

EZEKIEL 33:11-20

Tell them:

“As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; *I desire that the wicked turn from his evil ways and live.* Turn, turn from your wickedness, for why will you die, O Israel? For the good works of a righteous man will not save him if he turns to sin; and the sins of an evil man will not destroy him if he repents and turns from his sins.”

“I have said the good man will live. But if he sins, expecting his past goodness to save him, then none of his good deeds will be remembered. I will destroy him for his sins. And when I tell the wicked he will die and then he turns from his sins and does what is fair and right – if he gives back the borrower's pledge and returns what he has stolen and walks along the paths of right, not doing evil – he shall surely live. He shall not die. None of his past sins shall be brought up against him, for he has turned to the good and shall surely live.”

“And yet your people are saying the Lord isn't fair. The trouble is *they* aren't fair. For again I say, when the good man turns to evil, he shall die. But if the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what's fair and just, he shall live. Yet you are saying the Lord isn't fair. But I will judge each of you in accordance with his deeds.”

God says, turn, turn and live 42-43-44

EZEKIEL 18:1-32

Then the Lord's message came to me again.

“Why do the people use this proverb about the land of Israel: The children are punished for their fathers' sins? As I live says the Lord God, you will not use this proverb any more in Israel, for all souls are mine to judge – fathers and sons alike – and my rule is this: It is for a man's own sins that he will die.”

“But if a man is just and does what is lawful and right, and has not gone out to the mountains to feast before the idols of Israel and worship them, and does not commit adultery, nor lie with any woman during the time of her menstruation, and is a merciful

creditor, not holding on to the items given to him in pledge by poor debtors, and is no robber but gives food to the hungry and clothes to those in need, and grants loans without interest, and stays away from sin (from disobeying God's Laws), and is honest and fair when judging others, and obeys my laws – that man is just, says the Lord, and he shall surely live.”

“But if that man has a son who is a robber or a murderer and who fulfils none of his responsibilities, who refuses to obey the laws of God, but worships idols on the mountains and commits adultery, and oppresses the poor and needy, and robs his debtors by refusing to let them redeem what they have given him in pledge, and loves idols and worships them, and loans out his money at interest – shall that man live? No! He shall surely die, and it is his own fault.”

“But if this sinful man has, in turn, a son who sees all his father's wickedness, so that he fears God and decides against that kind of life, and doesn't go up on the mountains to feast before the idols and worship them, and does not commit adultery, and is fair to those who borrow from him and doesn't rob them, but feeds the hungry and clothes the needy, and helps the poor and does not loan money at interest, and obeys my laws – he shall not die because of his father's sins; he shall surely live. But his father shall die for his own sins because he is cruel and robs and does wrong.”

“What? you ask. Doesn't the son pay for his father's sins? No! For if the son does what is right and keeps my laws, he shall surely live. The one who sins is the one who dies. The son shall not be punished for his father's sins, nor the father for his son's. The righteous person will be rewarded for his own goodness and the wicked person for his wickedness. But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins and begins to obey my laws and do what is just and right, he shall surely live and not die. All his past sins will be forgotten, and he shall live because of his goodness.”

“Do you think I like to see the wicked die? asks the Lord. Of course not! I only want him to turn from his wicked ways and live. However, if a righteous person turns to sinning and acts like any other sinner, should he be allowed to live? No, of course not. All his previous goodness will be forgotten and he shall die for his sins.

“Yet you say: The Lord isn't being fair! Listen to me, O people of Israel. Am I the one who is unfair, or is it you? When a good man turns away from being good and begins sinning and dies in his sins, he dies for the evil he has done. And if a wicked person turns away from his wickedness and obeys the law, and does right, he shall save his soul, for he has thought it over and decided to turn from his sins and live a good life. He shall surely live – he shall not die.”

“And yet the people of Israel keep saying: ‘The Lord is unfair!’ O people of Israel, it is you who are unfair, not I. I will judge each of you, O Israel, and punish or reward each according to your own actions. Oh, turn from your sins while there is yet time. Put them behind you and receive a new heart and a new spirit. For why will you die, O Israel? I do not enjoy seeing you die, the Lord God says. Turn, turn and live!

JOEL 2:12-13

“Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me all your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, mourning. Let your remorse tear at your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful. He is not easily angered; he is full of kindness, and anxious not to punish you.

ISAIAH 48:17

The Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, says, I am the Lord your God, who punishes you for your own good and leads you along the paths that you should follow.

JEREMIAH 7:1-7

A message from God to the people: Even yet, if you leave your evil ways I will let you stay in your own land.

You may remain under these conditions only: If you stop your wicked thoughts and deeds, and are fair to others, and stop exploiting orphans, widows and foreigners. And stop your murdering. And stop worshipping idols as you do now to your hurt. Then and only then, will I let you stay in this land that I gave to your fathers to keep forever.

JEREMIAH 25:5-7

Each time the message was this: Turn from the evil road you are traveling and from the evil things you are doing. Only then can you continue to live here in this land which the Lord gave to you and to your ancestors forever. *Don't anger me by worshipping idols; but if you are true to me, then I'll not harm you.*

But you won't listen; you have gone ahead and made me furious with your idols. So you have brought upon yourselves all the evil that has come your way.

ZEPHANIAH 2:1-3

Gather together and pray, you shameless nation, while there still is time – before judgment begins, and your opportunity is blown away like chaff; before the fierce anger of the Lord falls and the terrible day of his wrath begins. Beg him to save you, all who are humble – all who have tried to obey. Walk humbly and do what is right; perhaps even yet the Lord will protect you from his wrath in that day of doom (death).

JEREMIAH 15:19-21

The Lord replied, “Stop this foolishness and talk some sense! Only if you return to trusting me will I let you continue as my spokesman. You are to influence them, not let them influence you! They will fight against you like a besieging army against a high city wall. But they will not conquer you for I am with you to protect and deliver you, says the Lord. Yes, I will certainly deliver you from these wicked men and rescue you from their ruthless hands.”

## CHAPTER 9 EXILE AND RETURN

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The cost of disobeying God 45

HOSEA 11:7

I (the Lord) have sentenced them (Israel) to slavery (captivity: people without freedom or personal rights) and no one shall set them free.

HOSEA 9:17

My God will destroy the people of Israel because they will not listen or obey. They will be wandering Jews, homeless among the nations.

JEREMIAH 29:18-19

And I will scatter them around the world. And in every nation where I place them they will be cursed and hissed and mocked. For they refuse to listen to me though I spoke to them again and again through my prophets.

Return to the Lord 45

HOSEA 3:4-5

This illustrates the fact that Israel will be a long time without a king or prince, and without an altar, temple, priests, or even idols!

Afterwards they will return to the Lord their God, and to the Messiah, their King (to David, their King), and they shall come trembling, submissive to the Lord and to his blessings, in the end times.

MICAH 2:12-13

The time will come, O Israel, when I will gather you – all that are left – and bring you together again like sheep in a fold, like a flock in a pasture – a noisy, happy, crowd. The Messiah will lead you out of exile and bring you through the gates of your cities of captivity, back to your own land. Your King will go before you – the Lord leads on.

Return and restoration 45-46

ISAIAH 27:1-13

In that day the Lord will take his terrible, swift sword and punish leviathan (a sea monster) the swiftly moving serpent, the coiling writhing serpent, the dragon of the sea.

In that day [of Israel's freedom] let this anthem be their song:

Israel is my vineyard; I, the Lord, will tend the fruitful vines; every day I'll water them, and day and night I'll watch to keep all enemies away. My anger against Israel is gone. If I find thorns and briars bothering her, I will burn them up, unless these enemies of mine surrender and beg for peace and my protection. The time will come when Israel will take root and bud and blossom and fill the whole earth with her fruit!

Has God punished Israel as much as he has punished her enemies? No, for he has devastated her enemies, while he has punished Israel but a little, exiling her far from her own land as though blown away in a storm from the east. And why did God do it? It was to purge away her sins (her disobedience of God's Laws), to rid her of all her idol altars and her idols. They will never be worshipped again. Her walled cities will be silent and empty, houses abandoned, streets grown up with grass, cows grazing through the city munching on twigs and branches.

My people are like the dead branches of a tree, broken off and used to burn beneath the pots. They are a foolish nation, a witless, stupid people, for they turn away from God. Therefore, he who made them will not have pity on them or show them his mercy. Yet the time will come when the Lord will gather them together one by one like hand-picked

grain, selecting them here and there from his great threshing floor (for beating out the grain) that reaches all the way from the river Euphrates to the Egyptian boundary. In that day the great trumpet will be blown, and many about to perish among their enemies, Assyria and Egypt, will be rescued and brought back to Jerusalem to worship the Lord in his holy mountain.

An everlasting covenant; a contract 46

JEREMIAH 32:37-44

But I will bring my people back again from all the countries where, in my fury, I will scatter them. I will bring them back to this very city, and make them live in peace and safety. And they shall be my people and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart and mind to worship me forever, for their own good and for the good of all their descendants.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, promising never again to desert them, but only to do them good. I will put a desire in their hearts to worship me, and they shall never leave me. I will rejoice to do them good and will replant them in this land, with great joy. Just as I have sent all these terrors and evils upon them, so will I do all the good I have promised them.

Fields will again be bought and sold in this land, now ravaged by the Babylonians, where men and animals alike have disappeared. Yes, fields shall once again be bought and sold – deeds signed and sealed and witnessed – in the country of Benjamin and here in Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah and in the hill country, in the Philistine plain and in the Negeb too, for some day I will restore prosperity to them.

Obey my laws and be my people 46

EZEKIEL 11:16-21

“But tell the exiles that the Lord God says: Although I have scattered you in the countries of the world, yet I will be a sanctuary to you for the time that you are there, and I will gather you back from the nations where you are scattered and give you the land of Israel again.

And when you return you will remove every trace of all this idol worship. I will give you one heart and a new spirit; I will take from you your hearts of stone and give you tender hearts of love for God, so that you can obey my laws and be my people, and I will be your God. But as for those now in Jerusalem, who long for idols, I will repay them fully for their sins (for disobeying my Laws),” the Lord God says.

Home again in peace and safety 46-47

EZEKIEL 39:25-29

“But now, the Lord God says, I will end the captivity of my people and have mercy upon them and restore their fortunes, for I am concerned about my reputation! Their time of treachery and shame will all be in the past; they will be home again, in peace and safety in their own land, with no one bothering them or making them afraid. I will bring them home from the lands of their enemies – and my glory shall be evident to all the nations when I do it. Through them I will vindicate my holiness before the nations. Then my people will know I am the Lord their God – responsible for sending them away to exile, and responsible for bringing them home. I will leave none of them remaining among the

nations. And I will never hide my face from them again, for I will pour out my Spirit upon them, says the Lord God.”

A new contract 47-48

JEREMIAH 31:1-40

At that time, says the Lord, all the families of Israel shall recognize me as the Lord; they shall act like my people. I will care for them as I did those who escaped from Egypt, to whom I showed my mercies in the wilderness, when Israel sought for rest. For long ago the Lord had said to Israel: I have loved you, O my people, with an everlasting love; with loving-kindness I have drawn you to me. I will rebuild your nation, O virgin of Israel. You will again be happy and dance merrily with timbrels (tambourines - flat half-drums with jingling discs of metal attached). Again you will plant your vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria and eat from your own gardens there.

The day shall come when watchmen on the hills of Ephraim will call out and say, “Arise, and let us go up to Zion to the Lord our God.” For the Lord says, Sing with joy for all that I will do for Israel, the greatest of the nations! Shout out with praise and joy: “The Lord has saved his people, the remnant of Israel.” For I will bring them from the north and from earth’s farthest ends, not forgetting their blind and lame, young mothers with their little ones, those ready to give birth. It will be a great company who comes. Tears of joy shall stream down their faces, and I will lead them home with great care. They shall walk beside the quiet streams and not stumble. For I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my oldest child.

Listen to this message from the Lord, you nations of the world, and publish it abroad: The Lord who scattered his people will gather them back together again and watch over them as a shepherd does his flock.

He will save Israel from those who are too strong for them! They shall come home and sing songs of joy upon the hills of Zion, and shall be radiant (beaming and bright) over the goodness of the Lord – the good crops, the wheat and the wine and the oil, and the healthy flocks and herds. Their life shall be like a watered garden, and all their sorrows shall be gone. The young girls will dance for joy, and men folk – old and young – will take their part in all the fun; for I will turn their mourning into joy and I will comfort them and make them rejoice, for their captivity with all its sorrows will be behind them. I will feast the priests with the abundance of offerings brought to them at the Temple; I will satisfy my people with my bounty, says the Lord.

The Lord spoke to me again, saying: In Ramah there is bitter weeping, Rachel is weeping for her children and she cannot be comforted, for they are gone. But the Lord says: Don’t cry any longer, for I have heard your prayers and you will see them again; they will come back to you from the distant land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, says the Lord, and your children will come again to their own land.

I have heard Ephraim’s groans: “You have punished me greatly; but I needed it all, as a calf must be trained for the yoke (the harness). Turn me again to you and restore me, for you alone are the Lord, my God. I turned away from God but I was sorry afterwards. I kicked myself for my stupidity. I was thoroughly ashamed of all I did in younger days.”

And the Lord replies: Ephraim is still my son, my darling child. I had to punish him, but I still love him. I long for him and surely will have mercy on him.

As you travel into exile, set up road signs pointing back to Israel. Mark your pathway well. For you shall return again, O virgin Israel, to your cities here. How long will you vacillate (waver; move to and fro), O wayward daughter? For the Lord will cause something new and different to happen – Israel shall seek him!

The Lord of heaven's armies, the God of Israel, says: When I bring them back again they shall say in Judah and her cities, "The Lord bless you, O centre of righteousness, O holy hill!" And city dwellers and farmers and shepherds alike shall live together in peace and happiness. For I have given rest to the weary and joy to all the sorrowing.

(Then Jeremiah weakened. "Such sleep is very sweet!" he said.)

The Lord says: The time will come when I will greatly increase the population and multiply the number of cattle here in Israel. In the past I painstakingly destroyed the nation but now I will carefully build it up. The people shall no longer quote this proverb – "Children pay for their fathers' sins (their disobedience of God's Laws)." For everyone shall die for his own sins – the person eating sour (bitter) grapes is the one whose teeth are set on edge (ache with pain).

The day will come, says the Lord, when I will make a new contract with the people of Israel and Judah. It won't be like the one I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a contract they broke, forcing me to reject them, says the Lord. But this is the new contract I will make with them: I will inscribe my laws upon their hearts, so that they shall want to honor me; then they shall truly be my people and I will be their God. At that time it will no longer be necessary to admonish (to warn) one another to know the Lord. For everyone, both great and small, shall really know me then, says the Lord, and I will forgive and forget their sins.

The Lord who gives us sunlight in the daytime and the moon and stars to light the night, and who stirs the sea to make the roaring waves – his name is the Lord of heaven's armies – says this:

I am as likely to reject my people Israel as I am to do away with these laws of nature! Not until the heavens can be measured and the foundations of the earth explored, will I consider casting them away forever for their sins!

For the time is coming, says the Lord, when all Jerusalem shall be rebuilt for the Lord, from the Tower of Hananel at the northeast corner, to the Corner Gate at the northwest; and from the hill of Gareb at the southwest, across to Goah on the southeast. And the entire city including the graveyard and ash dump in the valley shall be holy to the Lord, and so shall all the fields out to the brook of Kidron, and from there to the Horse Gate on the east side of the city; it shall never again be captured or destroyed.

EZEKIEL 16:62-63

"I will reaffirm my covenant with you, and you will know I am the Lord. Despite all you have done, I will be kind to you again; you will cover your mouth in silence and in shame when I forgive you all that you have done, says the Lord God."

The Spirit from Heaven 48-49

ISAIAH 32:15-17

...Until at last the Spirit is poured down on us from heaven. Then once again enormous crops will come. Then justice will rule through all the land, and out of justice, peace. Quietness and confidence will reign for evermore.

JOEL 2:28-32

“After I have poured out my rains again, I will pour out my Spirit upon all of you! Your sons and daughters will prophesy; your old men will dream dreams, and your young men see visions. And I will pour out my Spirit even on your slaves, men and women alike, and put strange symbols in the earth and sky – blood and fire and pillars of smoke.”

“The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon to blood before the great and terrible Day of the Lord shall come.”

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; even in Jerusalem some will escape, just as the Lord has promised, for he has chosen some to survive.”

The whole world will be ruled by the Lord from Jerusalem 49

MICAH 4:1-8

But in the last days Mount Zion will be the most renowned of all the mountains of the world, praised by all nations; people from all over the world will make pilgrimages there.

“Come,” they will say to one another, “let us visit the mountain of the Lord, and see the Temple of the God of Israel; he will tell us what to do, and we will do it.” For in those days the whole world will be ruled by the Lord from Jerusalem! He will issue his laws and announce his decrees from there.

He will arbitrate among the nations, and dictate to strong nations far away. They will beat their swords into ploughshares (plough blades) and their spears into pruning-hooks; nations shall no longer fight each other, for all war will end. There will be universal peace, and all the military academies and training camps will be closed down.

Everyone will live quietly in his own home in peace and prosperity, for there will be nothing to fear. The Lord himself has promised this. (Therefore we will follow the Lord our God forever and ever, even though all the nations around us worship idols!)

In that coming day, the Lord says that he will bring back his punished people – sick and lame and dispossessed – and make them strong again in their own land, a mighty nation, and the Lord himself shall be their King from Mount Zion forever. O Jerusalem – the Watch-tower of God’s people – your royal might and power will come back to you again, just as before.

Vengeance upon the nations 49

MICAH 5:7-15

Then the nation of Israel will refresh the world like a gentle dew or the welcome showers of rain, and Israel will be as strong as a lion. The nations will be like helpless sheep before her! She will stand up to her foes; all her enemies will be wiped out.

At that same time, says the Lord, I will destroy all the weapons you depend on, and tear down your walls and demolish the defenses of your cities. I will put an end to all witchcraft (sorcery and magic) – there will be no more fortune-tellers to consult – and destroy all your idols. Never again will you worship what you have made, and I will abolish the heathen shrines from among you, and destroy the cities where your idol temples stand.

And I will pour out my vengeance (revenge and retribution) upon the nations who refuse to obey me.

All nations will be judged by God 49-50

JOEL 3:1-2

“At that time, when I restore the prosperity of Judah and Jerusalem,” says the Lord, “I will gather the armies of the world into the ‘Valley Where Jehovah Judges’ and punish them there for harming my people, for scattering my inheritance among the nations and dividing up my land.

JOEL 3:9-12

Announce this far and wide: Get ready for war! Conscript your best soldiers; collect all your armies. Melt your ploughshares (plough blades) into swords and beat your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weak be strong. Gather together and come, all nations everywhere.

And now, O Lord, bring down your warriors! Collect the nations; bring them to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to pronounce judgment on them all.

The Ancient of Days – The Almighty God sits in Judgment 50

DANIEL 7:9-14

I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient of Days – the Almighty God – sat down to judge. His clothing was as white as snow, his hair like whitest wool. He sat upon a fiery throne brought in on flaming wheels, and a river of fire flowed from before him. Millions of angels ministered to him and hundred of millions of people stood before him, waiting to be judged. Then the court began its session and The Books were opened.

As I watched, the brutal fourth animal was killed and its body handed over to be burned because of its arrogance against Almighty God, and the boasting of its little horn. As for the other three animals, their kingdoms were taken from them, but they were allowed to live a short time longer.

Next I saw the arrival of a Man – or so he seemed to be – brought there on clouds from heaven; he approached the Ancient of Days and was presented to him. He was given the ruling power and glory over all the nations of the world, so that all people of every language must obey him. His power is eternal – it will never end; his government shall never fall.

DANIEL 7:22

...until the Ancient of Days came and opened his court and vindicated his people, giving them world wide powers of government.

DANIEL 7:26-27

“But then the Ancient of Days will come and open his court of justice and take all power from the vicious king, to consume and destroy it until the end. Then every nation under heaven, and all their power, shall be given to the people of God; they shall rule all things forever, and all rulers shall serve and obey them.”

## CHAPTER 10 REPENTANCE AND RETURNING TO GOD AND FORGIVENESS

Pages 50-55

Trust in the Lord 51

New courage to those with repentant hearts 51

Seek the Lord 51-52

Look to the Lord for his help 52

Come and return to God 52-53  
Fear God, our Maker 53-54  
Being made clean 54-55

Trust in the Lord 51  
JEREMIAH 17:5-14

The Lord says: Cursed is the man who puts his trust in mortal man (who is subject to death) and turns his heart away from God. He is like a stunted shrub in the desert, with no hope for the future; he lives on the salt-encrusted plains in the barren wilderness; good times pass him by forever.

But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and has made the Lord his hope and confidence. He is like a tree planted along a river bank, with its roots reaching deep into the water – a tree not bothered by the heat nor worried by long months of drought (a long dry period of weather). Its leaves stay green and it goes right on producing all its luscious fruit.

The heart (and mind; a person's real disposition) is the most deceitful (misleading and cheating) thing there is, and desperately (dangerously) wicked (and evil and morally wrong and not correct). No one can really know how bad it is! Only the Lord knows! He searches all hearts and examines deepest motives so he can give to each person his (or her) right reward, according to his (or her) deeds – how he (or she) has lived.

Like a bird that fills her nest with young she has not hatched and which will soon desert her and fly away, so is the man who gets his wealth by unjust means. Sooner or later he will lose his riches and at the end of his life become a poor old fool.

But our refuge is your throne, eternal, high and glorious. O Lord, the Hope of Israel, all who turn away from you shall be disgraced and shamed; they are registered for earth and not for glory, for they have forsaken the Lord, the Fountain of living waters. Lord, you alone can heal me, you alone can save (me), and my praises are for you alone.

New courage to those with repentant hearts 51  
ISAIAH 57:15-21

The high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, the Holy One, says this: I live in that high and holy place where those with contrite, humble spirits dwell; and I refresh the humble and give new courage to those with repentant hearts. For I will not fight against you forever, nor always show my wrath (my anger); if I did, all mankind would perish – the very souls I have made.

I was angry and smote (that is attacked) these greedy men. But they went right on sinning (disobeying the Laws of God), doing everything their evil hearts desired. I have seen what they do, but I will heal them anyway! I will lead them and comfort them, helping them to mourn and to confess their sins. Peace, peace to them, both near and far, for I will heal them all. But those who still reject me are like the restless sea, which is never still, but always churns up mire (mud) and dirt. There is no peace, says my God, for them!

Seek the Lord 51-52  
ISAIAH 55:6-13

Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call upon him now while he is near. Let men cast off their wicked deeds; let them banish (shut out) from their minds the very thought of

doing wrong! Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy upon them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon! This plan of mine is not what you would work out, neither are my thoughts the same as yours! For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours, and my thoughts than yours.

As the rain and snow come down from heaven and stay upon the ground to water the earth, and cause the grain to grow and to produce seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry, so also is my Word. I send it out and it always produces fruit. It shall accomplish all I want it to, and prosper everywhere I send it. You will live in joy and peace. The mountains and hills, the trees of the field – all the world around you – will rejoice. Where once were thorns, fir trees will grow; where briars grew, the myrtle trees will sprout up. This miracle will make the Lord's name very great and be an everlasting sign [of God's power and love].

Look to the Lord for his help 52

MICAH 7:7-10

As for me, I look to the Lord for his help; I wait for God to save me; he will hear me. Do not rejoice against me, O my enemy, for though I fall, I will rise again! When I sit in darkness, the Lord himself will be my Light. I will be patient while the Lord punishes me, for I have sinned against him; (I have disobeyed his laws) then he will defend me from my enemies, and punish them for all the evil they have done to me. God will bring me out of my darkness into the light, and I will see his goodness. Then my enemy will see that God is for me, and be ashamed for taunting (for mocking) me, "Where is that God of yours?" Now with my own eyes I see them trampled (crushed) down like mud in the street.

Come and return to God 52-53

JEREMIAH 10:23-24

O Lord, I know it is not in the power of man to map his life and plan his course – so you correct me, Lord; but please be gentle. Don't do it in your anger, for I would die.

ISAIAH 64:5

(adapted)

God welcomes those who cheerfully do good, who follow godly ways.

JOEL 2:32

Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

ISAIAH 8:17

I will wait for the Lord to help us, though he is hiding now. My only hope is in him.

ISAIAH 66:2

(adapted)

God looks with pity upon me, for I am a person who has a humble (gentle) and contrite (sorrowful) heart (and disposition), and I tremble at God's Word.

ISAIAH 17:10

(adapted)

I have turned to God who can save me – the Rock who can hide me.

ISAIAH 31:6

(adapted)

I come and return to God.

JEREMIAH 4:1-2

(adapted)

I truly return to the Lord and absolutely discard my idols (lifeless statues of gods used as objects for worship) and I swear by God alone, the living God, and I begin to live a good, honest and clean life, then I will be a testimony (an affirmation) to the nations of the world and they will come to God and glorify (and honor) his name.

ISAIAH 1:27

(adapted)

I return to the Lord; I am just and good; I shall be redeemed.

ISAIAH 30:15

(adapted)

I return to the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel and wait for him and I am saved; in quietness and confidence is my strength.

ISAIAH 30:18

(adapted)

I come to the Lord; he shows me his love; he has conquered me to bless me (and to make me happy), just as he said. For the Lord is faithful to his promises. Blessed (and made happy) are all those who wait for him to help them.

HOSEA 12:6

(adapted)

I come back to God. I live by the principles of love and justice (warm affection, friendship and fair dealing), and I always expect much from him, who is my God.

HOSEA 7:16

(adapted)

I look to heaven, to the Most High God.

ISAIAH 1:15

(adapted)

When I pray with my hands stretched out to heaven, the Lord looks and listens.

ISAIAH 1:4

(adapted)

I face the Lord, I admire (and highly respect) the Holy One of Israel, and receive his help and assistance.

AMOS 5:8-9

(adapted)

I seek him who created the Seven Stars and the constellation of Orion, who turns darkness into morning, and day into night, who calls forth the water from the ocean and pours it out as rain upon the land. The Lord, Jehovah, is his name. With blinding speed and violence he brings destruction on the strong, breaking all defenses.

Fear God, our Maker 53-54

ISAIAH 51:13

(adapted)

I fear God my Maker – I remember him, the one who spread the stars throughout the skies and made the earth.

ISAIAH 8:13-15

(adapted)

I don't fear anything except the Lord of the armies of heaven! As I fear him, I need fear nothing else. The Lord is my safety and the Rock of my Salvation (my Deliverance and Security and Safety).

JEREMIAH 5:21-22

(adapted)

I have eyes that see and ears that hear and I have absolute respect for God. I tremble in the presence of God. He set the shorelines of the world by perpetual decrees, so that the oceans, though they toss and roar, can never pass those bounds. God is a God to be feared and worshipped (to be liked, loved, respected, honored and obeyed).

ISAIAH 1:12-13

(adapted)

I am sorry for my sins (my thinking, speaking and acting against the laws of God).

EZELIEL 44:7

(adapted)

...the uncircumcised (the heathen) – those who have no heart for God (those who have no feeling, impulse, inclination, affection and desire for God).

JEREMIAH 9:25-26

(adapted)

I circumcise (purify) my heart (my real disposition) by loving the Lord.

ZEPHANIAH 3:1-2

(adapted)

I listen to the voice of God. I listen to what I am told; I accept all correction. I trust the Lord; I seek for God.

JEREMIAH 4:3-4

(adapted)

I plough up the hardness of my heart (my real disposition; my feelings, impulses, inclinations, affections and desires); otherwise the good seed will be wasted among the thorns. I cleanse my mind and heart, not just my body, or else God's anger will burn me to a cinder because of all my sins (my thinking, speaking and acting against the laws of God). And no one will be able to put the fire out.

Being made clean 54-55

JEREMIAH 4:14

I cleanse my heart while there is time. I can yet be saved by casting out my evil thoughts.

ISAIAH 1:16-19

(adapted)

I wash myself and become clean. I stop doing wicked things: I leave my evil ways. I learn to do good, to be fair and to help the poor, the fatherless, and widows.

I come to the Lord and talk it over! No matter how deep the stain of my sins, the Lord can take it out and make me as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if I am stained as red as crimson, the Lord can make me white as wool! I let the Lord help me, I obey him and I am made rich by the Lord.

ISAIAH 3:10

(adapted)

What a reward the godly man (and woman) is going to get.

ISAIAH 43:25

(adapted)

God alone is he who blots away (who obliterates) our sins for his own sake and will never think of them again.

JONAH 3:10

When God saw that they had put a stop to their evil (and ungodly) ways, he abandoned his plan to destroy them, and didn't carry it through.

JEREMIAH 5:1-3

(adapted)

I aim to be a fair and honest person. I tell the truth. I turn from my sins (and obey the laws of God).

JEREMIAH 4:22

(adapted)

I leave my foolishness and listen to God; I brighten up and gain understanding, I develop a talent for doing right.

ISAIAH 5:11

(adapted)

I don't get up early in the morning to go on long drinking bouts that last till late at night. I am not a drunken layabout (doing little or no work).

HOSEA 14:2-3

(adapted)

"O Lord, take away our sins; be gracious to us and receive us, and we will offer you the sacrifice of praise. Another nation (Assyria) cannot save us, nor can our strength in battle; never again will we call the idols we have made 'our gods'; for in you alone, O Lord, the fatherless find mercy."

ISAIAH 33:24

(adapted)

The people of Israel will no longer say, "We are sick and helpless," for the Lord will forgive (and pardon) them their sins (their disobedience) and bless them (and make them happy).

ISAIAH 6:7

(adapted)

I am now not guilty; my sins are all forgiven (my thoughts, speech and actions against the laws of God are pardoned).

## CHAPTER 11 PRAYER AND PRAISE

Pages 55-59

Consulting God 55-58

Blessed (Praised) be the Name of God for ever 58-59

Consulting God 55-58

HOSEA 6:6

(adapted)

I desire to always know God.

AMOS 5:4

(adapted)

I seek the Lord - and live.

ISAIAH 22:11

(adapted)

I always ask help from God.

HOSEA 7:7

I cry out to God for help.

ISAIAH 30:1

(adapted)

I ask advice from the Lord, and seek to do what he wants me to do. I avoid the company of unbelievers, the ungodly.

ISAIAH 31:1

(adapted)

I don't turn to another nation for help, trusting in their mighty cavalry and chariots. I look to the Holy One of Israel and consult him.

ISAIAH 30:19-21

(adapted)

I shall weep no more, for the Lord will surely be gracious to me at the sound of my cry. He will answer me. Though he gives me the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet he will be with me to teach me – with my own eyes I will see my Teacher. And if I leave God's paths and go astray, I will hear a Voice behind me say, "No, this is the way: walk here."

JEREMIAH 6:16

(adapted)

I ask the Lord where the good road is, the godly paths. I travel there and find rest for my soul.

ISAIAH 51:7-8

(adapted)

I listen to the Lord, I who know right from wrong and I who cherish God's laws in my heart: I am not afraid of people's scorn (people's contempt) or their slanderous (their false) talk. For the moth shall destroy them like garments; the worm shall eat them like wool; but God's justice and mercy shall last forever, and his salvation from generation to generation.

ISAIAH 41:13-16

(adapted)

God is holding me by my right hand – God, the Lord my God – says, "don't be afraid; I am here to help you." Despised (and hated) though I am, I am to fear not, for God will help me. God is the Lord, my Redeemer. He is the Holy One of Israel...The joy of the Lord shall fill me; I shall glory (and have value, pride and pleasure) in the God of Israel.

HOSEA 6:7

(adapted)

I accept God's love.

HOSEA 2:15

(adapted)

God transforms my/our Valley of Troubles into a Door of Hope.

HOSEA 10:12

(adapted)

I plant the good seeds of righteousness and I will reap a crop of God's love; I plough the hard ground of my heart (my real disposition, nature and character) for now is the time to seek the Lord, that he may come and shower salvation upon me.

ZECHARIAH 4:7

(adapted)

...declaring that all was done by grace (the free and unmerited favor) of God alone.

ISAIAH 7:9

(adapted)

If I want God to protect me, I must learn to believe what he says.

JEREMIAH 10:21

(adapted)

I keep my senses; I follow God and ask his will.

ISAIAH 8:12

(adapted)

I stay true to God.

ISAIAH 63:10

(adapted)

I am loyal to God and please the Holy Spirit.

ISAIAH 1:5-6

(adapted)

I remain loyal to the Lord.

NAHUM 1:7

The Lord is good. When trouble comes, he is the place to go! And he knows everyone who trusts in him!

ISAIAH 10:20

(adapted)

I trust the Lord, The Holy One of Israel.

HOSEA 11:12

(adapted)

I still trust in God and I am faithful to the Holy One.

JEREMIAH 9:3

(adapted)

I speak the truth; I care for the right. I care for the Lord.

ISAIAH 3:8

(adapted)

I speak up for the Lord and worship and honor him

ISAIAH 5:12

(adapted)

I have thought and care for the Lord.

ISAIAH 8:6

(adapted)

I accept the Lord's gentle care.

JEREMIAH 6:13

(adapted)

I am an honest person and tell the truth.

ISAIAH 41:9-10

(adapted)

I serve none but God alone, for God has chosen me and will not throw me away. I am not afraid, for God is with me. I am not dismayed for God is my God. God will strengthen me, God will help me. God will uphold me with his victorious right hand (the hand of his righteousness).

ISAIAH 51:12

(adapted)

God, even God, is he who comforts me and gives me all this joy. I have no right to fear mere mortal men, who wither like the grass and disappear.

HOSEA 7:13-14

(adapted)

I accept the truth from God. I don't lie there sleepless with anxiety. I ask God for help.

HOSEA 12:7

(adapted)

I am not like crafty merchants selling from dishonest scales – they love to cheat. I don't boast saying, "I am so rich! I have gained it all by myself!" I know that riches cannot make up for sin (that is, paying the penalty of death for disobeying God's laws).

HOSEA 4:1-2

(adapted)

I am faithful, kind and have knowledge of God. I don't swear and lie and kill and commit adultery. (I say just a simple 'yes, I will' or 'no, I won't.' My word is enough. I think and speak the truth and exercise proper respect for and care of everyone and practice faithfulness in marriage.)

ISAIAH 33:2-3

But to us, O Lord, be merciful, for we have waited for you. Be our strength each day and our salvation in the time of trouble. The enemy runs at the sound of your voice. When you stand up the nations flee.

HOSEA 2:18-20

(adapted)

Lord, may I/we lie down in peace and safety, unafraid; and may I/we be bound to you for ever with chains of righteousness and justice and love and mercy. May I/we be betrothed (engaged to be married) to you in faithfulness and love, and really know you as I/we never have before.

ISAIAH 12:1-6

"Praise the Lord! He was angry with me, but now he comforts me. See, God has come to save me! I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord is my strength and my song; he is my salvation. Oh, the joy of drinking deeply from the Fountain of Salvation!"

"Thank the Lord! Praise his name! Tell the world about his wonderful love. How mighty he is!" Sing to the Lord, for he has done wonderful things. Make known his praise around the world. Let all the people of Jerusalem (and your local place) shout his praise with joy. For great and mighty is the Holy One of Israel, who lives among you.

Blessed (Praised) be the name of God for ever 58-59

DANIEL 2:19-23

That night in a vision God told Daniel what the king (Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon) had dreamed.

Then Daniel praised the God of heaven, saying, “Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever, for he alone has all wisdom and all power. World events are under his control. He removes kings and sets others on their thrones. He gives wise men their wisdom, and scholars their intelligence. He reveals profound mysteries beyond man’s understanding. He knows all hidden things, for he is light, and darkness is no obstacle to him. I thank and praise you, O God of my fathers, for you have given me wisdom and glowing health, and now, even this vision of the king’s dream and the understanding of what it means.”

DANIEL 5:23

(adapted)

Praise the God who gives us the breath of life and controls our destiny!

## CHAPTER 12 OBEYING GOD

Pages 59-62

The Laws of God 59-60

Be just and fair 60-61

Assist those around me 61-62

An obligation to warn people 62

The Laws of God 59-60

JEREMIAH 8:7

(adapted)

I accept the Laws of God.

JEREMIAH 6:18-19

(adapted)

I accept God’s Law.

AMOS 2:4

(adapted)

I accept the Laws of God: I obey God.

I am thoughtful and considerate and obey God.

HOSEA 8:1

(adapted)

I have kept God’s Treaty and obey his Laws.

ISAIAH 2:5

(adapted)

I walk in the Light of the Lord and I am obedient to his Laws.

JEREMIAH 9:13

(adapted)

I have retained (and kept) the Commandments of the Lord and obeyed his Laws.

ISAIAH 5:24

(adapted)

I have kept the Laws of God and honored the Word of the Holy One of Israel.

JEREMIAH 7:28

(adapted)

I obey the Lord my God; I am taught by him and continue to live in the truth.

JEREMIAH 5:4

(adapted)

I know the ways of God and I obey him.

ISAIAH 28:12

(adapted)

I have rest in my own land because I obey God and I am kind and good to other people.

HOSEA 10:13

(adapted)

I don't trust in a lie believing that military might and great armies can make a nation safe!

AMOS 5:14-15

(adapted)

I am good. I flee from evil – and I live! The Lord God of Heaven's Armies is truly my Helper. I hate evil and I love the good.

Be just and fair 60-61

AMOS 5:15

(adapted)

I remodel my life on justice; on doing justly (on treating people fairly).

AMOS 6:12

(adapted)

I sustain justice and do that which is good and right.

AMOS 3:10

(adapted)

I remember what it means to do right.

AMOS 5:7

(adapted)

“Righteousness” and “Fair Play” are real to me. (I am just and fair in all my dealings.)

AMOS 5:12

(adapted)

I like everything that is good; I don't take bribes; I give justice to the poor.

AMOS 5:24

(adapted)

I provide a mighty flood of justice – a torrent of doing good.

ISAIAH 5:7

(adapted)

I yield (and produce) a crop of justice with righteousness.

AMOS 2:6

(adapted)

I have not perverted justice by accepting bribes, and I have not sold into slavery the poor who can't repay their debts.

HOSEA 7:1

(adapted)

I am not a liar, a thief or a bandit. I tell the truth and practice honesty.

AMOS 5:10-11

(adapted)

I like honest judges! I admire people who tell the truth! I care for the poor.

JEREMIAH 5:28

(adapted)

I give justice to orphans and maintain the rights of the poor.

Assist those around me 61-62

ISAIAH 3:14

(adapted)

I assist the poor and helpless peasants.

AMOS 6:6

(adapted)

I help those around me.

ISAIAH 58:3-11

(adapted)

I am not living in evil pleasure even while I am fasting (that is; going without food). I am not oppressing my workers. I am not fighting and quarrelling. The kind of fasting (abstaining and refraining) that God wants from me is that I stop oppressing those who work for me and treat them fairly and give them what they earn. I share my food with the hungry and bring right into my own home those who are helpless, poor and destitute (moneyless). I clothe those who are cold and I don't hide from relatives who need my help. If I do these things, God will shed his own glorious light upon me. He will heal me; my godliness will lead me forward, and goodness will be a shield before me, and the glory of the Lord will protect me from behind. Then, when I call, the Lord will answer. "Yes, I am here," he will quickly reply.

All I need to do is to stop oppressing the weak, and to stop making false accusations and spreading vicious (wrong and malicious) rumors (that is; unproved statements).

I feed the hungry! I help those in trouble! My light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around me shall be as bright as day. The Lord guides me continually, and he satisfies me with all good things, and keeps me healthy too; and I am like a well watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring.

ISAIAH 33:10

But the Lord says, I will stand up and show my power and might.

ISAIAH 33:10 and 13-16 and 17

Listen to what I have done, O nations far away! And you that are near acknowledge my might! The sinners among my people (who disobey God's Laws) shake with fear. "Which one of us," they cry, "can live here in the presence of this all-consuming, Everlasting Fire?" I will tell you who can live here. All who are honest and fair, who reject making profit by fraud (criminal deception), who hold back their hands from taking bribes (gifts to corrupt and internally make rotten and pollute). All who refuse to listen to those who plot murder, who shut their eyes to all enticement (and attraction) to do wrong. These are the ones who shall live here. The rocks of the mountains will be their fortress; food will be supplied to them and they will have all the water they need.

Your eyes will see the king in his beauty, and the highlands of heaven far away.

JEREMIAH 22:15-16

He was just and fair in all his dealings. That is why God blessed him. He saw to it that justice and help were given to the poor and the needy and all went well for him. This is how a man lives close to God.

HABAKKUK 2:4

(adapted)

Note this: Wicked men trust themselves alone and fail; but the righteous man trusts in the Lord and lives!

ZECHARIAH 4:6

‘Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of heaven’s armies – you will succeed because of my Spirit, though you are few and weak.’

EZEKIEL 36:26-27

(adapted)

And I will give you a new heart (a new disposition) – I will give you new and right desires – and put a new spirit within you. I will take out your stony hearts of sin (which disobey God’s Laws) and give you new hearts of love. And I will put my Spirit within you so that you will obey my laws and do whatever I command.

An obligation to warn people 62

EZEKIEL 3:17-21

“Son of dust, I have appointed you as a watchman for Israel; whenever I send my people a warning, pass it on to them at once. If you refuse to warn the wicked when I want you to tell them, You are under the penalty of death, therefore repent (turn around, face God, and obey his laws instead) and save your life – they will die in their sins (for their disobedience of God’s Laws) but I will punish you. I will demand your blood for theirs. But if you warn them and they keep on sinning, and refuse to repent, they will die in their sins, but you are blameless – you have done all you could. And if a good man becomes bad, and you refuse to warn him of the consequences, and the Lord destroys him, his previous good deeds won’t help him – he shall die in his sin. But I will hold you responsible for his death, and punish you. But if you warn him and he repents, he shall live and you have saved your own life too.”

EZEKIEL 33:7-9

“So with you, son of dust. I have appointed you as a watchman for the people of Israel; therefore listen to what I say and warn them for me. When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man you will die!’ and you don’t tell him what I say, so that he does not repent (turn around, face God, and obey his Laws instead) – that wicked person will die in his sins (his disobedience of God’s Laws) but I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn him to repent and he doesn’t, he will die in his sins, and you will not be responsible.”

CHAPTER 13 THE COMING ONE

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The One you are looking for will come suddenly to his Temple 63  
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“Listen: I will send my messenger before me to prepare the way. And then the one you are looking for will come suddenly to his Temple – the Messenger of God’s promises, to bring you great joy. Yes, he is surely coming,” says the Lord of heaven’s armies. “But who can live when he appears? Who can endure his coming? For he is like a blazing fire refining precious metal and he can bleach the dirtiest garments!”

“Like a refiner of silver he will sit and watch closely as the dross (the scum, the waste part of molten metal of little or no value) is burned away. He will purify the Levites, the ministers of God, refining them like gold or silver, so that they will do their work for God with pure hearts. Then once more the Lord will enjoy the offerings brought to him by the people of Judah and Jerusalem, as he did before. At that time my punishments will be quick and certain; I will move swiftly against wicked men who trick the innocent, against adulterers, and liars, against all those who cheat their employees, or oppress widows and orphans, or defraud (cheat or swindle) strangers, and do not fear me,” says the Lord of heaven’s armies. “For I am the Lord – I do not change. That is why you are not already utterly destroyed [for my mercy (my compassion) endures for ever].”

Bethlehem, the birthplace of my King 63  
MICAH 5:2-5

O Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are but a small Judean village, yet you will be the birthplace of my King who is alive from everlasting ages past! God will abandon his people to their enemies until the time of Israel’s spiritual rebirth; then at last the exile remnants (remainders) of Israel will rejoin their brethren in their own land.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God, and his people shall remain there undisturbed, for he will be greatly honored all around the world. He will be our Peace.

ISAIAH 7:14

All right then, the Lord himself will choose the sign – a child shall be born to a virgin! And she shall call him Immanuel (meaning, “God is with us”).

For unto us a Child is born 63-64  
ISAIAH 9:2-7

The people who walk in darkness shall see a great Light – a Light that will shine on all those who live in the land of the shadow of death. For Israel will again be great, filled

with joy like that of reapers when the harvest time has come, and like that of men dividing up the plunder they have won. For God will break the chains that bind his people and the whip that scourges them, just as he did when he destroyed the vast host of the Midianites by Gideon's little band. In that glorious day of peace there will no longer be the issuing of battle gear; no more of blood-stained uniforms of war; all such will be burned.

For unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. These will be his royal titles: "Wonderful," "Counselor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," "The Prince of Peace." His ever-expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule with perfect fairness and justice from the throne of his father David. He will bring true justice and peace to all the nations of the world. This is going to happen because the Lord of heaven's armies has dedicated himself to do it!

Good News to the suffering and afflicted 64

ISAIAH 61:1-11

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the suffering and afflicted. He has sent me to comfort the broken-hearted, to announce liberty to captives and to open the eyes of the blind. He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of God's favor to them has come, and the day of his wrath (his anger) to their enemies. To all who mourn in Israel he will give:

Beauty for ashes;

Joy instead of mourning;

Praise instead of heaviness.

For God has planted them like strong and graceful oaks (forest trees bearing nuts or fruits of acorns) for his own glory.

And they shall rebuild the ancient ruins, repairing cities long ago destroyed, reviving them though they have lain there many generations. Foreigners shall be your servants; they shall feed your flocks and plough your fields and tend your vineyards. You shall be called priests of the Lord, ministers of our God. You shall be fed with the treasures of the nations and shall glory in their riches. Instead of shame and dishonor, you shall have a double portion of prosperity and everlasting joy.

For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and wrong. I will faithfully reward my people for their suffering and make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known and honored among the nations; all shall realize that they are a people God has blessed.

Let me tell you how happy God has made me! For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and draped about me the robe of righteousness. I am like a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride with her jewels. The Lord will show the nations of the world his justice; all will praise him. His righteousness shall be like a budding tree, or like a garden in early spring, full of young plants springing up everywhere.

The Lord our Righteousness 64-65

JEREMIAH 23:5-8

For the time is coming, says the Lord, when I will place a Righteous Branch upon King David's throne. He shall be a King who shall rule with wisdom and justice and cause righteousness to prevail everywhere throughout the earth.

And this is his name: *The Lord our Righteousness*. At that time Judah will be saved and Israel will live in peace.

In that day people will no longer say when taking an oath, "As the Lord lives who rescued the people of Israel from the land of Egypt," but they will say, "As the Lord lives who brought the Jews back to their own land of Israel from the countries to which he had exiled them."

ISAIAH 11:1- 9

The Royal Line of David will be cut off, chopped down like a tree; but from the stump will grow a Shoot –yes, a new Branch from the old root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and might; the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. His delight will be obedience to the Lord. He will not judge by appearance, false evidence, or hearsay (or rumor), but will defend the poor and the exploited (the cheated). He will rule against the wicked who oppress them. For he will be clothed with fairness and with truth.

In that day the wolf and the lamb will lie down together, and the leopard and goats will be at peace. Calves and fat cattle will be safe among lions, and a little child shall lead them all. The cows will graze among bears; cubs and calves will lie down together, and lions will eat grass like the cows. Babies will crawl safely among poisonous snakes, and a little child who puts his hand in a nest of deadly adders will pull it out unharmed. Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for as the waters fill the sea, so shall the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord.

David, my Servant – the Messiah, their King, their only Shepherd 65-66

EZEKIEL 37:24-28

"And David, my Servant – the Messiah – shall be their King, their only Shepherd; and they shall obey my laws and all my wishes. They shall live in the Land of Israel where their fathers lived, the land I gave my servant Jacob. They and their children after them shall live there, and their grandchildren, for all generations. And my Servant David, their Messiah, shall be their Prince forever.

And I will make a covenant of peace with them, an everlasting pact. I will bless them and multiply them and put my Temple among them forever. And I will make my home among them. Yes, I will be their God and they shall be my people. And when my Temple remains among them, then the nations shall know that I, the Lord, have set Israel apart for special blessings."

JEREMIAH 33:15-18 and 25-26

At that time I will bring to the throne the true Son of David, and he shall rule justly. In that day the people of Judah and Jerusalem shall live in safety and their motto (a saying adopted as a rule of conduct) will be, "The Lord is our Righteousness!" For the Lord declares that from then on, David shall forever have an heir (a person entitled to inherit property or rank, that is a position in relation to others) sitting on the throne of Israel. And there shall always be Levites to offer burnt offerings and meal offerings and sacrifices to the Lord.

But this is the Lord's reply: I would no more reject my people than I would change my laws of night and day, of earth and sky. I will never abandon the Jews, or David my servant, or change the plan that this Child will some day rule these descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Instead I will restore their prosperity and have mercy on them.

See my Servant, my Chosen One 66

ISAIAH 42:1-9

See my Servant, whom I uphold; My Chosen One, in whom I delight. I have put my Spirit upon him; he will reveal justice (fair treatment) to the nations of the world. He will be gentle – he will not shout or quarrel in the streets. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the dimly burning flame. He will encourage the faint hearted, those tempted to despair. He will see full justice given to all who have been wronged. He won't be satisfied until truth and righteousness prevail throughout the earth, nor until even distant lands beyond the seas have put their trust in him.

The Lord God who created the heavens and stretched them out and created the earth and everything in it, and gives life and breath and spirit to everyone in all the world, he is the one who says [to his Servant, the Messiah],

“I the Lord have called you to demonstrate my righteousness. I will guard and support you, for I have given you my people as the personal confirmation of my covenant with them. You shall also be a light to guide the nations unto me. You will open the eyes of the blind, and release those who sit in prison darkness and despair. I am the Lord! That is my name, and I will not give my glory to anyone else; I will not share my praise with carved idols. Everything I prophesied came true, and now I will prophesy again, I will tell you the future before it happens.”

ISAIAH 52:7-15

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those bring the happy news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns. The watchmen shout and sing with joy, for right before their eyes they see the Lord God bring his people home again. Let the ruins of Jerusalem break into joyful song, for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Go now, leave your bonds and slavery. Put Babylon and all it represents far behind you – it is unclean to you. You are the holy people of the Lord; purify yourselves (improve with moral goodness) all you who carry home the vessels of the Lord. You shall not leave in haste, running for your lives; for the Lord will go ahead of you, and he, the God of Israel, will protect you from behind.

See, my Servant shall prosper; he shall be highly exalted (raised up). Yet many shall be amazed when they see him – yes, even far-off foreign nations and their kings; they shall stand dumbfounded (amazed and confounded into silence), speechless in his presence. For they shall see and understand what they had not been told before. They shall see my Servant beaten and bloodied, so disfigured one would scarcely know it was a person standing there. So shall he cleanse (purify) many nations.

God's program shall succeed and prosper in his hands 66-67

ISAIAH 53:1-12

But, oh, how few believe it! Who will listen? To whom will God reveal his saving power? In God's eyes he was like a tender green shoot, sprouting from a root in dry and sterile (barren) ground. But in our eyes there was no attractiveness at all, nothing to make us want him. We despised (and looked down on) and rejected (and refused to accept) him – a man of sorrows (and distress), acquainted with bitterest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way when he went by. He was despised and we didn't care.

Yet it was *our* grief he bore, *our* sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, for his *own* sins! (for his *own* disobedience of God's Laws!) But he was wounded and bruised for *our* sins. He was chastised (and punished) that we might have peace; he was lashed – and we were healed! *We* are the ones who strayed away like sheep! *We*, who left God's paths to follow our own. Yet God laid on *him* the guilt (the wrongdoing) and sins (the breaking of God's Laws) of every one of us.

He was oppressed (and harassed) and he was afflicted (and endured pain and suffering) yet he never said a word. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he stood silent before the ones condemning him. From prison and trial they led him away to his death. But who among the people of that day realized it was their sins (their disobedience of God's Laws) that he was dying for – that he was suffering their punishment? He was buried like a criminal in a rich man's grave; but he had done no wrong, and had never spoken an evil word.

Yet it was the Lord's good plan to bruise him and fill him with grief. But when his soul had been made an offering for sin, then he shall have a multitude of children, many heirs (many people entitled to an inheritance).

He shall live again and God's program shall prosper in his hands. And when he sees all that is accomplished by the anguish (the great mental and bodily pain) of his soul, he shall be satisfied; and because of what he has experienced, my righteous Servant shall make many to be counted righteous before God, for he shall bear all their sins.

Therefore I will give him the honors of one who is mighty and great, because he has poured out his soul unto death. He was counted as a sinner, and he bore the sins of many, and he pleaded with God for sinners (all those who have disobeyed God's Laws).

The Sun of Righteousness and another Prophet like Elijah 67

MALACHI 4:1-6

"Watch now," the Lord of heaven's armies declares, "the day of judgment is coming, burning like a furnace (with great heat). The proud and wicked will be burned up like straw; like a tree, they will be consumed – roots and all."

"But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out of pasture. Then you will tread upon the wicked as ashes underfoot," says the Lord of heaven's armies. "Remember to obey the laws I gave all Israel through Moses my servant on Mount Horeb."

"See, I will send you another prophet like Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful (and horrible) judgment day of God. His preaching will bring fathers and children together again, to be of one mind and heart, for they will know that if they do not repent (that is turn around, face God, and obey my Laws instead), I will come and utterly destroy their land."

A Book of Remembrance 68

MALACHI 3:16-18

Then those who feared and loved the Lord spoke often of him to each other. And he had a Book of Remembrance drawn up in which he recorded the names of those who feared him (with the deepest respect and wonder) and loved to think about him.

“They shall be mine,” says the Lord of heaven’s armies, “in that day when I make up my jewels (my precious stones). And I will spare them as a man spares an obedient and dutiful (and respectful) son. Then you will see the difference between God’s treatment of good men and bad (men), between those who serve (and assist) him and those who don’t (serve and assist him).”

On Mount Zion, in Jerusalem 68

ISAIAH 25:1-12

O Lord, I will honor and praise your name, for you are my God; you do such wonderful things! You planned them long ago, and now you have accomplished them, just as you said! You turn mighty cities into heaps of ruins. The strongest forts are turned to rubble. Beautiful palaces in distant lands disappear and will never be rebuilt. Therefore strong nations will shake with fear before you; ruthless nations will obey and glorify (and honor) your name.

But to the poor, O Lord, you are a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, a shelter from merciless men (having no compassion) who are like driving rain that melts down an earthen wall.

As a hot, dry land is cooled by clouds, you will cool the pride of ruthless (pitiless) nations. Here on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, the Lord of heaven’s armies will spread a wonderful feast for everyone around the world – a delicious feast of good food, with clear, well-aged wine and choice beef. At that time he will remove the clouds of gloom (of sadness and depression), the pall (the dark cloud) of death that hangs over the earth; he will swallow up (consume and completely destroy) death forever.

The Lord God will wipe away all tears and take away forever all insults (abuse) and mockery (and ridicule) against his land and people. The Lord has spoken – he will surely do it!

In that day the people will proclaim, “This is our God, in whom we trust, for whom we waited. Now at last he is here.” What a day of rejoicing (of great happiness)! For the Lord’s good hand will rest upon Jerusalem, and Moab (east of the Dead Sea) will be crushed as straw beneath his feet and left to rot. God will push them down just as a swimmer pushes down the water with his hands. He will end their pride and all their evil works. The high walls of Moab will be demolished and brought to dust.

The Lord is coming to punish the people for their sins 68-69

(their disobedience of God’s Laws)

ISAIAH 26:1-21

Listen to them singing! In that day the whole land of Judah will sing this song:

“Our city is strong! We are surrounded by the walls of his salvation!” Open the gates to everyone, for all may enter in who love the Lord. He will keep in perfect peace all those who trust him, whose thoughts turn often to the Lord! Trust in the Lord God always, for in the Lord Jehovah is your everlasting strength. He humbles the proud and brings the

haughty (and arrogant) city to the dust; its walls come crashing down. He presents it to the poor and needy for their use.

But for the good men the path is not uphill and rough. God does not give them a rough and treacherous path, but smooths the road before them. O Lord, we love to do your will! Our hearts' desire is to glorify your name. All night long I search for you; earnestly I seek for God; for only when you come in judgment on the earth to punish it will people turn away from wickedness (all thoughts, speech and actions against God's Laws) and do what is right.

Your kindness to the wicked doesn't make them good; they keep on doing wrong and take no notice of your majesty (of your sovereignty). They do not listen when you threaten; they will not look to see your upraised fist. Show them how much you love your people. Perhaps then they will be ashamed! Yes, let them be burned up by the fire reserved for your enemies.

Lord, grant us peace; for all we have and are has come from you. O Lord our God, once we worshipped other gods; but now we worship you alone. Those we served before are dead and gone; never again will they return. You came against them and destroyed them, and they are long forgotten. O praise the Lord! He has made our nation very great. He has widened the boundaries of our land!

Lord, in their distress they sought for you. When your punishment was on them, they poured forth a whispered prayer. How we missed your presence, Lord! We suffered as a woman giving birth, who cries and writhes (and rolls about) in pain. We too have writhed in agony, but all to no avail (to no use or benefit). No deliverance has come from all our efforts. Yet we have this assurance: Those who belong to God shall live again. Their bodies shall rise again! Those who dwell in the dust shall awake and sing for joy! For God's light of life will fall like dew (moisture from the air) upon them.

Go home, my people, and lock the doors! Hide for a little while until the Lord's wrath (the Lord's anger) against your enemies has passed. Look! The Lord is coming from the heavens to punish the people of the earth for their sins (for their disobedience of God's Laws). The earth will no longer hide the murderers. The guilty will be found.

The Holy Highway 69-70

ISAIAH 35:1-10

Even the wilderness and desert will rejoice in those days; the desert will blossom with flowers. Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers and singing and joy! The deserts will become as green as the Lebanon Mountains, as lovely as Mount Carmel's pastures and Sharon's meadows; for the Lord will display his glory (and splendor) there, the excellency (the superiority) of our God.

With this news bring cheer (and encouragement) to all discouraged ones. Encourage those who are afraid. Tell them, "Be strong, fear not, for your God is coming to destroy your enemies. He is coming to save you. And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf. The lame (the crippled) man will leap up like a deer, and those who could not speak will shout and sing! Springs will burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. The parched ground will become a pool, with springs of water in the thirsty land. Where desert jackals (wild dogs) lived, there will be reeds and rushes!

And a main road will go through that once-deserted land; it will be named “The Holy Highway.” No evil hearted men may walk upon it. God will walk there with you; even the most stupid (the most foolish) cannot miss the way. No lion will lurk (and lie hidden) along its course, nor will there be any other dangers; only the redeemed (those set free from sin by God) will travel there. These, the ransomed (released from captivity) of the Lord, will go home along that road to Zion, singing the songs of everlasting joy. For them all sorrow and sighing will be gone forever; only joy and gladness will be there.

New Heavens and a New Earth 70

ISAIAH 65:16-25

And yet, the days will come when all who invoke (and pray) a blessing or take an oath shall swear by the God of Truth; for I will put aside my anger and forget the evil that you did. For see, I am creating new heavens and a new earth – so wonderful that no one will even think about the old ones any more. Be glad; rejoice forever in my creation. Look! I will recreate Jerusalem as a place of happiness, and her people shall be a joy (a delight)! And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and in my people; and the voice of weeping and crying shall not be heard there any more.

No longer will babies die when only a few days old; no longer will men be considered old at 100! Only sinners will die that young! In those days, when a man builds a house, he will keep on living in it – it will not be destroyed by invading armies as in the past. My people will plant vineyards and eat the fruit themselves – their enemies will not confiscate (and seize) it. For my people will live as long as trees and will long enjoy their hard-won gains. Their harvests will not be eaten by their enemies; their children will not be born to be cannon fodder (fighting men and women considered only as something to be used up in war). For they are the children of those the Lord has blessed (and made happy). I will answer them before they even call to me. While they are still talking to me about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers! The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw as the ox does, and poisonous snakes shall strike no more! In those days nothing and no one shall be hurt or destroyed in all my Holy Mountain, says the Lord.

These Scriptures came true today 70

LIKE 4:16-21

When Jesus came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on Saturday, and stood up to read the Scriptures. The book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him, and he opened it to the place where it says:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor; he has sent me to announce that captives shall be released and the blind shall see, that the downtrodden shall be freed from their oppressors, and that God is ready to give blessings to all who come to him.”

He closed the book and handed it back to the attendant and sat down, while everyone in the synagogue gazed at him intently. Then Jesus added, “These Scriptures came true today!”



