

WINDOWS ON THE  
PROPHECY OF ISAIAH



# WINDOWS ON THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

Study Tools for  
Understanding Isaiah

AVRAHAM GILEADI



HEBRAEUS PRESS

Windows on the Prophecy of Isaiah  
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Published in the United States of America

First Printing, 2015

Second Printing, 2016

Softcover ISBN 978-0-910511-33-0

E-Book ISBN 978-0-910511-34-9

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“They received the word with all readiness of mind,  
and searched the scriptures daily, whether  
those things were so” (Acts 17:11).



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## PART ONE

# KEY FEATURES OF THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

**B**asic concepts of the prophecy of Isaiah clear up much of the mystery surrounding this ancient text. They are brought to light when applying different modalities of literary analysis—structural, typological, and rhetorical—each of which offers its own unique insights and data.

### **1. Isaiah's Prophecy Relates to Two Time Frames Simultaneously**

The head of the rabbinic school where I studied in Jerusalem taught that Isaiah's writings apply to two different time frames simultaneously: (1) Isaiah's day; and (2) "the last days" or "end-time" (*ăḥărit hăyyamîm*). When I asked how he knew this he said he had no proof but that it was Jewish tradition. Years later, during my Ph.D. program, I discovered the proof in the holistic literary structures of the Book of Isaiah. These entirely change the rules for interpreting the book. *Linear structures* map out cycles of events covering many centuries of time, starting in Isaiah's day. Additionally—layered over them—are *synchronous structures*. They view the entire Book of Isaiah as a

single scenario. And the time frame of that scenario is indeed the last days or end-time.

That means we must readjust our thinking about the Book of Isaiah to know how its message relates to the end-time. Like John, Isaiah saw the end of the world in a vision. His synchronous literary structures transform his book into an *apocalyptic* prophecy. But because it is grounded in history—in the events of his day and soon thereafter—the question is, How do those ancient nations relate to the end-time? Do their names apply to the last days even when those nations no longer exist? The answer is that in an end-time context the ancient names function as *codenames*. That doesn't mean, however, that we should confuse them with nations that have the same names today, or that we should limit Isaiah's prophecy to the geography of Middle East.

In fact, the key to figuring out Isaiah's codenames is simple. Match Isaiah's descriptions of the nations that existed in his day with ones that exist in the world today. Egypt, for example, was the great superpower of Isaiah's day. Nevertheless at that time Egypt was spiraling into a spiritual, economic, and political downturn. Prior to that, Egypt had been a defense against the other great superpower—Assyria. Assyria was a militaristic nation from the North that sought to conquer the then-known world. Indeed, it eventually succeeded in doing so. Isaiah, therefore, uses Assyria's destruction of the ancient world as an allegory of an end-time destruction. What happened in the past will happen again, only this time it will be with a new "Assyria" and a new "Egypt."

The same holds true for other nations and persons that play end-time roles. How Isaiah *characterizes* them tells us who they are. Just as a new "Assyria" and "Egypt" appear as two opposing political entities, so a new "Babylon" and "Zion" appear as two opposing spiritual entities. Isaiah defines Babylon structurally as both a people and place: a world ripening in wickedness and its corrupt inhabitants. These, God destroys as he did Sodom



and Gomorrah. Isaiah defines Zion, too, as both a people and place: those who repent of doing evil and who return from exile in an end-time exodus to Zion. By means of such literary definitions Isaiah accounts for all peoples in the world. It would thus be a mistake to assume his writings refer mostly to Jews.

## **2. Isaiah's Covenant Theology Parallels Emperor–Vassal Treaties**

We may be tempted to think of the Hebrew prophets as innovators of ideas comparable, say, to the Greek philosophers of antiquity. The prophets, however, didn't try to figure out life by their powers of reasoning, although they taught many eminently reasonable ideas. Rather, they established a spiritual heritage based on revelations from God, Creator of the heavens and the earth. Upon that foundation they built and expanded their understanding of God, of humanity, and of eternity. Still, a seeming exception to these divine origins is the ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal paradigm the prophets use to define God's relationship with his people. Because the emperor–vassal model is central to Israel's covenant theology, could it too have originated with God?

Emperor–vassal relationships of the ancient Near East consisted of an emperor appointing a vassal or vassals to rule under his jurisdiction in his empire. The emperor assigned each vassal a part of his empire over which to rule as king. Comprised of a city-state with adjoining towns and villages, this “promised land” became the vassal's by virtue of his treaty or covenant with the emperor. The covenant was conditional, however, on whether the vassal remained loyal to the emperor and didn't change his allegiance to another emperor. In treaty language, the vassal was said to “love” the emperor if he kept his commandments or the terms of the covenant. Blessings or curses followed the vassal's obedience or disobedience, respectively, to the covenant's terms.

As a “king of kings” and “lord of lords,” the emperor protected the vassal by rallying his hosts in defense of a loyal vassal who faced a mortal threat. Called the “common enemy” of the emperor and the vassal, anyone threatening the vassal with death would be annihilated. Over time, when a vassal proved loyal to the emperor under all conditions, the emperor legally adopted him as his “son.” At that point, the relationship between emperor and vassal changed from a “lord–servant” to a “father–son” relationship. Before that, the vassal’s covenant with the emperor had been *conditional*—it had depended on whether the vassal remained loyal to the emperor. Now, the covenant became *unconditional* or “forever” and the blessed heritage of his posterity.

The emperor protected the people of the vassal when the vassal kept law of the emperor and the vassal’s people kept the law of the vassal. That was the idea behind Israel’s elders asking for a king when Israel faced grave peril at the hands of the Philistines. God’s covenant with King David, which followed, functioned primarily as a means for obtaining God’s protection. Under its terms, the king became God’s vassal and God became Israel’s emperor. We see the protection clause of the Davidic Covenant operating in the Book of Isaiah when King Hezekiah and his people face a mortal threat by an invading Assyrian army of 185,000 men. When Hezekiah keeps God’s law and the people keep Hezekiah’s law, the angel of God slays the Assyrian host in one night.

### **3. Isaiah Uses Historical Precedents as *Types* of Things to Come**

Have you wondered whether the Hebrew prophets wrote down revelations precisely as God gave them, or whether they added their own thoughts and ideas? Isaiah, for example, was a literary genius as well as an inspired prophet of God. His writings exhibit many layered literary devices. These mechanics of prophesying show an amazing deliberation in how he

## KEY FEATURES OF THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

organized his revelations. As their intent was to communicate the most truth in as few words as possible, Isaiah used all literary forms of the ancient Near East, adapting them for his own prophetic purpose. Although he built on the foundation of previous prophets, he exceeded those before and after. Some say there lived more than one “Isaiah.” However, his book’s layered literary features refute that.

One literary technique Isaiah uses is to predict end-time events that resemble ancient events. In fact, Isaiah limits himself to that method of prophesying. In that way, his predictions stay grounded in the Hebrew prophetic tradition and always appear familiar. In practice, it means that whatever set a precedent in the past may qualify as a *type* or pattern of the future. Upon such types Isaiah builds his predictions. When he mentions an ancient person or nation by name, for example, that person or nation set a precedent that typifies something in the end-time. We say history repeats itself. But because not everything that happened in the past follows this pattern, Isaiah uses history selectively, depending on whether he knows something similar is going to occur again.

More than thirty new versions of ancient events appear in Isaiah’s writings, repeating every *major* event in Israel’s history. Although Isaiah disperses their predictions throughout his book, he interconnects them like dominos. One passage, for example, may contain a combination of several events while another will use a different combination. In the end, all are accounted for—a new chaos, creation, paradise, Sodom-and-Gomorra destruction, bondage, passover, exodus, wandering in the wilderness, conquest of the land, inheritance of the land, rebuilding of the temple, and so forth. Although all these events re-occur, their order differs as the world relives Israel’s history in one grand end-time scenario. Indeed, that very scenario is what defines the “end-time.”

This repetition of history as Isaiah predicts it involves all of humanity. But it isn’t Isaiah’s scenario. Unlike human

prognosticators—who have little or no idea of what lies ahead—Israel’s God foretells “the end from the beginning” (Isaiah 46:10). He orchestrates human history in such a way that the end is contained *in* the beginning. The former events he brought to pass, in other words, foreshadow end-time events. That capability, says Israel’s God, proves his divinity. When those ancient events re-occur, people will have no further excuse for not minding Isaiah’s warning. In fact, a reassuring thing about prior persons and events typifying future ones is that they help discern counterfeits—things that aren’t of God, that deviate from the patterns of the past.

#### **4. Isaiah’s Characterization of People Reveals Seven Spiritual Levels**

Would it surprise you to know that people who appear in Isaiah’s writings aren’t simply incidental to the story? Although Isaiah portrays real people who lived in his day, these also typify people who perform similar, end-time roles. In addition, they exemplify different spiritual categories. We observe, for example, that at times Isaiah uses the paired names “Jacob” and “Israel” to refer to God’s covenant people, while at other times he uses the paired names “Zion” and “Jerusalem.” What is the difference? Look closer and you will discover that the names Jacob and Israel depict a materialistic category of God’s people. Their idolatry makes them spiritually blind. They need waking up or they won’t survive God’s Day of Judgment that is coming upon the world.

In fact, people in the Jacob/Israel category are liable to descend even lower—to Babylon, a category of oppressors and evildoers. Others ascend to Zion/Jerusalem, a category of people who repent of evil, who prove faithful when God tests their loyalties. As they do so, God forgives their sins and acknowledges them as his covenant people. Isaiah further tells what happens in the end when the world polarizes into two camps. In God’s Day of

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Judgment, all who belong to the Babylon category perish from the earth. God delivers only Zion/Jerusalem and levels higher. Caught in between, the Jacob/Israel category disappears as all middle ground vanishes. People on that level face the choice of either ascending to Zion/Jerusalem or descending to Babylon.

Categories higher than Zion/Jerusalem include God's "servants" and "sons." By serving God in individual covenant relationships, some in the Zion/Jerusalem category ascend to the next spiritual level. An entire category of servants and sons, for example, emerges as a result of the mission of God's end-time servant who prepares the way for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth. As a temporal savior, the servant delivers them in a new exodus from among all nations to Zion—just as Moses delivered Israel out of Egypt to the Promised Land. God's servants and sons ascend from having a *conditional* covenant relationship with Israel's God, their emperor. As they prove loyal under all conditions, their covenants turn *unconditional* and they become his elect.

Still, things don't end there. Above sons/servants are seraphs/saviors, who act as angelic emissaries. And above them is Jehovah, the God of Israel and King of Zion. Isaiah depicts each ascent on this spiritual ladder as a rebirth or re-creation of the person who ascends. Each ascent involves the candidate's receiving a new name and an appointment to a higher spiritual ministry. With each ascent, a candidate keeps a higher law relating to a higher covenant. Each ascent, moreover, involves a temporary descent. That occurs when God tests the loyalties of the candidate through a series of trials of increasing intensity. Such trials often come at the hands of descending categories of people. The lowest equates with Perdition, people who devise and orchestrate evil.

## 5. Isaiah Presents Two Different Kinds of Messianic Prophecies

Many people assume that all messianic prophecies are equal. However, that isn't the case. There are important differences. Why do we suppose Jews and Christians don't see eye to eye on the matter of a Messiah? The Jews know their scriptures well. Messianic prophecies originated with them. Their brightest minds and most devoted scholars have diligently analyzed the writings of the prophets and transmitted them faithfully down the generations. Christians, on the other hand, who are identified with the Gentiles, didn't produce these prophecies. Yet Christians often act as if believing in Jesus as their Messiah is all that matters—as if that gives them the right to expropriate the Jewish scriptures and teach as gospel whatever interpretation suits them in the moment.

Look closer and you will find that Isaiah speaks of two separate individuals and of two distinct messianic roles. One is temporal, the other spiritual. Note also the *context* in which a prophecy appears. Taking things out of context is another thing Gentiles do. Let us say God is speaking about his “servant” in one instance and about his “son” in another. And yet, the context in each case is Israel's end-time restoration, an event that is *temporal* in nature. In that case, God isn't speaking about two different persons but just one. Especially as the terms “servant” and “son” together, not separately, define a vassal's relationship to his overlord. As with Moses, moreover, God doesn't call multiple prophets to guide and direct his people all at the same time but just one.

Let us also say we discover that Isaiah prophesies profusely about Israel's end-time restoration, in which God's servant and son releases people from bondage, unites Israel's tribes, conquers enemies, and so forth. But because Isaiah limits himself to using *types* from the past to predict the end-time, where would he find the type of just one person in the past doing all those things? None exists. In that case, Isaiah creates *composites*

of types, in which a single end-time leader accomplishes what several leaders did in the past. When restoring God's people, moreover, God's servant and son not only does what they did, he also exemplifies their character traits. That is why Isaiah depicts him as a composite of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Hezekiah, and Cyrus.

You may suppose that Cyrus' mention by name doesn't fit that pattern. But look closer and observe that Isaiah's "Cyrus" was never a purely historical person but is itself a *composite* figure. It combines the types of Cyrus and Moses in one instance (Isaiah 44:27–28) and of Cyrus and David in another (Isaiah 45:1). In fact, only in Isaiah 53:1–10—in which God is *not* speaking of his servant and son—do we find a prophecy of a *spiritual* Messiah. Unlike God's servant and son who prepares a people for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth, the figure Isaiah depicts in Isaiah 53:1–10 is Jehovah himself. A literary structure that juxtaposes the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14 with the King of Zion in Isaiah 52–53 identifies him as Israel's God, the King of Zion.

## **6. Isaiah Uses Metaphors as Aliases of Important End-Time Persons**

I sat spellbound as a rabbi taught that the clean animals Isaiah mentions allude to God's people Israel and the unclean to Gentiles. This gave new meaning to the ox and the ass and the millennial idea of harmony between the lamb and the lion. Although I don't recall much of what the rabbi taught, he planted a seed that bore good fruit. Later, I discovered a network of synonymous parallel lines in the Book of Isaiah that figuratively depict one thing to mean another. A single verse could have multiple meanings: *trees* could represent people, *forests* represent cities, *mountains* represent nations, and so forth. Key end-time persons, I found, personified God's attributes, such as *righteousness* and *light*, on the one hand, and *anger* and *wrath*, on the other.

But why would Isaiah resort to such indirect ways of speaking? First, when predicting the end-time Isaiah confines himself to using precedents from the past as *types*. Where no such types exist, therefore, he must find other ways to say what he wants. Second, Isaiah doesn't spell out everything. Only persons who deeply search his words and believe them will get his meaning. Third, his often seemingly incoherent writings protect them and those who understand them from prejudiced casual readers. Still, the method Isaiah uses limits him. Where will he find types from the past for what occurs in the end-time in instances where nothing like it happened before? Isaiah overcomes that obstacle by turning to metaphors—terms that function as pseudonyms or aliases.

Isaiah knows that God's people have never before returned out of bondage from the four parts of the earth. Nor have they overthrown a world superpower like Assyria. Isaiah can predict those very things, however, within the context of Israel's past. He has seen, for example, that events before Jehovah's coming will involve two principal human actors: (1) a tyrannical king of Assyria—a destroyer; and (2) God's servant and son—a deliverer. Whenever necessary, therefore, Isaiah can refer to these persons by means of aliases. Terms such as *ensign, hand, rod, staff, mouth, voice, fire, and sword* designate either individual, depending on the context. Each personifies those things. Terms such as *light* and *darkness*, on the other hand, set these two opponents apart.

Ancient Near Eastern mythology provides an additional source that Isaiah draws on. In the Ugaritic myth of Baal and Anath, for example, the terms *Sea* and *River* describe a god of chaos, an enemy Baal must conquer. These terms, therefore, suit Isaiah's purpose as aliases of the king of Assyria. God's raising his *staff* over the *Sea* and his *hand* over the *River*, for example, signifies a victory by God's end-time servant and son (his *staff* and *hand*) over the king Assyria (*Sea/River*). Personifying God's *anger* and *wrath*, this evil ruler acts as a *rod*



and *staff* to punish the wicked. In the end, however, God's servant and son—his righteous *rod* and *staff*—breaks him. The key to these identities appears in the paralleled lines that establish these terms' dual meanings.

### **7. Isaiah's End-Time Scenario Resembles an Archetypal Fairytale**

You may wonder what Isaiah's writings and fairytales have in common. The answer is, Nearly everything. Their common goal is that the bride and groom will live happily ever after in a heavenly palace that is also earthly. To get there, however, the hero and heroine must pass through hazards. They must learn to follow the higher wisdom that is offered them, not their own. They must trust that if they do so then at some point their fortunes will be reversed. The hard times that befell them, the abuses and reproach they suffered to assuage others' guilt—all will then appear for what it was: an experience necessary for them to attain their goal. Without it, they couldn't have reached it. Indeed, looking back at their lives, they wouldn't want to change anything.

As in fairytales, the path to a glorious eternal life may also be a trail of tears. A seven-part structure of the Book of Isaiah demonstrates this. Its seven pairs of opposite themes show the way everlasting happiness is attained: ruin may come before rebirth, suffering before salvation, humiliation before exaltation, disinheritance before inheritance, and so forth. And not just once but cyclically each time a person ascends to a higher spiritual plane. All depends on whether a candidate yields to a higher power, on whether he or she follows divine counsel in the midst of a temporary descent. If so, the result will indeed be endless joy in a heavenly place for the bride and groom. As in fairytales, however, not all are willing to pay the price, even for that glorious end.

In Isaiah's end-time scenario, the Virgin Daughter of Zion is the heroine of the story. She represents those who

repent of evil and prove loyal to Israel's God under all conditions. She marries Jehovah, her bridegroom, by an "everlasting covenant" at the time he comes to reign on the earth. As King of Zion, he attains his glory by following the same pattern he establishes for his people. When paying the price of redeeming his bride, he too experienced ruin, suffering, humiliation, disinheritance, and so forth. Because his ascent to glory is greater than all, however, his temporary descent is greater also. Like Jehovah, moreover, certain servants and sons of God also wed the Virgin Zion. Suffering in the similitude of their Redeemer, they likewise attain endless joy.

Opposing God's servants and sons is the tyrannical king of Assyria, an end-time Antichrist. He resembles the ogre or giant who plays the villain in fairytales. The Harlot Babylon, on the other hand—who matches the witch or wicked stepmother—oppresses the Virgin Zion. To the rescue come angelic emissaries, the equivalent of fairy godfathers and godmothers. Their divine powers help turn the tide of evil. In the end, a polarization of peoples occurs in the world. A majority of humanity—the equivalent of ugly stepsisters—takes sides against the Virgin Zion. All who hate her, however, are doomed to perish. Only those who love her inherit the earth when it gains its paradisiacal glory. Only they live happily ever after during the earth's millennial age of peace.

## PART TWO

# ISAIAH'S LAYERED LITERARY STRUCTURES

Literary structures are a way of organizing the content and carry their own message over and above what appears on the surface. Analyzing structures reveals the underlying themes and concepts of the Book of Isaiah. Its layered holistic structures attest to a single author—Isaiah.

### **1. Antithetical Themes of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure**

Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure divides the Book of Isaiah into two halves of thirty-three chapters each. Seven pairs of antithetical themes in the first half parallel seven pairs of the same antithetical themes in the second half. Within that structural arrangement, Isaiah establishes prophetic and theological concepts that deeply impact the book's message, particularly as it relates to the end-time (see Avraham Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah*, Hebraeus Press, 2nd ed., 2012).

## WINDOWS ON THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

Ruin & Rebirth (Isaiah 1–5; 34–35)

Rebellion & Compliance (Isaiah 6–8; 36–40)

Punishment & Deliverance (Isaiah 9–12; 41–46)

Humiliation & Exaltation (Isaiah 13–23; 47)

Suffering & Salvation (Isaiah 24–27; 48–54)

Disloyalty & Loyalty (Isaiah 28–31; 55–59)

Disinheritance & Inheritance (Isaiah 32–33; 60–66)

The above seven pairs of antithetical themes reveal a divine pattern in which ruin precedes rebirth, punishment precedes deliverance, humiliation precedes exaltation, suffering precedes salvation, and disinheritance precedes inheritance. This shows that to ascend to higher spiritual levels a person or nation of God's people must descend through trials, prove loyal to God under all conditions, and comply with his law and word while resisting the temptation to be disloyal or rebel.

According to this pattern, the higher a person or nation ascends spiritually, the greater the preceding descent through trials that test their loyalty. In each case, a higher law and word of God must be observed in order to ascend further. Every ascent is characterized by God's re-creating the candidate nearer to his own image and likeness. It is accompanied by the candidate's receiving a new name pertaining to the new spiritual level and by an appointment to a higher spiritual calling.

As a synchronous holistic structure—in which all parts of the text interconnect concurrently or *synchronously*—Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure transforms the entire Book of Isaiah into an apocalyptic or end-time prophecy. In that sense, Israel's ancient history, as selectively represented in the Book of Isaiah, functions as an allegory of the end-time, in which the names of ancient persons and nations act as codenames of persons and nations that exist at the end of the world.

**2. Trouble at Home, Exile Abroad,  
Happy Homecoming**

A three-part literary structure resembling early Egyptian narrative patterns, Trouble at Home, Exile Abroad, and Happy Homecoming functions like a three-act play in which the people of God (1) break their covenant with him; (2) are cast out of their Promised Land; and (3) finally return, renewed and reconstituted. As a linear holistic structure, Trouble at Home, Exile Abroad, and Happy Homecoming follows a timeline reaching from Isaiah's day to the end of the world.

Israel in its Homeland Rebels against God  
(Isaiah 1–39)

God Disperses Israel among the Nations  
(Isaiah 40–54)

Israel's Elect Remnant Returns from Exile  
(Isaiah 55–66)

A national consciousness pervades the first part of this threefold structure as Israel dwells in the land God promised Israel's ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. A universal consciousness pervades the second part as Israel's twelve tribes spread throughout the earth, populating new lands and intermarrying with other nations. An individual consciousness pervades the third part as only persons who renew God's covenant respond to his end-time summons to return home.

A redeeming aspect of Israel's dispersion among the nations of the world is that through the assimilation and intermingling of Israelite lineages with gentile or non-Israelite peoples, all nations of the world can now lay claim to Israel's covenantal heritage. Repentant persons of all nations, in other words, may renew the covenant with the God of Israel and reap its abundant blessings. God thus turns evil to good on behalf of those who love him and desire to serve him.

### 3. Apostasy, Judgment, Restoration, Salvation

A four-part structure based on a literary pattern in the Ugaritic myth of Baal and Anath conveys a Hebrew prophetic message. As a linear holistic structure, Apostasy, Judgment, Restoration, and Salvation connects Israel's ancient apostasy and judgment with its end-time restoration and salvation, showing that the history of Israel's twelve-tribed kingdom doesn't conclude with its demise by the Assyrian and Babylonian empires but that it resumes in the end-time.

God's People Break His Law and Word  
(Isaiah 1–9)

God Empowers the Archtyrant against His People  
(Isaiah 10–34)

God's Servant Restores God's Repentant People  
(Isaiah 35–59)

God's Elect People Inherit the Millennial Age  
(Isaiah 60–66)

This same fourfold cycle additionally occurs *as* an end-time phenomenon, reflecting an *end-time* apostasy, judgment, restoration, and salvation of God's covenant people. Numerous mini-cycles of apostasy, judgment, restoration, and salvation in the Book of Isaiah further show how Israel's God deals with his people collectively and individually when they transgress his law and word and he attempts to convince them to repent so that he may restore them to a state of blessedness.

As a divine pattern on an *individual* level, a person may suffer God's judgments in life that are a consequence of transgressing his law and word. When those undesirable effects of personal choices influence one to return to God, on the other hand, it is often the kind intervention of a friend whom God sends into one's life that provides the final push toward

returning to God. Whichever part a person plays in this theological cycle of life, God is in the details.

#### 4. Covenant Curses and Covenant Blessings

A two-part structure resembling the curses and blessings of Hittite and Assyrian emperor–vassal treaties consists of covenant curses that predominate in the first part of the Book of Isaiah and covenant blessings that predominate in the second. The blessings and curses of the Sinai Covenant enumerated in Deuteronomy 28 follow the same pattern, except that Moses cites first the blessings, then the curses. All depends on whether Israel keeps or breaks God's law and word.

God's People Suffer the Consequences of Wickedness  
(Isaiah 1–39)

God's People Enjoy the Fruits of Righteousness  
(Isaiah 40–66)

In the end-time context of the Book of Isaiah, God's people have transgressed his law and word that are the terms of the Sinai Covenant and they now come under condemnation. Only those who repent and renew the covenant with Israel's God ultimately experience its blessings. Exceptions to the curses/blessings pattern occur: even when people collectively suffer the curses, God delivers the righteous; and even when they collectively enjoy the blessings, the wicked remain cursed.

People's *individual* lives that manifest patterns of covenant blessings and curses, on the other hand, vary so widely that one cannot judge another's fortune or misfortune as a blessing or curse. Instances of transgressing God's covenant followed by curses, for example, may be compounded by inherited generational "iniquities" or dysfunctional patterns that factor into one's standing before God. Likewise, a person's prosperity serves as no indicator of personal righteousness.

### 5. Isaiah's Zion Ideology of Proxy Salvation

A literary pattern possessing Jebusite roots—possibly dating to Melchizedek king of Salem—involves the end-time mediatory role of a descendant of David. Called Zion ideology, it consists of (1) God's destruction of the wicked; (2) his deliverance of the righteous; and (3) the intercession of a Davidic king. A historical precedent occurs when an angel of God slays an Assyrian army of 185,000 men besieging Jerusalem at King Hezekiah intercession on behalf of his people.

God Destroys the Wicked of His People and the Nations  
(Isaiah 1–39)

A Davidic King Intercedes on Behalf a Repentant Remnant  
(Isaiah 36–38)

God Delivers the Righteous of his People and the Nations  
(Isaiah 40–66)

This scenario reoccurs at the end of the world when enemies threaten God's people with death. At that point, the curses of his covenant with the king—God's end-time servant—come on those who threaten him and his people. Forty mini-patterns of Zion ideology appear in the Book of Isaiah in which the word *Zion* or its equivalent occurs in conjunction with (1) the destruction of the wicked; (2) the deliverance of the righteous; and (3) a codename or alias of God's servant.

Based on the protection clause of the Davidic Covenant—God's covenant with King David and his heirs—all with whom Israel's God makes *individual* covenants on the model of his covenant with David may similarly obtain his divine protection of those who are theirs as a universal principle. God saved Abraham's nephew Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for Abraham's sake, for example; but he saved Lot's family for Lot's sake (Genesis 19:12, 29).



**6. Test One, Test Two, Test Three**

Three major tests try the loyalties of God's end-time people: (1) an archtyrant who conquers the world and demands all peoples' allegiance in the pattern of the ancient kings of Assyria and Babylon; (2) an end-time equivalent of the ancient Babylonian empire, whose socio-economic structure was grounded in the manufacture and sale of idols or false gods; and (3) ecclesiastical leaders who excommunicate and disfel-lowship God's servants for their zeal and love of the truth.

The Archtyrant Demands All People's Allegiance  
(Isaiah 1-38)

Babylon's Idols Seduce People away from God  
(Isaiah 39-48)

Ecclesiastical Leaders Persecute God's Servants  
(Isaiah 49-66)

The three tests parallel three tests to which the Greek gods of myth subject Odysseus: (1) the one-eyed Cyclops who attempts to take Odysseus captive resembles the king of Assyria/Babylon, an end-time Antichrist; (2) the sirens who seek to seduce Odysseus compare with Babylon and its idols; and (3) the false suitors of Odysseus' wife, who waste his substance during his absence and who challenge him on his return, resemble leaders who abuse their ecclesiastical authority.

God's children who compromise liberty and "make peace" with the archtyrant "weep bitterly" in the end when their hopes are dashed (Isaiah 33:7-9; 36:16). Those blind and deaf who "trust in idols and esteem their images as gods retreat in utter confusion" when God empowers foreign enemies against them (Isaiah 42:17-18). Persons whom their ecclesiastical leaders "abhor" and "exclude" for the truth's sake (Isaiah 66:5) God exalts in the end (Isaiah 61:7-9; 65:13-15).

## 7. The Servant–Tyrant Parallelism

A literary pattern contrasting the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14 with the King of Zion in Isaiah 52–53 in a series of twenty-one antithetical verses identifies the suffering figure of Isaiah 53:1–10 with the King of Zion of Isaiah 52:7, showing they are the same person (*Literary Message of Isaiah*, 173–79, 211–24). Depicting his descent phase through trials and afflictions that precedes his ascent phase as King of Zion, this literary configuration attests to one divine Savior.

The King of Babylon Exalts Himself and Is Humiliated  
(Isaiah 14)

The King of Zion Suffers Humiliation and Is Exalted  
(Isaiah 52–53)

Differentiating the King of Babylon from the King of Zion is his exalting himself in order to become “like the Most High [God].” Pursuing a counterfeit of glory, he ends up being cast into the lowest Pit (Isaiah 14:13–15). The King of Zion, on the other hand, consents to being judged as the lowest of men while serving as a proxy savior to his people (Isaiah 53:3–10). This pattern defines the true path to glory and infers that the King of Zion becomes like the Most High God.

As humanity’s preeminent exemplars of righteousness and wickedness, the King of Zion and King of Babylon constitute role models that all people follow either for good or for evil. Manifestations of pride—as in exalting oneself over others in thought, word, or deed—inevitably lead to humiliation. And vice versa: a humble attitude—as in acknowledging one’s nothingness before God and complete dependence on him for all things—is a prerequisite for ascent to glory.

## PART THREE

# SEVEN SPIRITUAL LEVELS OF HUMANITY

People depicted in the Book of Isaiah are more than characters who feature incidentally in ancient and end-time events. They additionally typify spiritual categories discernible by how they relate to Israel's God. Each informs us who we are from his perspective—what defines us.

### **1. Perdition—A Spiritual Point of No Return**

*Abstract:* The orchestrators of evil in the world who make up this lowest category of people retain no hope of returning to God's good graces. The path they choose in life crosses the line into pure wickedness, perfidy, and depravity. Their conscious deliberation to wreak chaos in the earth flies in the face of all they pretend to be, as likely few people perceive the depth of their commitment to evil. Seeking power and riches to the detriment of the rest of humanity, they routinely deceive and manipulate people even as they murder and perpetrate the cruelest injustices in order to accomplish their self-serving ends. For such, there exists no hope of a resurrection as beyond

death their spirits decay away in unrelenting torment in the Pit of Dissolution until they cease to exist.

At the top of the list of these antichrist types is the king of Assyria, also known as the king of Babylon—a title ancient Assyrian conquerors of Babylon applied to themselves. Because Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure transforms the entire Book of Isaiah into an apocalyptic prophecy, this king figure refers to an end-time archtyrant whom God sends against his covenant people to punish them for their wickedness in a time of apostasy: "Hail the Assyrian, the rod of my anger! He is a staff—my wrath in their hand. I will commission him against a godless nation, appoint him over the people [deserving] of my vengeance, to pillage for plunder, to spoliage for spoil, to tread underfoot like mud in the streets. Nevertheless, it shall not seem so to him; this shall not be what he has in mind. His purpose shall be to annihilate and to exterminate nations not a few" (Isaiah 10:5–7).

In the pattern of ancient Assyrian world conquerors, the end-time "king of Assyria" invades all lands, conquers a corrupt world, and boasts of his exploits without acknowledging God as the one who empowers him: "He said, 'I have done it by my own ability and shrewdness, for I am ingenious. I have done away with the borders of nations, I have ravaged their reserves, I have vastly reduced the inhabitants. I have impounded the wealth of peoples like a nest, and I have gathered up the whole world as one gathers abandoned eggs; not one flapped its wings, or opened its mouth to utter a peep.' Shall an axe exalt itself above the one who hews with it, or a saw vaunt itself over him who handles it? As though the rod wielded him who lifts it up! As though the staff held up the one who is not made of wood! Therefore will the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, send a consumption into his fertile lands, and cause a fire to flare up like a burning hearth, to undermine his glory: the Light of Israel will be the fire and their Holy One the flame, and it shall

burn up and devour his briars and thorns in a single day” (Isaiah 10:13–17).

The king of Assyria conquers even the great world superpower Egypt and sets his sights on a righteous remnant of God’s people, claiming he will make short work of them also: “Whom have you mocked and ridiculed? Against whom have you raised your voice, lifting your eyes to high heaven? Against the Holy One of Israel! By your servants you have blasphemed my Lord. You thought, ‘On account of my vast chariotry I have conquered the highest mountains, the farthest reaches of Lebanon. I have felled its tallest cedars, its choicest cypresses. I have reached its loftiest summit, its finest forest. I have dug wells and drunk of foreign waters. With the soles of my feet I have dried up all Egypt’s rivers!’ Have you not heard how I ordained this thing long ago, how in days of old I planned it? Now I have brought it to pass. You were destined to demolish fortified cities, [turning them] into heaps of rubble, while their timorous inhabitants shrank away in confusion, becoming as wild grass, transiently green, or like weeds on a roof that scorch before they grow up. But I know where you dwell, and your comings and goings, and how stirred up you are against me. And because of your snortings and bellowings against me, which have mounted up to my ears, I will put my ring in your nose and my bit in your mouth and turn you back by the way you came” (Isaiah 37:23–29; compare 36:1–20).

Like the ancient gods of myth, he ascends to what appears to be a space station, from which he rules the earth. But even from there he is cast down, his spirit condemned to the Pit of Dissolution, there to suffer for his genocidal crimes against humanity: “You who commanded the nations have been hewn down to earth! You said in your heart, ‘I will rise in the heavens and set up my throne above the stars of God; I will seat myself in the mount of assembly [of the gods], in the utmost heights or Zaphon. I will ascend above the altitude of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High [God]!’ But you have been

brought down to Sheol, to the utmost depths of the Pit. Those who catch sight of you stare at you, wondering, ‘Is this the man who made the earth shake and kingdoms quake, who turned the world into a wilderness, demolishing its cities, permitting not his captives to return home?’” (Isaiah 14:12–17; compare 38:17).

As the exemplar of oppressors and evildoers, the king of Assyria joins other world tyrants in hell, a place the wicked cannot escape: “Sheol cannot praise you, nor death glorify you; those who go down into the Pit have no [further] hope of your faithfulness” (Isaiah 38:18); “Tophet has been prepared of old, [a hearth] indeed, made ready for rulers; broad and deep is its fire pit and ample its pyre; Jehovah’s breath burns within it like a river of lava” (Isaiah 30:33). The spirits of the wicked in that place serve as a reminder to all humanity of the consequences of defying God: “And they shall go out and look upon the corpses of the people who transgressed against me, whose worms do not die and whose fire shall not be extinguished. They shall be a horror to all flesh” (Isaiah 66:24).

Unlike persons who repent of doing evil, Perdition types never rise above their damned state. Even the memory of them ultimately vanishes with them: “O Jehovah, our God, lords other than you have ruled over us, but you alone we recall by name. They are dead, to live no more, spirits who will not resurrect; you appoint them to destruction, wiping out all recollection of them” (Isaiah 26:13–14).

## **2. Babylon/Chaldea—Idolaters and Evildoers**

*Abstract:* Taking their name from ancient Babylon, the inveterate idolaters and oppressors of humanity in this category labor in a state of moral turpitude without making the effort to pull themselves out of their spiritual morass. Having bought into this world’s standard of values, they evidence little awareness of a higher reality that includes a divine Creator and Redeemer.

Like the Perdition category, they are in a process of de-creation, as by their own choices they commit to living a less-than-human ethic in which they deceive themselves and their own kind. Among their estranged ranks are those who worshiped God but who, when faced with a defining moment that tests their loyalties, yield to pride, take offense, and repudiate others' attempts to save their souls.

By paralleling ten oracles against Babylon and other foreign powers with a single oracle against Babylon, Part IV of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 13–23; 47) establishes the idea of Babylon as a conglomerate of entities similar to the ancient Babylonian empire—a kind of Greater Babylon that compares with John's Babylon the Great (Revelation 17:5). Isaiah juxtaposes that end-time "Babylon" structurally, typologically, and rhetorically with Zion, just as he does the King of Babylon with the King of Zion. He further identifies end-time Babylon contextually as the earth, the world, sinners, and the wicked on the eve of their destruction (Isaiah 13:1, 9, 11, 19). Finally, he compares Babylon to a harlot who seeks to displace God by appropriating his godhood to herself:

"You thought, 'I, the Eternal Mistress, exist forever!' and did not consider these, or remember her final destiny. Now therefore hear this, O pampered lady, securely enthroned, thinking to herself, 'I exist, and other than me there is nothing; I shall not be widowed or bereaved of children': Bereavement and widowhood shall suddenly overtake you, both in one day. They shall come upon you in full, notwithstanding your many magical feats and exceedingly strong combinations. Secure in your wickedness, you thought, 'No one discerns me.' By your skill and science you were led astray, thinking to yourself, 'I exist, and there is none besides me!' Catastrophe shall overtake you, which you shall not know how to avert by bribes; disaster shall befall you from which you cannot ransom yourself: there

shall come upon you sudden ruin such as you have not imagined” (Isaiah 47:7–11).

End-time Babylon’s self-exaltation comes to an end when Israel’s God reverses the circumstances of Zion and Babylon, exalting the one from the dust to her throne (Isaiah 52:1–3) but humiliating the other from her throne into the dust: “Get down and sit in the dust, O Virgin Daughter of Babylon; squat on the ground, dethroned, O Daughter of the Chaldeans. You shall no more be spoken of as delicate and refined. Take two grindstones and grind flour; unveil, disrobe, bare your legs, wade through streams: your nakedness shall be exposed and your shame uncovered. I will take vengeance and not be entreated of men” (Isaiah 47:1–3).

He appoints a “watchman”—a prophet or seer—“who reports what he sees,” inferring that other watchmen don’t report what they see, or don’t see at all: “My Lord said to me, ‘Go and appoint a watchman who will report what he sees. Let him watch for chariots with teams of horses, riders on asses and riders on camels. He must be most vigilant, fully alert.’ Then the lookout cried, ‘I have been standing on the watchtower day in and day out, my Lord; night after night I have stood guard. Now they come: cavalry and teams of horses!’ And he gave the reply, ‘She has fallen; Babylon has fallen. All her idol gods he has razed to the ground.’ To you who know me, who are of my fold, I have reported what I heard from Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel” (Isaiah 21:6–10).

Babylon’s “fall” compares with that of Sodom and Gomorrah—it never rises up again: “And Babylon, the most splendid of kingdoms, the glory and pride of Chaldeans, shall be [thrown down] as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. Never shall it be reinhabited; it shall not be resettled through all generations. Nomads will not pitch their tents there, nor will shepherds rest their flocks in it. But wild animals will infest it, and its buildings overflow with weasels; birds of prey



will find lodging there and demonic creatures prance about in it. Jackals will cry out from its palaces, howling creatures from its amusement halls. Her time draws near; [Babylon's] days shall not be prolonged" (Isaiah 13:19–22).

Babylon's inhabitants include in their ranks those who were God's people but who corrupt themselves and apostatize: "Hear, O heavens! Give heed, O earth! Jehovah has spoken: I have reared sons, brought them up, but they have revolted against me. The ox knows its owner, the ass its master's stall, but Israel does not know; my people are insensible. Alas, a nation astray, a people weighed down by sin, the offspring of wrongdoers, perverse children: they have forsaken Jehovah, they have spurned the Holy One of Israel, they have lapsed into apostasy" (Isaiah 1:2–4); "Though favor be shown the wicked, they will not learn righteousness; in a land of uprightness they remain perverse and see not the glory of Jehovah. O Jehovah, your hand is lifted up, but they perceive it not. Let them perceive with dismay your zeal for your people when the fire prepared for your enemies consumes them" (Isaiah 26:10–11).

These wicked include the leaders of God's people who decry the new things God does at the end of the world and who disparage his seer—his end-time servant—colluding instead with the political establishment and relying on an arm of flesh: "Hear the word of Jehovah, you scoffers who preside over these people in Jerusalem. You have supposed, by taking refuge in deception and hiding behind falsehoods, to have covenanted with Death, or reached an understanding with Sheol, that, should a flooding scourge sweep through [the land], it shall not reach you. Therefore, thus says my Lord Jehovah: 'I lay in Zion a stone, a keystone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation. They who believe it will not do rashly. I will make justice the measure, righteousness the weight; a hail shall sweep away your false refuge and waters flood the hiding place. Your covenant

with Death shall prove void, your understanding with Sheol have no effect: when the flooding scourge sweeps through, you shall be overrun by it. As often as it sweeps through, you shall be seized by it: morning after morning it shall sweep through, by day and by night [it shall seize you]; it shall cause terror merely to hear word of it” (Isaiah 28:14–19).

God’s end-time servant and his associates warn those who repent of evil to flee Babylon—to escape into the wilderness and not fall victim to its imminent desolation: “Go forth out of Babylon, flee from Chaldea! Make this announcement with resounding voice; broadcast it to the end of the earth. Say, ‘Jehovah has redeemed his servant Jacob.’ They thirsted not when he led them through arid places: he caused water to flow for them from the rock; he cleaved the rock and water gushed out. ‘But there is no peace,’ says Jehovah, ‘for the wicked” (Isaiah 48:20–22); “Turn away, depart; touch nothing defiled as you leave there. Come out of her and be pure, you who bear Jehovah’s vessels. But you shall not leave in haste or go in flight: Jehovah will go before you, the God of Israel behind you” (Isaiah 52:11–12).

The exodus of God’s elect out of Greater Babylon into the wilderness resembles Israel’s ancient exodus out of Egypt and God’s victory over the armies of Pharaoh: “Thus says Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, your Redeemer: ‘For your sake I launch [an attack] on Babylon and bring down as fugitives all the Chaldeans, they who sing the praises of shipping. I Jehovah, your Holy One, Creator of Israel, am your King.’ Thus says Jehovah—who provides a way in the Sea, a path through the mighty waters, who dispatches chariots and horses, armies of men in full strength; they lie down as one, to rise no more, they flicker and die, snuffed out like a wick” (Isaiah 43:14–17).

Those who remain behind in Babylon partake of its curses when Babylon’s time runs out: “Catastrophe shall overtake you, which you shall not know how to avert by bribes; disaster shall befall you from which you cannot ransom yourself:

there shall come upon you sudden ruin such as you have not imagined” (Isaiah 47:11); “‘I will rise up against them,’ says Jehovah of Hosts. ‘I will cut off Babylon’s name and remnant, its offspring and descendants,’ says Jehovah. ‘I will turn it into swamplands, a haunt for ravens; I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,’ says Jehovah of Hosts” (Isaiah 14:22–23). Only Zion and persons affiliated with Zion live on into the earth’s millennial age of peace.

### **3. Jacob/Israel—Believers in the God of Israel**

*Abstract:* People with whom Israel’s God establishes a covenant relationship but who renege on their commitment and falter in living by his precepts make up a large initial category of Isaiah’s seven spiritual levels. Preoccupied by worldly pursuits within the materialistic Babylonian culture to which they subscribe, they suffer from intellectual torpor and spiritual blindness that result from an infatuation with idols—the works of men’s hands. They need waking up to the imminent judgments of God hanging over the world that will surely overtake them unless they renew their covenant relationship with him, repent of their waywardness, and return wholeheartedly to their God. Only on those conditions can they participate in his salvation, temporal and spiritual.

Although they believe in the God of Israel and practice a form of religion, people in the Jacob/Israel category become lax in their devotions and blame him for their misfortunes instead of repenting of their sins: “Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak thus, O Israel: ‘Our path has become obscured from Jehovah; our cause is overlooked by our God?’” (Isaiah 40:27); “You do not call upon me, O Jacob; you have grown weary of me, O Israel. Yet [I required] not that you bring me offerings from your flocks or pay me homage by sacrificial slaughter; I have not burdened you with oblations or wearied you with

burning incense. [Nor have I burdened you] to buy me the fragrant calamus or sate me with the fat of immolations. Yet you have burdened me with your sins, wearied me with your iniquities” (Isaiah 43:22–24).

As Jehovah’s collective “servant,” the Jacob/Israel category loves its idols—things of men’s own making—more than its God. The result is a spiritual blindness to the truths of God that guard his people against enemies at home and abroad without their even being aware of their fallen state:

“Those who trust in idols and esteem their images as gods shall retreat in utter confusion. O you deaf, listen; O you blind, look and see! Who is blind but my own servant, or so deaf as the messenger I have sent? Who is blind like those I have commissioned, as uncomprehending as the servant of Jehovah—seeing much but not giving heed, with open ears hearing nothing? It is the will of Jehovah that, because of his righteousness, they magnify the law and become illustrious. Instead, they are a people plundered and sacked, all of them trapped in holes, hidden away in dungeons. They have become a prey, yet no one rescues them, a spoil, yet none demands restitution. Who among you hearing this will take heed of it hereafter, and be mindful and obey? Who is it that hands Jacob over to plunder and Israel to despoilers, if not Jehovah, against whom we have sinned? For they have no desire to walk in his ways or obey his law. So in the heat of his anger he pours out on them the violence of war, till it envelopes them in flames—yet they remain unaware—till it sets them on fire; yet they take it not to heart” (Isaiah 42:17–25).

Israel’s God appoints his end-time servant to persuade his people to awaken from their spiritual inertia and save their souls: “My Lord Jehovah has endowed me with a learned tongue, that I may know how to preach to those grown weary a word to wake them up” (Isaiah 50:4). His task is free God’s people from bondage to sin and from subjugation to enemies: “I have created you and appointed you to be a covenant for the

people, a light to the nations, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from confinement and from prison those who sit in darkness” (Isaiah 42:6–7).

The servant’s task is to deliver them from their self-righteousness and to exemplify God’s righteousness to them: “Proclaim it aloud without restraint; raise your voice like a trumpet! Declare to my people their transgressions, to the house of Jacob its sins. Yet they importune me daily, eager to learn my ways, like a nation practicing righteousness and not forsaking the precepts of its God” (Isaiah 58:1–2); “I summon a bird of prey from the east, from a distant land the man who performs my counsel. What I have spoken, I bring to pass; what I have planned, I do. Hear me, you stubborn-hearted, who are far from righteousness: I have brought near my righteousness; it is not now far off” (Isaiah 46:11–13).

So steeped are God’s people in their materialistic idolatry that at times God’s servant feels as though he has “labored in vain” and “spent my strength for nothing and to no purpose” (Isaiah 49:4). While most people today see the ludicrousness of bowing down before manmade statues as their ancestors did, they nevertheless fail to see how close a resemblance that ancient practice still has to the worship of idols in the modern age:

“Hear me, O house of Jacob, and all you remnant of the house of Israel, who have been a load on me since birth, borne up by me from the womb: Even to your old age, I am present; till you turn grey, it is I who sustain you. It is I who made you, and I who bear you up; it is I who carry and rescue you. To whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me, that we should appear similar? They who squander gold from the purse and weigh out silver on the scales hire a smith to make them a god they bow down to and worship. They bear it aloft, carrying it on their shoulders; when they set it in place, there it stands, unable to budge from

its spot. Though they cry to it for help, it does not answer; it cannot save them from trouble” (Isaiah 46:3–7).

Only a few of the Jacob/Israel category ultimately respond to God’s servant by repenting of evildoing. Instead, a majority prefers a course fraught with covenant curses: “Jehovah spoke to me, clasping my hand, and admonished me not to follow the ways of these people. For he said, ‘Do not call a conspiracy all that these people call a conspiracy; be not afraid or awed by the thing they fear. But sanctify Jehovah of Hosts, making him your fear, him your awe. And [to you] he will be a sanctuary, but to the two houses of Israel a stumbling block or obstructing rock, and a snare, catching unawares the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Many will stumble into them, and when they fall shall be broken, and when they become ensnared shall be taken captive” (Isaiah 8:11–15).

In their pride, the descendants of Ephraim come under special condemnation: “This message my Lord sent to Jacob, and it shall befall Israel. And the entire people—Ephraim and those who dwell in Samaria—shall know of it, who say in pride and arrogance of heart, ‘The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stone; the sycamores have been felled, but we will replace them with cedars!’ But Jehovah will strengthen Rezin’s enemies against them when he stirs up their adversaries: Aramaeans from the east and Philistines from the west will devour Israel with open mouth. Yet for all this his anger is not abated; his hand is upraised still. But the people do not turn back to him who smites them, nor will they inquire of Jehovah of Hosts. Therefore Jehovah will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm top and reed, in a single day; the elders or notables are the head, the prophets who teach falsehoods, the tail. The leaders of these people have misled them, and those who are led are confused. My Lord is not pleased with their young men, nor does he pity their fatherless and widows, because all alike are godless malefactors, and every mouth utters profanities” (Isaiah 9:8–17);

“When Ephraim’s defenses come to an end, so shall the sovereignty of Damascus: as with the glory of the children of Israel, so shall it be with Aram’s remnant,’ says Jehovah of Hosts. ‘In that day Jacob’s glory shall wane, and his fatness of body become leanness. After being like a harvest of ripe grain, whose ears are reaped by the armful, he will become like ears plucked in the Valley of Rephaim when only the gleanings are left; or when an olive tree is beaten, having two or three berries in the topmost bough, or four or five in its most fruitful branch,’ says Jehovah, the God of Israel. In that day men will have regard to their Maker, and their eyes look to the Holy One of Israel, and regard not the altars, the works of their hands, nor look to things their own fingers have made—the idols of prosperity and the shining images” (Isaiah 17:3–8).

When it is over, God’s destruction of the wicked leaves only a small remnant of the Jacob/Israel category—those for whom God’s Day of Judgment serves as a time to repent. That repentance, though belated, nevertheless assures their survival: “In that day those who survive of Israel and who escape of the house of Jacob will no longer rely on him who struck them, but will truly rely on Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel: of Jacob a remnant will return to the One Mighty in Valor. For though your people, O Israel, be as the sands of the sea, only a remnant will return; although annihilation is decreed, it shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, will carry out the utter destruction decreed upon the whole earth” (Isaiah 10:20–23).

Even last-minute appeals to the Jacob/Israel category may thus yield the salvation of a few souls: “Return to him from whom you have contrived to go far astray, O children of Israel. For in that day every one of you will despise your idolatrous silver and gold by which your hands have incurred guilt” (Isaiah 31:6). Disposing of the idols is the first step: “By this shall Jacob’s iniquity be expiated, as a result of this his sins removed: when he makes like crushed chalkstone all altar stones, leaving

no idols of prosperity and shining images standing” (Isaiah 27:9). By purging their lives of worldliness and renewing their covenant with Israel’s God, people in the Jacob/Israel category become candidates for ascent to Zion/Jerusalem.

#### **4. Zion/Jerusalem—Covenant People of God**

*Abstract:* People who repent of transgression and keep the law and word of Israel’s God—the terms of his covenant—qualify to ascend spiritually from the Jacob/Israel category to Zion/Jerusalem. After experiencing a descent phase, a time of trial in which God tests their loyalties, they receive a remission of their sins and the constant companionship of his holy Spirit. Committed to loving God and neighbor, they are re-created or re-born on the first ascending spiritual level. With it, they receive a new name and a divine commission to minister to God’s children who have yet to ascend. As they fulfill their stewardships, God pours out on them the blessings of his covenant. Empowered by his holy Spirit, their lives assume a sacred purpose characterized by love and joy.

Beginning with the Jacob/Israel category, persons who prove loyal through the time of testing that God orchestrates succeed in ascending to higher spiritual levels: “Your faithfulness in time [of trial] shall prove to be a strength, your wisdom and knowledge your salvation; your fear of Jehovah shall be your riches” (Isaiah 33:6). In the midst of their descent phase—if they abandon their idols and return wholeheartedly to him—they are assured God’s holy Spirit will guide them as Jehovah’s coming to the earth draws near, that they will live to enjoy blessed lands of inheritance:

“Then will Jehovah delay [his coming], that he may favor you; out of mercy toward you he will remain aloof. For Jehovah is the God of justice; blessed are all who wait for him. O people



of Zion, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, you shall have no cause to weep. He will graciously respond at the cry of your voice; he will answer you as soon as he hears it. Though my Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall your Teacher remain hidden no longer, but your eyes shall see the Master. Your ears shall hear words from behind you saying, 'This is the way; walk in it!' should you turn left or right. You will discard as unclean your graven idols plated with silver, your cast idols gilded in gold; you will eject them as a menstruous woman [her impurity] and say, 'Away with you!' Then will he water with rain the seed you sow in the ground, that the land's increase of food may be rich and abundant. In that day your cattle shall graze in ample pasturelands, and the oxen and asses that till the soil eat grain silage winnowed with shovel and fork" (Isaiah 30:18–24);

By definition, the Zion/Jerusalem category—God's people to whom Jehovah comes—consists of those of Jacob/Israel who repent of transgression: "He will come as Redeemer to Zion, to those of Jacob who repent of transgression,' says Jehovah. 'As for me, this is my covenant with them,' says Jehovah: 'My Spirit which is upon you and my words which I have placed in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of their offspring, says Jehovah, from now on and forever'" (Isaiah 59:20–21).

At his coming, Jehovah fights their battles and delivers them from enemies too powerful for them: "Thus said Jehovah to me: 'As a lion or a young lion growls over the prey when the shepherds muster in full force against him, and is not dismayed at the sound of their voice nor daunted by their numbers, so shall Jehovah of Hosts be when he descends to wage war upon Mount Zion and upon its heights. As birds hover over the nest, so will Jehovah of Hosts guard Jerusalem; by protecting it he will deliver it, by passing over it, preserve it'" (Isaiah 31:4–5).

Before he reverses their circumstances in his Day of Judgment, however, Jehovah tests his people's loyalties: "I will put my words in your mouth and shelter you in the shadow of my hand, while I replant the heavens and set the earth in place, that I may say to Zion, 'You are my people.' Rouse yourself; awaken and rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from Jehovah's hand the cup of his wrath, drinking to the dregs the bowl of stupor" (Isaiah 51:16-17); "Awake, arise; clothe yourself with power, O Zion! Put on your robes of glory, O Jerusalem, holy city. No more shall the uncircumcised and defiled enter you. Shake yourself free, rise from the dust; sit enthroned, O Jerusalem. Loose yourself from the bands around your neck, O captive Daughter of Zion. Thus says Jehovah: 'You were sold without price, and you shall be redeemed without money'" (Isaiah 52:1-3).

With Jehovah as its God, Zion/Jerusalem repudiates false suitors such as the king of Assyria: "The Virgin Daughter of Zion holds you in contempt; she laughs you to scorn. The Daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head at you" (Isaiah 37:22).

Zion/Jerusalem's watchmen intercede with Israel's God to restore his people to the glory he had promised them: "I have appointed watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem, who shall not be silent day or night. You who call upon Jehovah, let not up nor give him respite till he reestablishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned in the earth" (Isaiah 62:6-7); "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent; for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain still till her righteousness shines like a light, her salvation like a flaming torch. The nations shall behold your righteousness and all their rulers your glory; you shall be called by a new name conferred by the mouth of Jehovah. Then shall you be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, a royal diadem in the palm of your God. You shall no more be called the forsaken one, nor your land referred to as desolate; you shall be known as her in whom I delight and your land considered espoused" (Isaiah 62:1-4).

With Jehovah as her husband, Zion brings forth a nation of her children: “Can the earth labor but a day and a nation be born at once? For as soon as she was in labor, Zion gave birth to her children. ‘Shall I bring to a crisis and not bring on birth?’ says Jehovah. ‘When it is I who cause the birth, shall I hinder it?’ says your God. Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all who love her; join in her celebration, all who mourn for her” (Isaiah 66:8–10).

As with each ascent, God’s people receive a new commission to minister to those who have yet to ascend to their level: “Scale the mountain heights, O Zion, herald of good tidings. Raise your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, messenger of good news. Make yourself heard, be not afraid; proclaim to the cities of Judah: ‘Behold your God!’ See, my Lord Jehovah comes with power; his arm presides for him. His reward is with him; his work precedes him. Like a shepherd he pastures his flock: the lambs he gathers up with his arm and carries in his bosom; the ewes that give milk he leads gently along” (Isaiah 40:9–11).

At Jehovah’s coming to dwell with his people, a new era of peace begins on the earth: “Behold Zion, the city of our solemn assemblies; let your eyes rest upon Jerusalem, the abode of peace—an immovable tent, whose stakes shall never be uprooted, nor any of its cords severed. None who reside there shall say, ‘I am ill’; the people who inhabit it shall be forgiven their iniquity” (Isaiah 33:20, 24); “Many peoples shall go, saying, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may instruct us in his ways, that we may follow in his paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and from Jerusalem the word of Jehovah” (Isaiah 2:3); “They will call you the City of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 60:14); “Shout and sing for joy, O inhabitants of Zion, for renowned among you is the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 12:6).

### 5. Sons/Servants—God’s Elect or Holy Ones

*Abstract:* Ascending from the Zion/Jerusalem category are valiant souls who sanctify their lives by emulating Israel’s Savior-God and assimilating his attributes and perfections. Entering into individual compacts with him under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, they act as proxy saviors of others in the pattern of King Hezekiah at Assyria’s siege of Jerusalem. Proving loyal to Israel’s God through a descent phase of trials and afflictions, they are re-created in his image and likeness and inherit lands and posterities by an unconditional covenant. They serve as kings and queens to others of God’s people in bringing them into a covenant relationship with him, laying the groundwork for a transformation of the earth when Jehovah comes to establish his reign of peace.

When a large Assyrian army surrounds Jerusalem—where a remnant of God’s people loyal to King Hezekiah has taken refuge—the king appeals to Jehovah his God for his people’s protection: “And Hezekiah prayed to Jehovah and said, ‘O Jehovah of Hosts, God of Israel, who sits enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. It is you who made the heavens and the earth. O Jehovah, give ear and hear; O Jehovah, open your eyes and see. Listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to mock the living God. O Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have indeed destroyed all peoples and their lands, committing their gods to the fire. For they were no gods, but mere works of men’s hands, of wood and of stone, and so they could destroy them. But now, O Jehovah our God, deliver us out of his hand, that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone are Jehovah’” (Isaiah 37:15–20).

At the onset of trouble—when Assyria was making inroads into the Promised Land—Hezekiah had renewed his people’s

covenant relationship with their God, saying: “The wrath of Jehovah has been upon Judah and Jerusalem. He has delivered them to atrocities, desolation, and derision, as you see with your own eyes. Our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, daughters, and wives are taken captive because of it. Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with Jehovah the God of Israel that his fierce wrath may turn from us. My sons, be not now remiss, for Jehovah has chosen you to stand before him to serve him” (2 Chronicles 29:8–11).

In a classic example of what is called the “Birthpangs of the Messiah,” a repentant remnant of God’s people under a mortal threat from enemies looks to their king—their Messiah (*māšiah*, literally “anointed one”)—for deliverance, while their king looks to his God: “This is a woeful day, a day of reproof and disgrace. Children have reached the point of birth, but there is no strength to deliver them” (Isaiah 37:3). As his people’s king and protector under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, Hezekiah’s responsibility is to intercede with Israel’s God on their behalf. For his intercession to be effectual, however, his loyalty must be impeccable: “I beseech you to remember, O Jehovah, how I have walked before you faithfully and with full purpose of heart and have done what is good in your eyes” (Isaiah 38:3).

On the model of ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal covenants, the king is answerable for his people’s disloyalties to their God if he is to obtain his people’s physical protection. In that case, there could be a heavy price to pay: “In those days Hezekiah became gravely ill. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him and said, ‘Thus says Jehovah: “Put your house in order. You will die; you will not recover”’” (Isaiah 38:1).

In recounting the event of his personal mortal threat from that illness, Hezekiah later writes: “I said, ‘In the prime of life must I depart through Sheol’s gates, deprived of the balance of my years?’ I thought, ‘I shall not see Jehovah in the land of the living; I shall not now behold Man among those dwelling in

mortality. My tabernacle is being uprooted, carried away from me like a shepherd's tent. My life is cut off like woven fabric; he is severing me from the loom. Can I contain myself until morning, while like a lion he racks my whole frame? [Surely,] as night has followed day, you are bringing on my end! Like a mounting lark I twitter, like a dove I murmur. My eyes are drawn looking heavenward; I am utterly sleepless from bitterness of soul. O Jehovah, I am in straits; be my surety!" (Isaiah 38:10-14).

Lending substance to his intercession with Jehovah, the king's suffering satisfies the requirements of justice for his people's disloyalties to their God and Jehovah accepts the king's petition: "Thus says Jehovah, the God of your father David: 'I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will protect this city'" (Isaiah 38:5-6). In other words, after king and people pass his test of their loyalties, Jehovah delivers the people and their proxy savior from their respective mortal threats. He sends his angel, who slays the besieging Assyrian army in one night (Isaiah 37:36).

In the pattern of King Hezekiah, end-time persons who ascend to the son/servant level similarly function as proxy saviors of those to whom they minister under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. For their intercession with Israel's God to be effectual, however, their loyalty to him must likewise be impeccable, even in the face of severe opposition: "The path of the righteous is straight; you pave an undeviating course for the upright. In the very passage of your ordinances we anticipate you, O Jehovah; the soul's desire is to contemplate your name. My soul yearns for you in the night; at daybreak my spirit within me seeks after you. For when your ordinances are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:7-9); "Hear me, you who know righteousness, O people in whose heart is my law: Do not fear the reproach of men; be

undaunted by their ridicule. For the moth shall consume them like a garment; moths shall devour them like wool. But my righteousness shall endure forever, my salvation through endless generations” (Isaiah 51:7–8).

Though enemies threaten, God’s sons/servants’ faith in the protection clause of the Davidic Covenant that is based on their righteousness guarantees God’s deliverance: “You shall be firmly established through righteousness; you will be far from oppression and have no cause to fear, far from ruin, for it shall not approach you” (Isaiah 54:14); “Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, ‘Give up!’ to the south, ‘Withhold not!’ Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth—all who are called by my name, whom I have formed, molded and wrought for my own glory” (Isaiah 43:5–7).

The “sons” and “daughters” whom Israel’s God thus recreates on the son/servant level—those “formed,” “molded,” and “wrought” for his glory—he brings home to lands of inheritance in an end-time exodus from the four parts of the earth: “Arise, shine, your light has dawned; the glory of Jehovah has risen upon you! Although darkness covers the earth, and a thick mist the peoples, upon you Jehovah will shine; over you his glory shall be visible. Nations will come to your light, their kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look about you! They have all assembled to come to you: your sons shall arrive from afar; your daughters shall return to your side” (Isaiah 60:1–4).

So numerous are Israel’s returnees that the Woman Zion is astonished at the multitude of her long-lost children: “The children born during the time of your bereavement shall yet say in your ears, ‘This place is too cramped for us; give us space in which to settle!’ And you will say to yourself, ‘Who bore me these while I was bereaved and barren? I was exiled, banished; by whom were these reared? When I was left to myself, where

were they?’ Thus says my Lord Jehovah: ‘I will lift up my hand to the nations, raise my ensign to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, queens your nursing mothers’” (Isaiah 49:20–23).

Even as Jehovah’s current, unfaithful wife is cast off, his formerly unfaithful wife—she who *was* cast off but who has repented—he remarries: “Sing, O barren woman who did not give birth; break into jubilant song, you who were not in labor. ‘The children of the deserted wife shall outnumber those of the espoused,’ says Jehovah. ‘Expand the site of your tent; extend the canopies of your dwellings. Do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your offspring shall dispossess the nations and resettle the desolate cities’” (Isaiah 54:1–3); “Jehovah shall delight in you, and your land shall be espoused. As a young man weds a virgin, so shall your sons wed you; as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you” (Isaiah 62:4–5).

## **6. Seraphs/Seraphim—Angelic Emissaries**

*Abstract:* Comprising the highest spiritual category to which one may ascend on this earth, seraphs compare with translated beings such as Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, who exercise divine powers. Their mission spans heaven and earth and extends to all nations. God’s end-time servant and his fellowservants fall in that category. Like persons on the son/servant level—from whom they ascend—they serve as kings and queens, restoring God’s people to promised lands before Israel’s God Jehovah comes to reign on the earth. Unlike the mission of God’s sons/servants, however, which is local, theirs is worldwide. Their role as proxy saviors under the terms of the Davidic Covenant involves an intense descent



phase through trials and afflictions followed by a glorious ascent.

God's end-time servant exemplifies one whom Israel's God exalts on the seraph level. His descent into suffering and humiliation—as he fulfills the role of a proxy savior to God's people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant—includes being ecclesiastically ostracized and physically disfigured by enemies: “My servant, being astute, shall be highly exalted; he shall become exceedingly eminent: just as he appalled many—his appearance was marred beyond human likeness, his semblance unlike that of men—so shall he yet astound many nations, kings shutting their mouths at him. What was not told them, they shall see; what they had not heard, they shall consider” Isaiah 52:13–15; compare 50:4–11); “Thus says Jehovah, the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel, to him who is despised as a person, who is abhorred by his people, a servant to those in authority: ‘Kings shall rise up when they see you, princes shall prostrate themselves, because Jehovah keeps faith with you, because the Holy One of Israel has chosen you’” (Isaiah 49:7).

The “kings” mentioned in these passages—unlike the political kings of the nations, whom God condemns (Isaiah 1:23–24; 3:14; 24:21–22; 30:33; 41:2; 45:1)—are persons who hear God's servant and similarly serve as proxy saviors to God's people on the seraph level under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. These are kings and their queens who ascend from the son/servant category as they fulfill the greater task of restoring God's exiled people to lands of inheritance: “Thus says my Lord Jehovah: ‘I will lift up my hand to the nations, raise my ensign to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, queens your nursing mothers’” (Isaiah 49:22–23).

Nevertheless, those whom Israel's God chooses to this task may hail from the humblest of origins. In contrast to the blind and dumb watchmen who occupy the highest echelon of society—whom God reprimands and gives over to covenant curses (Isaiah 56:9–12; 66:5–6)—they rise from the lowest echelon to become fellowservants of God's end-time servant. Isaiah uses the historical example of “foreigners” and “eunuchs” to make his point: “Let not the foreigner who adheres to Jehovah say, ‘Jehovah will surely exclude me from his people.’ And let not the eunuch say, ‘I am but a barren tree.’ For thus says Jehovah: ‘As for the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths and choose to do what I will—holding fast to my covenant—to them I will give a handclasp and a name within the walls of my house that is better than sons and daughters; I will endow them with an everlasting name that shall not be cut off’” (Isaiah 56:3–5).

Such an “everlasting name” signifies an unconditional covenant that God makes with those who prove faithful under all conditions. Isaiah, however, creates a *composite* of personas to depict God's end-time servants. Making up this composite category are (1) a general class of end-time “servants” of God—as distinct from and on a higher spiritual level than those in the son/servant category; (2) new “watchmen” who displace the old blind and deaf watchmen; (3) “priests” of God; and (4) “kings” of his people:

“As for the foreigners who adhere to Jehovah to serve him, who love the name of Jehovah, that they may be his *servants*—all who keep the Sabbath without profaning it, holding fast to my covenant—these will I bring to my holy mountain and gladden in my house of prayer. Their offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted on my altar” (Isaiah 56:6–7; emphasis added); “Your heart shall rejoice to see it, your limbs flourish like sprouting grass, when the hand of Jehovah shall be manifest among his *servants* and his rage among his enemies” (Isaiah 66:14; emphasis added);

“I have appointed *watchmen* on your walls, O Jerusalem, who shall not be silent day or night. You who call upon Jehovah, let not up nor give him respite till he reestablishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned in the earth” (Isaiah 62:6–7; emphasis added); “You shall be called the *priests* of Jehovah and referred to as the ministers of our God. You shall feed on the wealth of the nations and be gratified with their choicest provision. Because their shame was twofold, and shouted insults were their lot, therefore in their land shall their inheritance be twofold and everlasting joy be theirs” (Isaiah 61:6–7; emphasis added); “Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their *kings* will minister to you. Though I struck you in anger, I will gladly show you mercy. Your gates shall always remain open; they shall not be shut day or night, that a host of nations may be brought to you and their *kings* escorted in’ (Isaiah 60:10–11; emphasis added).

Like God’s end-time servant, his fellow servants receive opposition from their own people as an integral part of their descent phase through trials and affliction while fulfilling the role of proxy saviors under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. In the end, however—after they prove faithful under all conditions—God reverses their circumstances and empowers them over their enemies:

“Whatever weapon is devised against you, it shall not succeed; every tongue that rises to accuse you, you shall refute. This is the heritage of the servants of Jehovah, and such is their vindication by me,’ says Jehovah” (Isaiah 54:17); “Thus says my Lord Jehovah: ‘My servants shall eat indeed, while you shall hunger; my servants shall drink indeed, while you shall thirst; my servants shall rejoice indeed, while you shall be dismayed. My servants shall shout indeed, for gladness of heart, while you shall cry out with heartbreak, howling from brokenness of spirit. Your name shall be left to serve my chosen ones as a curse when my Lord Jehovah slays you. But his servants he will call by a different name’” (Isaiah 65:13–15).

Under the pseudonym of God's *arm*—harking back to Moses' stretching forth his arm at Israel's exodus out of Egypt (Exodus 14:21–22; Isaiah 63:11–13)—God empowers his end-time servant as the time draws near for his dispersed people to return home in a new exodus to Zion: “Awake, arise; clothe yourself with power, O *arm* of Jehovah! Bestir yourself, as in ancient times, as in generations of old. Was it not you who carved up Rahab, you who slew the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the Sea, the waters of the mighty deep, and made of ocean depths a way by which the redeemed might pass? Let the ransomed of Jehovah return! Let them come singing to Zion, their heads crowned with everlasting joy; let them obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away” (Isaiah 51:9–11; emphasis added).

God's empowering his *arm* is thus synonymous with his “baring” or “revealing” his *arm* and commissioning his servant and his fellowservants to herald Jehovah's imminent coming: “How comely upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger announcing peace, who brings tidings of good, who heralds salvation, saying to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’ Hark! Your watchmen lift up their voice; as one they cry out for joy: for they shall see eye to eye when Jehovah returns [to] Zion. Jehovah has bared his holy *arm* in the eyes of all nations, that all ends of the earth may see our God's salvation” (Isaiah 52:7–8, 10; emphasis added); “Who among you foretold these things? It is him Jehovah loves, who shall perform his will in Babylon; his *arm* shall be against the Chaldeans. I myself have spoken it, and also called him; I have brought him, and I will prosper his way” (Isaiah 48:14–15; emphasis added).

The ascent of God's servant and his fellowservants to the translated category of seraphs sets them apart from all others of God's children. Relying solely upon Jehovah to the exclusion of all else, they “ascend” to become unwearied—like Jehovah himself: “They who hope in Jehovah shall be renewed in strength: they shall ascend as on eagles' wings; they shall run

without wearying, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31; compare vv 28–30). For their sake, God delivers many of his people at the time he destroys the wicked of the world: “Thus says Jehovah: ‘As when there is juice in a cluster of grapes and someone says, “Don’t destroy it, it is still good,” so I will do *for the sake* of my servants by not destroying everything: I will extract offspring out of Jacob, and out of Judah heirs of my mountains; my chosen ones shall inherit them, my servants shall dwell there”’ (Isaiah 65:8–9; emphasis added).

### 7. Jehovah God of Israel—A Savior-God

*Abstract:* Descending below all prior to ascending above all in his own cyclical phase of descent before ascent, Jehovah God of Israel pays the price of his people’s spiritual salvation that extends to all humanity. As a proxy savior under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, he serves justice on behalf of those unable to make restitution in kind for transgressing against God, which restitution only a God can make. As a sacrificial offering prefigured by the Law of Moses, he atones for sin so that God may extend his mercy to all who repent. His glorious coming as King of Zion to institute his reign of peace on the earth, preceded by his earthly tenure as a “man of sorrows” who redeems humanity from the Fall, comprise the two most significant events to impact human history.

As all salvation, temporal and spiritual, comes from God, under what principles does salvation operate? Even proxy saviors under the terms of the Davidic Covenant on the seraph and son/servant levels only create the *conditions* for salvation to occur. They don’t actually save their peoples themselves—Israel’s God does. Still, even he, Jehovah, follows the same pattern he has laid down on whose basis all proxy salvation occurs: on the model of ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal

covenants, the vassal answers for the disloyalties of his people to the emperor. In practical terms, those disloyalties consist of God's people's sins and transgressions before God, which Jehovah takes upon himself and answers for to the Most High God, his Father, under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. In other words, he willingly fulfills the requirements of justice by suffering the curses of the covenant that have accrued to his people who repent of transgression, obviating the need for *them* to answer for them:

“He bore our sufferings, endured our griefs, though we thought him stricken, smitten of God, and humbled. But he was pierced for our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities; the price of our peace he incurred, and with his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep had gone astray, each of us headed his own way; Jehovah brought together upon him the iniquity of us all. He was harassed, yet submissive, and opened not his mouth—like a lamb led to slaughter, like a sheep, dumb before its shearers, he opened not his mouth. By arrest and trial he was taken away. Who can apprise his generation that he was cut off from the land of the living for the crime of my people, to whom the blow was due? He was appointed among the wicked in death, among the rich was his burial; yet he had done no violence, and deceit was not in his mouth. But Jehovah willed to crush him, causing him suffering, that, if he made his life an offering for guilt, he might see his offspring and prolong his days, and that the purposes of Jehovah might prosper in his hand” (Isaiah 53:4–10).

Persons who perceive the magnitude of Jehovah's sacrifice on behalf of his people can't help but exude gratitude for such infinite love: “I will recount in praise of Jehovah Jehovah's loving favors, according to all that Jehovah has done for us, according to the great kindness he has mercifully and most graciously rendered the house of Israel. For he thought, ‘Surely they are my people, sons who will not play false’; and so he became their Savior: with all their troubles he troubled himself,

the angel of his presence delivering them. In his love and compassion he himself redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old" (Isaiah 63:7–9).

From Jehovah's foundational sacrifice for sin springs *all* salvation, spiritual and temporal: "[In that day you will say,] 'O Jehovah, you are my God; I will extol you by praising your name. For with perfect faithfulness you have performed wonders, things planned of old. . . . You were a refuge for the poor, a shelter for the needy in distress, a covert from the down-pour and shade from the heat. When the blasts of tyrants beat down like torrents against a wall, or like scorching heat in the desert, you quelled the onslaughts of the heathen: as burning heat by the shade of a cloud, you subdued the power of tyrants. In this mountain will Jehovah of Hosts prepare a sumptuous feast for all peoples, a feast of leavened cakes, succulent and delectable, of matured wines well refined. In this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the shroud that shrouds all nations, by abolishing death forever. My Lord Jehovah will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the reproach of his people from throughout the earth. Jehovah has spoken it. In that day you will say, 'This is our God, whom we expected would save us. This is Jehovah for whom we have waited; let us joyfully celebrate his salvation!'" (Isaiah 25:1, 4–9).

Jehovah's coming to establish his reign of peace on the earth nevertheless has a twofold aspect, additionally involving the demise of those who *don't* repent: "From the west men will fear Jehovah Omnipotent, and from the rising of the sun his glory. For he will come [upon them] like a hostile torrent impelled by the Spirit of Jehovah. But he will come as Redeemer to Zion, to those of Jacob who repent of transgression,' says Jehovah" (Isaiah 59:19–20); "As one, the makers of inventions retired in disgrace, utterly dismayed and embarrassed. But Israel is saved by Jehovah with an everlasting salvation; you shall not be dismayed or put to shame worlds

without end” (Isaiah 45:16–17); “Lift up your eyes to the heavens; look on the earth beneath: the heavens shall vanish as by smoke, the earth wear out like a garment—its inhabitants shall die in the manner of vermin. But my salvation shall be everlasting; my righteousness shall never fail” (Isaiah 51:6); “Israel is saved by Jehovah with an everlasting salvation; you shall not be dismayed or put to shame worlds without end” (Isaiah 45:17).

Once his people prove loyal as a nation by keeping his law and word, Israel’s God reverses their circumstances and restores them to glory: “Although you had been forsaken and abhorred, with none passing through [your land], yet I will make you an everlasting pride, the joy of generation after generation. You will suck the milk of the nations, suckling at the breasts of kings. Then shall you know that I, Jehovah, am your Savior, that your Redeemer is the Valiant One of Jacob. In place of copper I will bring gold, in place of iron, silver; in place of wood I will bring copper, in place of stones, iron. I will make peace your rulers and righteousness your oppressors: tyranny shall no more be heard of in your land, nor dispossession or disaster within your borders; you will regard salvation as your walls and homage as your gates. No longer shall the sun be your light by day, nor the brightness of the moon your illumination at night: Jehovah will be your everlasting light and your God your radiant glory. Your sun shall set no more, nor your moon wane: to you Jehovah shall be an endless light when your days of mourning are fulfilled” (Isaiah 60:15–20).

Upon their adverse circumstances being reversed, God’s people enter an entirely new phase of human existence: “The troubles of the past shall be forgotten and hidden from my eyes. See, I create new heavens and a new earth; former events shall not be remembered or recalled to mind” (Isaiah 65:16–17); “In that day you will say, ‘I praise you, O Jehovah. Although you have been angry with me, your anger is turned away and you have consoled me. In the God of my salvation I will trust



## SEVEN SPIRITUAL LEVELS OF HUMANITY

without fear; for Jehovah was my strength and my song when he became my salvation. Then shall you rejoice in drawing water from the fountains of salvation” (Isaiah 12:1–3): “As the earth brings forth its vegetation, and as a garden causes what is sown to spring up in it, so will my Lord Jehovah cause righteousness and praise to spring up in the presence of all nations” (Isaiah 61:11).



## PART FOUR

# ANCIENT *TYPES* OF END-TIME EVENTS

Isaiah's method of prophesying draws on events from ancient times as building blocks for predicting end-time events. Whatever set a precedent in the past may serve as a *type* of what happens in the future. Thirty such *types* show how history repeats itself at the end of the world.

### **1. Israel's Apostasy**

A primary event from antiquity Isaiah draws on when predicting the end of the world is the apostasy of God's people—that is, of those who profess to be God's covenant people in that day. Because Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure transforms the entire Book of Isaiah into an *apocalyptic* prophecy, his writings may be read on two levels, the first pertaining to his own day or soon thereafter, and the second to “the last days” or end-time (*āḥārīt hāyyamīm*). Indeed, the world's end-time scenario is set in motion *by* the apostasy of God's people in that day—they are its catalyst.

Other Hebrew prophets besides Isaiah bewail Israel's ancient apostasy. Like Isaiah, Amos and Hosea prophesy in the

eighth century B.C., declaring, “They have despised the law of Jehovah and have not kept his commandments. Their falsehoods have made them go astray the same way their ancestors did” (Amos 2:4); “Ephraim, you are committing whoredoms; Israel has become defiled. They won’t align their actions so as to turn to their God, because the spirit of whoredom is among them and they haven’t known Jehovah. Israel’s pride testifies to its face” (Hosea 5:3–5).

The clearest evidence of Israel’s historical decline, however, appears in Isaiah’s prophecy itself. Because Isaiah lived at a pivotal point in Israel’s history—when God’s people as a whole had become spiritually corrupt—he uses that historical precedent as the type or pattern of an end-time corruption, showing how their drifting into a condition of spiritual atrophy over two generations ends in outright apostasy: “Hear, O heavens! Give heed, O earth! Jehovah has spoken: I have reared sons, brought them up, but they have revolted against me. The ox knows its owner, the ass its master’s stall, but Israel does not know; my people are insensible. Alas, a nation astray, a people weighed down by sin, the offspring of wrongdoers, perverse children: they have forsaken Jehovah, they have spurned the Holy One of Israel, they have lapsed into apostasy” (Isaiah 1:2–4).

The people’s biggest problem, ancient and end-time, is their idolatry—their infatuation with the things of this world: “Their land is full of silver and gold and there is no end to their wealth; their land is full of horses and there is no end to their chariots. Their land is full of idols: they adore the works of their hands, things their own fingers have made” (Isaiah 2:7–8; compare 2:20; 17:7–8; 27:9; 30:22; 31:7; 44:15; 48:4–5).

As it grows widespread, this preoccupation with material things generates spiritual blindness, an inability by God’s people to discern the new reality—that their religion has morphed from what God had revealed—that it has made a fundamental shift into a belief system that displaces the power of God with

the precepts of men, thereby failing to fulfill people's spiritual needs. Of this generational backsliding, the people and their leaders are thus entirely unaware: "Jehovah has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep: he has shut your eyes, the prophets; he has covered your heads, the seers" (Isaiah 29:10); "Those who trust in idols and esteem their images as gods shall retreat in utter confusion. O you deaf, listen; O you blind, look and see! Who is blind but my own servant, or so deaf as the messenger I have sent? Who is blind like those I have commissioned, as uncomprehending as the servant of Jehovah—seeing much but not giving heed, with open ears hearing nothing?" (Isaiah 42:17–20).

A kind of delusion sets in among ecclesiastical leader as the people subscribe to the new narrative that merely perpetuates the status quo: "These too have indulged in wine and are giddy with strong drink: priests and prophets have gone astray through liquor. They are intoxicated with wine and stagger because of strong drink; they err as seers, they blunder in their decisions. For all tables are filled with vomit; no spot is without excrement. Whom shall he give instruction? Whom shall he enlighten with revelation? Weanlings weaned from milk, those just taken from the breast? For it is but line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept; a trifle here, a trifle there" (Isaiah 28:7–10); "Their watchmen are altogether blind and unaware; all of them are but dumb watchdogs unable to bark, lolling seers fond of slumber. Gluttonous dogs, and insatiable, such indeed are insensible shepherds. They are all diverted to their own way, every one after his own advantage. 'Come, [they say,] let us get wine and have our fill of liquor. For tomorrow will be like today, only far better!'" (Isaiah 56:10–12).

When a spirit of self-sufficiency follows the people's prosperity, spiritual standards grow lax and predatory practices prevail: "How the faithful city has become a harlot! She was filled with justice; righteousness made its abode in her, but

now murderers. Your silver has become dross, your wine diluted with water. Your rulers are renegades, accomplices of robbers: with one accord they love bribes and run after rewards; they do not dispense justice to the fatherless, nor does the widow's case come before them" (Isaiah 1:21–23); "The godless utter blasphemy; their heart ponders impiety: how to practice hypocrisy and preach perverse things concerning Jehovah, leaving the hungry soul empty, depriving the thirsty [soul] of drink. And rogues scheme by malevolent means and insidious devices to ruin the poor, and with false slogans and accusations to denounce the needy" (Isaiah 32:6–7).

God responds by calling his people to account, subjecting them to the curses of his covenant instead of pouring out his blessings: "He will bring to trial the elders of his people and their rulers, [and say to them,] 'It is you who have devoured the vineyard; you fill your houses by depriving the needy. What do you mean by oppressing my people, humbling the faces of the poor?' says Jehovah of Hosts" (Isaiah 3:14–15); "But the people do not turn back to him who smites them, nor will they inquire of Jehovah of Hosts. Therefore Jehovah will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm top and reed, in a single day; the elders or notables are the head, the prophets who teach falsehoods, the tail. The leaders of these people have misled them, and those who are led are confused" (Isaiah 9:13–16).

While in Isaiah's day Assyria destroys the Northern Kingdom of Israel and transports its people into Mesopotamia, the Southern Kingdom of Judah—through the righteous influence of King Hezekiah—reforms and reinstates the pure worship of Jehovah (2 Chronicles 29–31). That too establishes a type for the end-time. By juxtaposing those two scenarios within parallel units of material, Isaiah's Seven-Part structure treats them as two *contemporary* end-time events, not as events divided by time the way they occur historically. Only later, near the end of the seventh century B.C.,

does the Southern Kingdom of Judah, too, fully apostatize and is taken captive into Babylon.

In each instance of Israel's ancient apostasy, moreover, a militaristic power from the North arises that conquers and destroys much of the known world. Whereas the Northern Kingdom's apostasy is followed by Assyria's becoming a world power and destroying both it and the other nations of the world, the Southern Kingdom's apostasy more than a century later is followed by Babylon's becoming a world power and repeating that scenario.

Jeremiah predicts this second event: "Has a nation changed gods into what aren't gods? Thus have my people changed their glory for what doesn't profit [them]" (Jeremiah 2:11); "The house of Israel and house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me,' says Jehovah. They have belied Jehovah and said, 'Not him! No evil will come upon us. We won't see the sword or famine.' The prophets have become wind; [his] word is not in them—so it is with them. Therefore, thus says Jehovah God of Hosts, 'Because you say such a thing, see, I will make my words in your mouth as fire and these people the wood and it will devour them. Lo, I am bringing a nation upon you from afar, O house of Israel,' says Jehovah. 'It is a mighty nation, an ancient nation, a nation whose language you don't know nor understand when they speak. Their quiver is as an open sepulcher; all are mighty men. And they will consume your harvest and food, which your sons and daughters should eat. They will consume your flocks and herds, and they will eat up your vines and fig trees'" (Jeremiah 5:11–17).

This prophetic pattern of God's judgments coming upon his people and upon the ancient world at the hands of an invading power from the North as a consequence of his people's apostasy accords with the apostasy of God's end-time people similarly being the catalyst of a world conquest and destruction by an invading power from the North, except that this time it heralds the end of the world.

## 2. The Tower of Babel

People's vain imaginations get the better of them at the time they build the Tower of Babel in an attempt to create a world utopia: "The whole earth was of one language and one speech. And it happened that as they journeyed from the east they found a plain in the land of Shinar and dwelt there. And they said one to another, 'Come, let us make bricks and fire them thoroughly.' (For they had bricks for stone and cement for mortar.) And they said, 'Come, let us build a city for ourselves and a tower whose top reaches heaven. And let us make a name for ourselves in case we disperse over the whole face of the earth.' And Jehovah came down to see the city and tower the sons of men were building. And Jehovah said, 'See, the people are one; all have a single language. Now that they have started this, they will stop at nothing that they imagine they can do. Come, let us go down there and confound their language so they won't understand each other's words.' Jehovah therefore scattered them from there over the face of the whole earth. So they left off building the city. And hence its name is called Babel because there Jehovah confounded the language of the whole earth, and from there Jehovah scattered them over the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:1-9).

The idea of a "city" with a "tower" whose top reaches the "sky" or "heaven" (*šamayîm*) is not unfamiliar in today's world. Modern cities and their skyscrapers in many ways duplicate the ancient "Babel" or "Babylon" (*bābel*) society with its materialistic socio-economic structure. As people today are indeed "scattered over the face of the whole earth," God's plan is to bring them back together. But that event occurs on *his* terms as in the end it is his elect according to his covenant who thus reunite (Deuteronomy 30:1-6; Jeremiah 31:10; Ezekiel 11:16-17; 20:33-44; Matthew 24:31). At that time, God gives his people "a pure language so that all may all call on the name of Jehovah and serve him with one accord" (Zephaniah 3:9).



Meanwhile, the earth's wayward inhabitants—those who follow the vain imaginations of their hearts in the modern world—God destroys in his Day of Judgment: “You have made the city a heap of rubble, fortified towns a ruin. Heathen mansions shall no more form cities, nor ever be rebuilt!” (Isaiah 25:2); “He has put down the elite inhabitants of the exalted city by casting it to the ground, laying it even with the dust. It is trodden underfoot by the feet of the poor, by the footsteps of those impoverished” (Isaiah 26:5–6); “[Mourn] for all the amusement houses in the city of entertainment, for the palaces shall lie abandoned, the clamorous towns deserted. High rises and panoramic resorts shall become haunts for ever after, the playground of wild animals, a browsing place for flocks. . . . For by a hail shall forests be felled, cities utterly leveled” (Isaiah 32:13–14, 19)—on “the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall” (Isaiah 30:25); “Jehovah of Hosts has a day in store for all the proud and arrogant and for all who are exalted, that they may be brought low. [It shall come] against . . . every tall tower and reinforced wall. . . . The haughtiness of men shall be abased, and man's pride brought low; Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day” (Isaiah 2:12–14, 17).

### **3. The Babylonian Captivity**

The Babylonian captivity of Israel's Southern Kingdom occurs in the days of the prophet Jeremiah, more than a century after Isaiah: “In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and besieged it. And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up. . . . And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with fire and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. Then Nebuzar-Adan, captain of the guard, carried away captive to Babylon

the remnant of the people who were left in the city” (Jeremiah 39:1–2, 8–9).

Although Babylon’s destruction and captivity of the Southern Kingdom of Judah occurs long after Isaiah’s day, Isaiah nevertheless predicts it and additionally uses it as the type of an end-time event. Because Assyria has already set a precedent of a world power that destroys the Northern Kingdom, Isaiah doesn’t cast Babylon in that end-time mold, only Assyria. He does, however, use the Babylonian captivity of God’s people of the Southern Kingdom as the type of an end-time captivity because for that Babylon sets a precedent. While Assyria conquers the people of the Northern Kingdom, it doesn’t subjugate them the way Babylon does. Assyria simply transports the nations they conquer to different parts of their empire, removing them from their native lands to destroy their patriotism so they can more easily govern them.

To the Harlot Babylon—who represents an idolatrous materialistic world empire in the Book of Isaiah—Jehovah says, “I was provoked by my people, so I let my inheritance be defiled. I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy; even the aged you weighed down heavily with your yoke” (Isaiah 47:6). Historically, the Babylonian captivity is the third occasion God’s people become subject to a foreign world power: “Thus says my Lord Jehovah: ‘At first my people went down to Egypt to sojourn there. Then the Assyrians subjected them for nothing. Now what have I here?’ says Jehovah. ‘My people are taken over without price; those who govern them act presumptuously,’ says Jehovah, ‘and my name is constantly abused all the day long’” (Isaiah 52:4–5).

As an end-time event, involving those who claim to be God’s people in that day, the new “Babylonian Captivity” resembles the old except that this time it isn’t limited to the ancient Near East but encompasses the entire world. Although it comes as a covenant curse on the heels of the apostasy of God’s people just as it does in the past, this coercive new

world order impacts not only them but nations and peoples everywhere.

#### **4. The Call of Abraham**

When Abraham's people, including his own father, worship idols and a famine sweeps the land, God commands Abraham to leave: "Jehovah said to Abram, 'Move from your country and your kindred and your father's house to a land I will show you. And I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse he who curses you. And in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' So Abram left, as Jehovah had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son and all their goods that they had gathered up, and the souls they had won in Haran, and they went forth to go into the Land of Canaan and entered the Land of Canaan" (Genesis 12:1-5; compare Joshua 24:2-3).

Jehovah rewards Abraham for leaving his native land and his extended family to enter the unknown by promising him a land of inheritance and a numerous posterity: "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18); "My covenant is with you; you will be a father of many nations. You will no more be called Abram but your name will be Abraham, for I am making you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful and make you into nations, and kings will come out of you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your offspring after you" (Genesis 17:4-7).

Isaiah predicts a time when Abraham's end-time descendants face the same choice as Abraham—whether to leave or stay in Babylon. Jehovah thus reminds them that what he did for Abraham he will do for them if they heed his call.

As Abraham came from the ends of the earth and received a Promised Land, so would they: “You, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, offspring of Abraham my beloved friend, you whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, called from its farthest limits—to you I say, ‘You are my servant; I have accepted you and not rejected you. Be not fearful, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will also succor you and uphold you with my righteous right hand’” (Isaiah 41:8–10); “Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob and once again choose Israel; he will settle them in their own land, and proselytes will adhere to them and join the house of Jacob” (Isaiah 14:1).

Isaiah nevertheless sees that only persons who are righteous as Abraham was righteous heed Jehovah’s call: “Hear me, you followers of righteousness, seekers of Jehovah: Look to the rock from which you were cut, to the quarry out of which you were hewn; look to Abraham your father, to Sarah who bore you. He was but one when I called him, but I blessed him by making him many” (Isaiah 51:1–2); “So shall justice inhabit the desert, and righteousness abide in the farmland. And the effect of justice shall be peace, and the result of righteousness an assured calm forever. My people shall dwell in peaceful settlements, in safe neighborhoods, in comfortable dwellings. Blessed are you, who shall then sow by all waters, letting oxen and asses range free” (Isaiah 32:16–18, 20). As with Abraham, the lands of inheritance and blessed offspring God promises his elect are theirs by an “everlasting covenant” (Isaiah 61:7–9).

### **5. Lot’s Deliverance from Sodom**

When God destroys the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by a rain of fire and brimstone on account of their consummate wickedness, he sends two angels to deliver Lot, Abraham’s nephew. Abraham had pled with God whether he would destroy Sodom and Gomorrah if only fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, or

even ten righteous men inhabited them. The answer was no—there were not even ten (Genesis 18:23–32). So great was the wickedness of the Sodomites, in fact, that they attempted to sexually violate even the angels who came to rescue Lot:

“In the evening, two angels came to Sodom as Lot sat at Sodom’s gate. And Lot, seeing [them], rose up to meet them and bowed himself with his face to the ground. And he said, ‘See now, my lords, turn in, I beg you, into your servant’s house and tarry all night, and wash your feet. Then shall you rise up early and go on your way.’ And they said, ‘No, we will stay in the street the whole night.’ But when he insisted they turned in to him and entered his house. So he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread and they ate. But before they lay down the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, old and young, persons from every quarter, and called out to Lot and said to him, ‘Where are the men who came in to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we may know them.’

“Then Lot went outside to them and shut the door behind him, saying ‘I beg you, brothers, don’t do so wickedly. See, I have two daughters who haven’t known man. Let me, I beg you, bring them out to you and do to them as seems good in your eyes. Only to these men do nothing who have come under the shadow of my roof.’ And they said, ‘Stand back!’ and said, ‘This chap came here to live and he wants to play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.’ And they pressed hard on the man Lot and almost broke the door. But the men put forth their hand and pulled Lot into the house after them and shut the door. And they smote the men at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wore themselves out to find the door.

“Then the men said to Lot, ‘Have you any others here? Your sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or whoever you have in the city bring out of here because we are going to destroy this place. Their clamor has become great before Jehovah, and Jehovah has sent us to destroy it.’ So Lot went and spoke to his

sons-in-law who were betrothed to his daughters and said, ‘Get up and get out of here. Jehovah will destroy this city.’ But to his sons-in-law he seemed like a person who was joking. And when morning came the angels hastened Lot, saying, ‘Arise, take your wife and two daughters who are here or you will be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered the men laid hold on his hand and on the hand of his wife and the hand of his two daughters (Jehovah being merciful to him) and brought him out and put him beyond the city. And when they had brought them out [the man] said, ‘Escape for your life! Don’t look back and don’t stay in the plain. Escape to the mountain or you will be consumed’ (Genesis 19:1–17).

Because Lot was Abraham’s nephew—the son of Abraham’s brother Haran who had died—Abraham acted as a father to Lot and as his protector. It was for Abraham’s sake, therefore, that God delivered Lot: “And it happened when God destroyed the cities of the plain that God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow at the time he overthrew the cities in which Lot lived. So Lot went up from Zoar and lived in the mountain with his two daughters, for he was afraid to live in Zoar. And he and his two daughters lived in a cave” (Genesis 19:29–30).

Abraham’s role toward Lot, in effect, was that of a proxy savior—as was the case when “God *remembered* his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” and delivered their descendants out of bondage in Egypt (Exodus 2:24; emphasis added). Thus, while God delivered Lot for Abraham’s sake, he delivered Lot’s daughters for Lot’s sake, Lot acting as *their* proxy savior. When the angels asked Lot whether he had any others whom he would like to bring—“whoever you have in the city”—they even left open the possibility that God would deliver others for Lot’s sake as Lot was a righteous man for whom God had respect.

In the end-time version of these events, when wickedness peaks to the degree it did in Sodom and Gomorrah, God

again rescues his elect while many others of his people perish for corrupting their lives: “The sinners in Zion are struck with fear; the godless are in the grip of trembling: ‘Who among us can live through the devouring fire? Who among us can abide eternal burning?’ They who conduct themselves righteously and are honest in word, who disdain extortion and stay their hand from taking bribes, who stop their ears at the mention of murder, who shut their eyes at the sight of wickedness. They shall dwell on high; the impregnable cliffs are their fortress. Bread is provided them, their water is sure” (Isaiah 33:14–16); “The righteous disappear, and no man gives it a thought; the godly are gathered out, but no one perceives that from impending calamity the righteous are withdrawn. They who walk uprightly shall attain peace, and rest in their beds” (Isaiah 57:1–2).

Just as Abraham acted as a proxy savior to Lot when God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, so God’s end-time servants act as proxy saviors to those whom God delivers from an end-time Sodom and Gomorrah type of destruction: “Thus says Jehovah: ‘As when there is juice in a cluster of grapes and someone says, “Don’t destroy it, it is still good,” so I will do *for the sake of* my servants by not destroying everything; I will extract offspring out of Jacob, and out of Judah heirs of my mountains; my chosen ones shall inherit them, my servants shall dwell there”’ (Isaiah 65:8–9; emphasis added); “Had not Jehovah of Hosts left us a few survivors, we should have been as Sodom, or become like Gomorrah” (Isaiah 1:9).

## **6. The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah**

God’s desolation of Sodom and Gomorrah by a hail of fire and brimstone in the days of Abraham wiped out all vestiges of human habitation in that place even to this day. Thereafter, Sodom and Gomorrah’s destruction became synonymous with a curse God pronounces on any people whose depravity resembles theirs:

God “turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, damning them by overthrowing them, hence making an example of them to those who live wickedly. And he delivered the just [man] Lot, who was vexed by the filthy conversation of the ungodly. For that righteous man, dwelling among them, seeing and hearing, was roiled in his righteous soul day after day by their lawless acts. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and how to reserve the unjust to the Day of Judgment to be punished—those who go after the flesh in their defiling lusts and who despise self-discipline. Presumptuous are they, and self-willed, unafraid to speak evil of nobleness. Whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, dare bring no railing accusation against them before the Lord. But [such as] these, like carnal brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speaking evil of things they don’t understand, shall utterly perish in their corruption, receiving the reward of [their] unrighteousness like those who count it a pleasure to brawl for the day. A stain [are they], and blemishes, sporting themselves in their deceitfulness while they feast among you, their eyes full of adultery, unable to cease sinning—beguiling, unstable souls, their hearts preoccupied with covetous acts. A cursed progeny [are they]” (2 Peter 2:6–14).

The severity of God’s judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah thus match the degree of wickedness to which their inhabitants had sunk: “The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities and the entire plain and all those cities’ inhabitants and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him and became a pillar of salt. And when Abraham arose early in the morning [and went] to the place where he stood before Jehovah, he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and the entire land of the plain. And he observed the smoke of that region ascending like the smoke of a furnace” (Genesis 19:23–28).



Although God had commanded Moses that “there shall be no whore among the daughters of Israel nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel” (Deuteronomy 23:17), the sin of homosexuality nevertheless manifested itself from time to time in Israel, causing the prophets to chasten the people: “Judah did evil in the sight of Jehovah. They provoked him to resentment by the sins they committed beyond what their fathers had done. For they also built shrines for themselves and images and groves on every high hill and under every green tree. And there were sodomites in the land, who did according to all the abominations of the nations Jehovah had cast out before the people of Israel” (1 Kings 14:22–24);

“The land is full of adulterers. Because of blasphemy the land mourns; the wilderness oases have dried up. Their conduct is evil, their aggressiveness unconscionable. Prophets and priests are both profane. Even in my house have I found their wickedness,’ says Jehovah. ‘Therefore shall their ways become slippery to them and in the dark. Becoming coercive, they will fall thereby. For I will bring evil upon them—the day of their judgment,’ says Jehovah. ‘I have seen foolishness among the prophets of Samaria, They prophesy by Baal and cause my people Israel to err. Among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen something awful: they commit adultery and live a lie. They strengthen the hands of evildoers so that no one turns from his wickedness. They are all like Sodom to me, and its inhabitants like Gomorrah.’

“Therefore thus says Jehovah of Hosts concerning the prophets: ‘See, I will make them eat bitterness and drink polluted water because from the prophets of Jerusalem has ungodliness spread throughout the land.’ Thus says Jehovah of Hosts, ‘Don’t heed the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you vain; they speak a vision from their own heart, not from the mouth of Jehovah. They still say to those who despise me, ‘Jehovah has said [it]; you will have peace.’ So

say they to everyone who walks after the imagination of his own heart: ‘No evil shall come upon you’” (Jeremiah 23:10–17).

These portrayals of wickedness among God’s people typify Isaiah’s end-time scene. Jehovah’s calling his own people by the names Sodom and Gomorrah indicates they have become as ungodly as those cities’ ancient inhabitants. Therefore they must suffer the same fate: “The look on their faces betrays them: they flaunt their sin like Sodom; they cannot hide it. Woe to their souls; they have brought disaster upon themselves!” (Isaiah 3:9); “Hear the word of Jehovah, O leaders of Sodom; give heed to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!” (Isaiah 1:10).

Even though God delivers a righteous few among his end-time people as he did Lot and his daughters from Sodom and Gomorrah, many end up perishing in the inferno: “Wickedness shall be set ablaze like a fire, and briars and thorns shall it consume; it shall ignite the jungle forests, and they shall billow upward in mushrooming clouds of smoke. At the wrath of Jehovah of Hosts the earth is scorched, and people are but fuel for the fire” (Isaiah 9:18–19); “Her streams shall turn into lava and her earth into brimstone; her land shall become as burning pitch. Night and day it shall not be quenched; its smoke shall ascend forever. It shall remain a wasteland from generation to generation; through endless ages none shall traverse it” (Isaiah 34:9–10).

Paul, too, warns against God’s coming “day of wrath” (Romans 2:5), when those who knew God would fall away and wilfully transgress with the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness, because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shown it to them. For the invisible things concerning him from the creation of the world have been clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made—even his eternal power and Godhead—so that they are

without excuse. Because when they knew God they glorified him not as God, nor were thankful but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image resembling corruptible man, birds, four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Therefore, God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies among themselves, who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen.

“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections, for even their women changed their natural use into what is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another—men with men, doing what is unseemly and receiving in their persons a fitting reward of their evil practices. And as they desired not to retain God in their awareness, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do things inexpedient, being filled with every [form of] unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, malevolence, being full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, viciousness, [becoming] gossipers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, conceivers of evil, disobedient to parents, devoid of understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unbending, unmerciful, who, knowing God’s judgment—that those who commit such things are worthy of death—not only do those things but have pleasure in those who do them” (Romans 1:18–32).

Because such wickedness by God’s end-time people is the catalyst of a worldwide Sodom and Gomorrah type of desolation, they experience what Babylon does. When “Babylon, the most splendid of kingdoms, the glory and pride of Chaldeans, shall be [thrown down] as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah” (Isaiah 13:19), they are destroyed with it.

## 7. Cosmic Disturbance

During the earth's formative stages, the heavens and the earth witness horrendous upheavals. Influenced by heavenly bodies around it and by cosmic debris, the earth experiences cycles of regression into more chaotic states followed by its regrouping and regenerating to the point that it can sustain life or higher forms of life. These cosmic disturbances are observed by visionaries such as King David:

“The earth tottered and trembled. The foundations of heaven moved and shook, for he was enraged. A smoke arose from his nostrils, from his mouth a devouring fire of kindled coals. He bowed the heavens and came down; darkness was under his feet. He rode on a cherub and flew. He was seen on the wings of the wind. He made darkness a pavilion round about himself, murky waters and dense clouds in the sky. Through the brightness before him appeared lighted coals of fire. Jehovah thundered from heaven; the Most High uttered his voice. He sent forth arrows and scattered them; lightnings discomfited them. The sea troughs appeared and the substratum of the world was exposed at Jehovah's rebuke, at the blast of his nostrils' breath” (2 Samuel 22:8–16).

Other instances of disturbance of the natural order are experienced by God's people themselves, as occurs during Israel's conquest of the Promised Land: “And it came to pass as they fled from before Israel in the descent to Beth-horon that Jehovah cast great stones from heaven upon them as far as Azekah. And they died. And those who died from the hailstones outnumbered those whom the people of Israel slew with the sword. Then spoke Joshua to Jehovah in the day Jehovah delivered up the Amorites before the people of Israel, saying, in the sight of Israel, ‘Sun, stand still upon Gibeon, and, Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon.’ And the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves on their enemies. Isn't this written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven and hastened not to go down

about an entire day. And there was no day like it before or after in which Jehovah heeded the voice of a man, for Jehovah fought for Israel” (Joshua 10:11–14).

Isaiah predicts similar end-time instances of cosmic upheaval as an integral part of God’s cleansing of the earth of its wicked inhabitants: “When the windows on high are opened, the earth shall shake to its foundations. The earth shall be crushed and rent; the earth shall break up and cave in; the earth shall convulse and lurch. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, sway back and forth like a shanty; its transgressions weigh it down, and when it collapses it shall rise no more” (Isaiah 24:18–20); “Lift up your eyes to the heavens; look on the earth beneath: the heavens shall vanish as by smoke, the earth wear out like a garment—its inhabitants shall die in the manner of vermin” (Isaiah 51:6); “I clothe the heavens with the blackness of mourning; I put up sackcloth to cover them” (Isaiah 50:3);

“The Day of Jehovah shall come as a cruel outburst of anger and wrath to make the earth a desolation, that sinners may be annihilated from it. The stars and constellations of the heavens will not shine. When the sun rises, it shall be obscured; nor will the moon give its light. . . . I will cause disturbance in the heavens when the earth is jolted out of place by the anger of Jehovah of Hosts in the day of his blazing wrath” (Isaiah 13:9–10, 13); “Men will go into crevices in the rocks and fissures in the cliffs, from the awesome presence of Jehovah and from the brightness of his glory, when he arises and strikes terror on earth” (Isaiah 2:21);

“Jehovah’s rage is upon all nations, his fury upon all their hosts; he has doomed them, consigned them to the slaughter. Their slain shall be flung out and their corpses emit a stench; their blood shall dissolve on the mountains, their fat decompose [on the hills]—when the heavens are rolled up as a scroll, and their starry hosts shed themselves with one accord, like withered leaves from a vine, or shriveled fruit from a fig tree.

When my sword drinks its fill in the heavens, it shall come down on Edom in judgment, on the people I have sentenced to damnation” (Isaiah 34:2–5). Isaiah’s end-time version of cosmic disturbance thus coincides with God’s Day of Judgment coming upon the earth’s unrepentant inhabitants, including those of his own people.

### 8. Primordial Chaos

“In the beginning”—when “God created the heavens and the earth”—“the earth was formless and unorganized (*tôhû wābôhû*), and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:1–2). The words *tôhû wābôhû* express the chaotic or disorganized state of the elements from which God formed the earth.

Isaiah’s portrayal of the earth’s creation best depicts God’s organization of the basic elements of “dust” and “waters” from their preexistent state into a place fit for human habitation: “Who measured out the waters with the hollow of his hand and gauged the heavens by the span of his fingers? Who compiled the earth’s dust by measure, weighing mountains in scales, hills in a balance? . . . Are you so unaware, that you have not heard? Have you not been told before, that you do not understand [by whom] the earth was founded? By him who sits enthroned above the earth’s sphere, to whom its inhabitants are as grasshoppers, who suspends the heavens like a canopy, stretching them out as a tent to dwell in” (Isaiah 40:12, 21–22).

The chaotic condition of the earth during its formation from cosmic debris in the beginning is nevertheless repeated in the end as its inhabitants’ wickedness leads to a similar dissolution of elements into a disorganized state. This time, however, the earth’s face is marred as its human establishments and elite institutions are demolished. Scattered throughout the Book of Isaiah we thus find the chaos motifs of dust, waters/hail, mud/mire/clay, mist/darkness, clouds/smoke, wind/vapor/tempest, fire/flames, chaff/stubble, refuse/litter, and dross/alloy.

All depict God's end-time de-creation of chaotic entities as he reduces the wicked of his people and the nations to nothing or non-entities:

**Dust:** "He has put down the elite inhabitants of the exalted city by casting it to the ground, laying it even with the *dust*. It is trodden underfoot by the feet of the poor, by the footsteps of those impoverished" (Isaiah 26:5-6; emphasis added); "As a blazing fire consumes stubble, and as dry weeds wane before the flame, so shall their roots decay away and their blossoms fly up like *dust*. For they have despised the law of Jehovah of Hosts and reviled the words of the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 5:24; emphasis added).

**Waters/hail:** "I will make justice the measure, righteousness the weight; a *hail* shall sweep away your false refuge and *waters* flood the hiding place" (Isaiah 28:17; emphasis added); "For by a *hail* shall forests be felled, cities utterly leveled" (Isaiah 32:19; emphasis added); "Jehovah will cause his voice to resound, and make visible his arm descending in furious rage, with flashes of devouring fire, explosive discharges and pounding *hail*" (Isaiah 30:30; emphasis added).

**Mud/mire/clay:** "The wicked are like the raging Sea, unable to rest, whose waters heave up *mire* and *mud*" (Isaiah 57:20; emphasis added); "I will commission him against a godless nation, appoint him over the people [deserving] of my vengeance, to pillage for plunder, to spoliage for spoil, to tread underfoot like *mud* in the streets" (Isaiah 10:6; emphasis added); "I have raised up one from the north who calls on my name, who shall come from the direction of sunrise. He shall come upon dignitaries as on *mud*, tread them as *clay* like a potter" (Isaiah 41:25; emphasis added).

**Mist/gloom/darkness:** "He shall be stirred up against them in that day, even as the Sea is stirred up. And should one look to the land, there [too] shall be a distressing *gloom*, for the daylight shall be darkened by an overhanging *mist*" (Isaiah 5:30; emphasis added); "They will look to the land, but there shall be

a depressing scene of anguish and *gloom*; and thus are they banished into outer *darkness*” (Isaiah 8:22; emphasis added).

**Clouds/smoke:** “Wickedness shall be set ablaze like a fire, and briars and thorns shall it consume; it shall ignite the jungle forests, and they shall billow upward in mushrooming *clouds of smoke*” (Isaiah 9:18; emphasis added); “Wail at the gates; howl in the city! Utterly melt away, you Philistines! From the North shall come [pillars of] *smoke*, and no place he has designated shall evade it” (Isaiah 14:31; emphasis added).

**Wind/vapor/tempest:** “When you cry out in distress, let those who flock to you save you! A *wind* shall carry all of them off; a *vapor* shall take them away” (Isaiah 57:13; emphasis added); “You shall thresh mountains to dust and make chaff of hills. As you winnow them, a *wind* shall take them away, a *tempest* dispel them” (Isaiah 41:15–16; emphasis added).

**Fire/flames:** “Your land is ruined, your cities burned with *fire*; your native soil is devoured by aliens in your presence, laid waste at its takeover by foreigners” (Isaiah 1:7; emphasis added); “Who is it that hands Jacob over to plunder and Israel to despoilers, if not Jehovah, against whom we have sinned? For they have no desire to walk in his ways or obey his law. So in the heat of his anger he pours out on them the violence of war, till it envelopes them in *flames*—yet they remain unaware—till it sets them on *fire*; yet they take it not to heart” (Isaiah 42:24–25; emphasis added).

**Chaff/stubble:** “Suddenly, in an instant, your crowds of evildoers shall become as fine dust, your violent mobs like flying *chaff*” (Isaiah 29:5; emphasis added); “Who has raised up Righteousness from the east, calling him to [the place of] his foot? Who has delivered nations to him, toppled their rulers, rendering them as dust to his sword, as driven *stubble* to his bow?” (Isaiah 41:2; emphasis added); “Nations may roar like the roaring of great waters, but when he rebukes them they will flee far away; they will be driven before the wind like *chaff* on the mountains, or as whirling [dust] in a storm. At evening



time shall be the catastrophe, and before morning they shall be no more. This is the lot of those who plunder us, the fate of those who despoil us” (Isaiah 17:13–14; emphasis added).

**Refuse/litter:** “The mighty shall be as *refuse*, and their works a spark; both shall burn up alike, and there shall be none to extinguish” (Isaiah 1:31; emphasis added); “Therefore the anger of Jehovah is kindled against his people: he draws back his hand against them and strikes them; the mountains quake, and their corpses lie like *litter* about the streets” (Isaiah 5:25; emphasis added).

**Dross/alloy:** “Your silver has become *dross*, your wine diluted with water. . . . I will restore my hand over you and smelt away your *dross* as in a crucible, and remove all your *alloy*” (Isaiah 1:22, 25; emphasis added).

## 9. Assyria’s World Conquest

Because Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure transforms the entire Book of Isaiah into an apocalyptic prophecy, ancient Assyria’s conquest of the then-known world typifies an end-time world conquest by an end-time “Assyria.” Historically, Assyria’s brutal subjugation of nations and peoples involves the destruction of much of their agriculture and infrastructure: “You have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, utterly destroying them” (2 Kings 19:11).

Because Assyria’s world conquest occurs in Isaiah’s day, Isaiah provides the best source both for its historical documentation and for its prophetic transformation into an end-time scenario. According to the way Isaiah nuances Assyria’s world conquest, the mastermind of that grand exploit is its tyrannical king, whom Jehovah appoints to that task on the heels of the apostasy of Jehovah’s own people: “Hail the Assyrian, the rod of my anger! He is a staff—my wrath in their hand. I will commission him against a godless nation, appoint him over the people [deserving] of my vengeance, to pillage for plunder, to spoliage for spoil, to tread underfoot like mud in

the streets. Nevertheless, it shall not seem so to him; this shall not be what he has in mind. His purpose shall be to annihilate and to exterminate nations not a few” (Isaiah 10:5–7).

An evil alliance of nations rallies to Assyria’s standard to accomplish the job of conquering the world: “Hark! A tumult on the mountains, as of a vast multitude. Hark! An uproar among kingdoms, as of nations assembling; Jehovah of Hosts is marshaling an army for war. They come from a distant land beyond the horizon—Jehovah and the instruments of his wrath—to cause destruction throughout the earth. . . . Whoever is found shall be thrust through; all who are caught shall fall by the sword. Their infants shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes, their homes plundered, their wives ravished. See, I stir up against them the Medes, who do not value silver, nor covet gold. Their bows shall tear apart the young. They will show no mercy to the newborn; their eye will not look with compassion on children” (Isaiah 13:4–5, 15–18).

Because of his remarkable success, the Assyrian archtyrant attributes all to his own genius, not to Israel’s God who empowers him (here, the pronoun “I” appears seven times, reflecting his unbounded egotism): “But when my Lord has fully accomplished his work in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, he will punish the king of Assyria for his notorious boasting and infamous conceit, because he said, ‘I have done it by my own ability and shrewdness, for I am ingenious. I have done away with the borders of nations, I have ravaged their reserves, I have vastly reduced the inhabitants. I have impounded the wealth of peoples like a nest, and I have gathered up the whole world as one gathers abandoned eggs; not one flapped its wings, or opened its mouth to utter a peep’” (Isaiah 10:12–14).

After he serves Jehovah’s purpose of punishing a wicked world, the Assyrian boaster himself comes to an end: “Whom have you mocked and ridiculed? Against whom have you raised your voice, lifting your eyes to high heaven? Against the Holy One of Israel! By your servants you have blasphemed my

Lord. You thought, ‘On account of my vast chariotry I have conquered the highest mountains, the farthest reaches of Lebanon. I have felled its tallest cedars, its choicest cypresses. I have reached its loftiest summit, its finest forest. I have dug wells and drunk of foreign waters. With the soles of my feet I have dried up all Egypt’s rivers!’ Have you not heard how I ordained this thing long ago, how in days of old I planned it? Now I have brought it to pass. You were destined to demolish fortified cities, [turning them] into heaps of rubble, while their timorous inhabitants shrank away in confusion, becoming as wild grass, transiently green, or like weeds on a roof that scorch before they grow up. But I know where you dwell, and your comings and goings, and how stirred up you are against me. And because of your snortings and bellowings against me, which have mounted up to my ears, I will put my ring in your nose and my bit in your mouth and turn you back by the way you came” (Isaiah 37:23–29).

Passing himself off as the god of this world, the archtyrant’s self-exaltation finally leads to his utter humiliation: “You said in your heart, ‘I will rise in the heavens and set up my throne above the stars of God; I will seat myself in the mount of assembly [of the gods], in the utmost heights or Zaphon. I will ascend above the altitude of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High!’ But you have been brought down to Sheol, to the utmost depths of the Pit. Those who catch sight of you stare at you, wondering, ‘Is this the man who made the earth shake and kingdoms quake, who turned the world into a wilderness, demolishing its cities, permitting not his captives to return home?’ . . . How the tyrant has met his end and tyranny ceased! Jehovah has broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of those who ruled—him who with unerring blows struck down the nations in anger, who subdued peoples in his wrath by relentless oppression” (Isaiah 14:13–17, 4–6). (Note: Although the above passage references the “king of Babylon,” Assyrian

conquerors of Babylon, as in this case, named themselves “King of Babylon.”)

### **10. The Flood**

The worldwide deluge God brings upon the earth in the days of Noah, which destroys men and beasts, is a consequence of humanity’s corruption and violence: “God saw that the wickedness of man on the earth was great and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And Jehovah regretted he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Jehovah said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth—men and beasts, crawling creatures, and the birds of the air—for I regret that I made them.’ But Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah. . . . And God looked on the earth, and verily it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way on the earth. And God said to Noah, ‘The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with violence by them. See, I will destroy them with the earth’” (Genesis 6:5–8, 12–13);

“In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day all the wellsprings of the mighty deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And rain came on the earth for forty days and forty nights. . . . And the flood stayed forty days on the earth. And the waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose above the earth. And the waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark [floated] on the water’s surface. The waters on the earth predominated until all high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The waters prevailed fifteen cubits high until the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth—both fowl and cattle, beasts and crawling creatures that crawl on the earth, and all men. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life and all that was upon the dry land died. Every living thing was destroyed that existed on the face of the ground. Men and cattle,

crawling creatures, and the birds of the air were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah remained and those with him in the ark” (Genesis 7:11–12, 17–23).

The new Flood that Isaiah predicts, on the other hand, although similarly destructive of men and beasts, is manmade. Using flood imagery to depict Assyria’s end-time conquest of the world, Isaiah links this new Flood to the old. By comparing the Assyrian archtyrant and his alliance of nations to the sea in commotion and to a river in flood, Isaiah draws on ancient Near Eastern mythology to tell us that the new Flood is as devastating as the old and serves the same purpose. Beginning with his own people, Jehovah permits the powers of chaos to predominate until the earth is cleansed of wickedness:

“My Lord has in store one mighty and strong: as a ravaging hailstorm sweeping down, or like an inundating deluge of mighty waters, he will hurl them to the ground by his hand” (Isaiah 28:2); “My Lord will cause to come up over them the great and mighty waters of the River—the king of Assyria in all his glory. He will rise up over all his channels and overflow all his banks. He will sweep into Judea [like] a flood and, passing through, reach the very neck; his outspread wings will span the breadth of your land, O Immanuel” (Isaiah 8:7–8); “He shall be stirred up against them in that day, even as the Sea is stirred up” (Isaiah 5:30).

When the new Flood has served its purpose, Jehovah relents and receives back his people who repent: “This is to me as in the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would no more flood the earth. So I swear to have no more anger toward you, never again to rebuke you” (Isaiah 54:9).

Assyria and its alliance meet the same fate they impose on the world they destroy and subjugate: “Woe to the many peoples in an uproar, who rage like the raging of the seas—tumultuous nations, in commotion like the turbulence of mighty waters! Nations may roar like the roaring of great waters, but when he rebukes them they will flee far away; they will be

driven before the wind like chaff on the mountains, or as whirling dust in a storm. At evening time shall be the catastrophe, and before morning they shall be no more. This is the lot of those who plunder us, the fate of those who despoil us” (Isaiah 17:12–14); “At that time shall tribute be brought to Jehovah of Hosts from a nation perpetually on the move, from a nation dreaded far and wide, a people continually infringing, whose rivers have annexed their lands, to the place of the name of Jehovah of Hosts: Mount Zion” (Isaiah 18:7).

## II. Assyria’s Invasion of the Promised Land

The fact that Assyria’s invasion of both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel occurs during Isaiah’s lifetime—not before, as with other events of which he predicts new versions—allows him to use that event, too, as a *type* of future invasion of the lands of God’s people. Indeed, Assyria’s conquest of the Promised Land greatly impacts the course of Israel’s history and becomes a key typological component of Isaiah’s end-time scenario:

“It happened in the fourth year of King Hezekiah—being the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel—that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. And at the end of three years they captured it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea, king of Israel, Samaria was taken. . . . And in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the walled cities of Judea and captured them” (2 Kings 18:9–10, 13).

The end-time Assyrian alliance acts much the same as its ancient counterpart when Jehovah summons it to invade his people’s lands. Contrasting Jehovah’s own people, who have sunk into a lax and licentious state (Isaiah 8:15; 28:12–13; 29:10; 43:22; 50:4; 59:10), is the well-disciplined Assyrian alliance: “He raises an ensign to distant nations and summons them from beyond the horizon. Forthwith they come, swiftly and speedily.

Not one of them grows weary, nor does any stumble; they do not drowse or fall asleep. Their waist-belts come not loose nor their sandal thongs undone. Their arrows are sharp; all their bows are strung. The tread of their warhorses resembles flint; their chariot wheels revolve like a whirlwind. They have the roar of a lion; they are aroused like young lions: growling, they seize the prey, and escape, and none comes to the rescue” (Isaiah 5:26–29).

The king of Assyria’s unstoppable military machine advances into country after country, his ultimate goal being the conquest of God’s elect: “He advances on Aiath, passes through Migron; at Micmash he marshals his weaponry. They cross over the pass, stopping overnight at Geba. Ramah is in a state of alarm, Gibeah of Saul is fleeing. Cry out, O Daughter of Gallim! Hear her, Laishah; answer her, Anathoth! Madmenah has moved out of the way, the inhabitants of Gebim are in full flight. This same day he will but pause at Nob and signal the advance against the mountain of the Daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem” (Isaiah 10:28–32).

In the end, however, Assyria’s armies are defeated in two major battles: “At the voice of Jehovah the Assyrians will be terror-stricken, they who used to strike with the rod. At every sweep of the staff of authority, when Jehovah lowers it upon them, they will be fought in mortal combat” (Isaiah 30:31–32); “And Assyria shall fall by a sword not of man; a sword not of mortals shall devour them: before that sword they shall waste away and their young men melt; their captain shall expire in terror and their officers shrink from the ensign,’ says Jehovah, whose fire is in Zion, whose furnace is in Jerusalem” (Isaiah 31:8–9). Following these major defeats, Assyria’s scattered garrisons are mopped up by God’s end-time servant as he and the armies of God reconquer the earth on behalf of God’s people.

## 12. The Egyptian Bondage

Israel's ancient bondage in Egypt comes about when a new Egyptian dynasty fears the populous Israelites who had taken up residence in Egypt in the days of Joseph the son of Jacob, whom an earlier Pharaoh had made ruler of all Egypt: "Now there arose a new king over Egypt who didn't know Joseph. And he said to his people, 'See, the people of Israel are more and mightier than we are. Come, let us deal wisely with them lest they multiply and it come to pass that, when there is a war, they join our enemies and fight against us and then get out of the land.' So they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the people of Israel. And the Egyptians made the people of Israel serve rigorously and made their lives bitter with hard bondage, with mortar and brick and with all kinds of servitude in the field, all their employ in which they made them serve being rigorous" (Exodus 1:8-14).

Although the end-time versions of ancient events are much briefer in duration—all being compressed into a period of just a few years—their reality matches what occurred in the past: "Thus says my Lord Jehovah: 'At first my people went down to Egypt to sojourn there. Then the Assyrians subjected them for nothing. And now, what have I here?' says Jehovah. 'My people are taken over without price; those who govern them act presumptuously,' says Jehovah, 'and my name is constantly abused all the day long'" (Isaiah 52:4-5).

This passage compares Israel's bondage in Egypt to its later subjection to Assyria, then uses both to predict an end-time bondage or captivity in which the political leaders of God's people "take them over" and lord it over them as did the Egyptians and Assyrians anciently. Assyria's conquest of the world, moreover, maintains and perpetuates this bondage, so that from the time God's end-time people apostatize,



they begin to continuously suffer the covenant curse of bondage to enemies.

Those of his people who repent, on the other hand, God releases from bondage after the curse serves its purpose of restoring them to a covenant relationship with him: “Thus says my Lord, Jehovah of Hosts: ‘O my people who inhabit Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrians, though they strike you with the rod or raise their staff over you, as did the Egyptians’” (Isaiah 10:24); “I will break Assyria in my own land, trample them underfoot on my mountains; their yoke shall be taken from them, their burden removed from their shoulders” (Isaiah 14:25); “In that day their burdens shall be lifted from your shoulders, their yoke [removed] from your neck: the yoke [that wore away your fatness] shall by fatness wear away” (Isaiah 10:27).

### **13. Israel’s Exodus out of Egypt**

After successive pharaohs enslave the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Egypt and make them serve in hard bondage, God raises up Moses to deliver them: “Then said Jehovah to Moses, ‘Now shall you see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand will he let them go, and with a strong hand will he drive them out of his land.’ And God spoke to Moses and said to him, ‘I am Jehovah. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by [the name of] God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah I wasn’t known to them. I have also established my covenant with them to give them the Land of Canaan, the land of their sojourn in which they were strangers. And I have heard the groanings of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered my covenant. Therefore say to the people of Israel, “I am Jehovah. I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians and will rid you of their bondage. I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm and with great judgments. And I will take you to myself for a people; I will be a God to you. And you will know that I am Jehovah your God when I bring

you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for an inheritance. I am Jehovah”” (Exodus 6:1–8).

After Jehovah brings ten plagues on the land of Egypt, and Pharaoh finally lets the Israelites go, he and his army nevertheless corner them at the Red Sea in a last attempt to once again enslave them. So Jehovah says to Moses, “Raise your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it so that the people of Israel may go through the midst of the sea on dry ground” (Exodus 14:16). When Moses, therefore, “stretched out his hand over the sea, Jehovah caused the sea to retreat with a strong east wind all that night, making the sea dry ground as the waters divided. Then the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. But the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea with Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and horsemen. And it happened in the morning watch that Jehovah looked at the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and troubled the Egyptian host and took off their chariot wheels when they drove them heavily. So the Egyptians said, ‘Let us flee from the face of Israel, for Jehovah battles for them against the Egyptians.’

“Then Jehovah said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may return over the Egyptians and over their chariots and horsemen.’ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its strength as the morning appeared. And the Egyptians fled against it, and Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots, horsemen, and the entire host of Pharaoh who came into the sea after them. There remained not so much as one of them. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus did Jehovah save Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians. And Israel beheld the Egyptian dead on the sea-shore and saw the great work Jehovah had done against the Egyptians. And the people feared Jehovah, and they believed Jehovah and his servant Moses” (Exodus 14:21–31).

In the same way Jehovah intervenes in his people’s affairs when he raises up Moses and empowers him to deliver Israel from bondage anciently, so he intervenes again when he raises up and empowers his end-time servant—his mighty *arm*—to deliver his people at the end of the world. This time, however, it appears that Jehovah’s servant, who is elsewhere called “the angel of his presence” (Isaiah 63:9), was directly involved in delivering Israel in Moses’ day: “Awake, arise; clothe yourself with power, O *arm* of Jehovah! Bestir yourself, as in ancient times, as in generations of old. Was it not you who carved up Rahab, you who slew the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the Sea, the waters of the mighty deep, and made of ocean depths a way by which the redeemed might pass? Let the ransomed of Jehovah return! Let them come singing to Zion, their heads crowned with everlasting joy; let them obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away” (Isaiah 51:9–11; emphasis added).

Israel’s end-time exodus, however, instead of being from a single land—Egypt—is out of Babylon, which Isaiah identifies as the world at large on the eve of its destruction (Isaiah 13:1, 9, 11, 19). At the new exodus, the name “Babylon” thus functions as a codename of the world in its corrupt state: “Go forth out of Babylon, flee from Chaldea! Make this announcement with resounding voice; broadcast it to the end of the earth. Say, ‘Jehovah has redeemed his servant Jacob.’” (Isaiah 48:20). Just as the angel of Jehovah accompanies Israel’s ancient exodus, so on this occasion Jehovah himself accompanies them: “Turn away, depart; touch nothing defiled as you leave there. Come out of her and be pure, you who bear Jehovah’s vessels. But you

shall not leave in haste or go in flight: Jehovah will go before you, the God of Israel behind you” (Isaiah 52:11–12).

Exiting end-time Babylon, God’s people thus arrive from the four corners of the earth: “Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, ‘Give up!’ to the south, ‘Withhold not!’ Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth” (Isaiah 43:5–6). As before, no armies or elements stand in their way: “Thus says Jehovah—who provides a way in the Sea, a path through the mighty waters, who dispatches chariots and horses, armies of men in full strength; they lie down as one, to rise no more, they flicker and die, snuffed out like a wick” (Isaiah 43:16–17); “When you cross the waters, I will be with you; [when you traverse] the rivers, you shall not be overwhelmed. Though you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; its flame shall not consume you” (Isaiah 43:2).

So great an event is the new, end-time exodus of God’s people that only the new, not the old, is celebrated in the millennial age: “‘The days come,’ says Jehovah, ‘that it will no more be said, “Jehovah lives, who brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,” but “Jehovah loves, who brought the people of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where he had driven them.” For I will bring them again into the land I gave their fathers” (Jeremiah 16:14–15).

#### **14. Israel’s Wandering in the Wilderness**

After the Israelites escape Egypt under Moses, they dwell forty years in the Sinai wilderness before inheriting the Promised Land. Several accounts record their trek: “The entire assembly of the people of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin in their travels according to the commandment of Jehovah. And they encamped in Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. So the people chided with Moses and said, ‘Give us water so we may drink.’ And Moses

said to them, ‘Why do you chide with me? Why do you tempt Jehovah?’ And the people thirsted there for water. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, ‘Why is it that you have brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and cattle with thirst?’ And Moses called to Jehovah, saying, ‘What shall I do for these people? They are almost ready to stone me.’ And Jehovah said to Moses, ‘Go before the people and take with you of the elders of Israel. And the rod with which you smote the river, take in your hand and go. See, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb. And you will smite the rock and water will come out of it so that the people may drink.’ And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel” (Exodus 17:1–6);

“And the people of Israel took their journey out of the wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. From the first, they took their journey according to the commandment of Jehovah by the hand of Moses” (Numbers 10:12–13); “And the people of Israel set forward and encamped in Oboth. And they journeyed from Oboth and encamped at Ije-abarim in the wilderness before Moab toward the sunrise. And from there they moved and encamped in the Valley of Zared, and from there they moved and encamped on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that approaches the borders of the Amorites” (Numbers 21:10–13).

Although the end-time sequel of Israel’s wandering in the wilderness is much briefer in comparison, it has the same purifying and sanctifying effect on God’s people in preparing them to inherit promised lands as Israel’s ancient dwelling in the wilderness: “I will bring you out from among the peoples and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered, with a mighty hand and with a stretched-out arm and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. As I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you,” says the Lord God. ‘And I will

cause you to pass under the rod and bring you into the bond of the covenant. I will purge out from among you the rebels and those who transgress against me. I will bring them forth out of the country where they dwell and they won't enter into the Land of Israel. Then will you know that I am Jehovah” (Ezekiel 20:34–38).

Isaiah predicts that God appoints his end-time servant to lead the new exodus and new wandering in the wilderness just as Moses does in antiquity: “He said: It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore those preserved of Israel. I will also appoint you to be a light to the nations, that my salvation may be to the end of the earth. . . . Thus says Jehovah: ‘At a favorable time I have answered you; in the day of salvation I have come to your aid: I have created you and appointed you to be a covenant of the people, to restore the Land and reappportion the desolate estates, to say to the captives, “Come forth!” and to those in darkness, “Show yourselves!” They shall feed along the way and find pasture on all barren heights; they shall not hunger or thirst, nor be smitten by the heatwave or the sun: he who has mercy on them will guide them; he will lead them by springs of water. All my mountain ranges I will appoint as roads; my highways shall be on high. See these, coming from afar, these, from the northwest, and these, from the land of Sinim” (Isaiah 49:6, 8–12).

Not only does God provide water in the wilderness for his people as before, he also regenerates the wilderness so that its trees provide shade: “When the poor and needy require water, and there is none, and their tongue becomes parched with thirst, I Jehovah will answer their want; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open up streams in barren hill country, springs in the midst of the plains; I will turn the desert into lakes, parched lands into fountains of water. I will bring cedars and acacias, myrtles and oleasters in the wilderness; I will place cypresses, elms and box trees in the steppes—that

all may see it and know, consider it, and perceive that Jehovah's hand did this, that the Holy One of Israel created it" (Isaiah 41:17-20);

"See, I do a new thing; it is now springing up. Surely, you are aware of it: I am making roads through the desert, streams in the wasteland. The wild beasts do me honor, the jackals and birds of prey, for bringing water to the wilderness, streams to the dry land, that I may give drink to my chosen people, the people I formed for myself to speak out in praise of me" (Isaiah 43:19-21); "They thirsted not when he led them through arid places: he caused water to flow for them from the rock; he cleaved the rock and water gushed out" (Isaiah 48:21); "You shall depart in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and hills shall sing at your presence and the trees of the meadows all clap their hands. In place of the thornbush shall come up the cypress, in place of nettles, the myrtle. This shall serve as a testimony of Jehovah, an everlasting sign that shall not be done away" (Isaiah 55:12-13).

The new wandering in the wilderness has a way of leveling the playing field for God's end-time people as they anticipate Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth: "A voice calls out, 'In the desert prepare the way for Jehovah; in the wilderness pave a straight highway for our God: every ravine must be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the uneven ground must become level and rough terrain a plain'" (Isaiah 40:3-4).

God's repentant people who survive the earth's cleansing to inherit the Promised Land receive instruction in the wilderness, just as the Israelites do anciently: "In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind see out of gross darkness. The lowly shall obtain an increase of joy in Jehovah, and the poorest of men rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 29:18-19); "And a man shall become as a shelter from the wind or refuge from the storm, like brooks of water in a desert place, or the shade of a large rock in arid country. The eyes of those who see shall not be shut, and the ears of

those who hear shall listen. The minds of the rash shall learn understanding, and the tongues of the stammerers master eloquence” (Isaiah 32:2–4).

### **15. Israel’s Pilgrimage to Zion**

Isaiah nuances the end-time exodus and wandering in the wilderness of God’s repentant people by comparing it to a pilgrimage patterned after Israel’s ancient pilgrimages to the temple. Annually or bi-annually, Israel’s tribes gathered from throughout the Promised Land to Jerusalem to renew their covenants with Jehovah and bring offerings to the temple. Those were joyous occasions, when the people sang hymns along the way and fellowshiped with friends and loved ones:

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of Jehovah.’ Our feet will stand within your gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city compacted together. There, the tribes go up—the tribes of Jehovah—to the testimony of Israel, to give thanks to the name of Jehovah” (Psalm 122:1–4); “I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of Jehovah. Now will I pay my vows to Jehovah in the presence of all his people, in the courts of Jehovah’s house, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise Jehovah” (Psalm 116:17–19). Even the vassal kings of David’s and Solomon’s empire participated in Israel’s pilgrimage: “Because of your temple in Jerusalem, kings will bring presents to you” (Psalm 68:29).

In the end-time version of these events, when the rest of the world is suffering God’s judgments, those who love Jehovah rejoice in taking part in the great gathering to his temple: “But for you there shall be singing, as on the night when a festival commences, and rejoicing of heart, as when men march with flutes [and drums and lyres] on their way to the mountain of Jehovah, to the Rock of Israel” (Isaiah 30:29); “There shall be highways and roads which shall be called the Way of Holiness, for they shall be for such [as are holy]. The unclean shall not traverse them; on them shall no



reprobates wander. No lion shall be encountered there, nor shall wild beasts intrude. But the redeemed shall walk them, the ransomed of Jehovah shall return; they shall come singing to Zion, their heads crowned with everlasting joy. They shall have won joy and gladness when sorrow and sighing flee away” (Isaiah 35:8–10).

Because during several millennia of Israel’s exile many descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob assimilate into the nations of the Gentiles, many who return from dispersion in the end-time exodus and wandering in the wilderness reclaim their Israelite identity and renew their covenant with Jehovah: “I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, my blessing upon your posterity. They shall shoot up like grass among streams of water, like willows by running brooks. One will say, ‘I am Jehovah’s,’ and another name himself Jacob. Yet others will inscribe on their arm, ‘To Jehovah,’ and adopt the name Israel” (Isaiah 44:3–5).

From among Israel’s lineages who have assimilated into the Gentiles, too, return certain kings and queens, fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that kings would come out of their loins (Genesis 17:6, 16; 35:11). Jeremiah predicts this: “There shall enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people” (Jeremiah 22:4). These kings and their queens assist Israel’s scattered remnants to return from dispersion: “Thus says my Lord Jehovah: ‘I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, raise my ensign to the nations; and they will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, queens your nursing mothers’” (Isaiah 49:22–23);

“Nations will come to your light, their kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look about you! They have all assembled to come to you: your sons shall arrive from afar; your daughters shall return to your side. Then, when you see it, your face will light up, your heart swell with awe: the

multitude of the Sea shall resort to you; a host of nations shall enter you. A myriad of camels shall cover your land, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and frankincense and heralding the praises of Jehovah. All Kedar's flocks will gather to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they shall be accepted as offerings on my altar, and so I will make glorious my house of glory" (Isaiah 60:3-7).

### **16. Jehovah's Protective Cloud**

God provided divine protection for Israel when it came out of the land of Egypt by placing his cloud of glory over them to shield them from the elements and to separate them from their enemies: "The angel of God who went before the camp of Israel moved and went behind them. And the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, being a cloud and darkness [to them] but giving light by night [to these], so that one didn't come near the other the entire night" (Exodus 14:19-20); "And they took their journey from Succoth and encamped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. And Jehovah went before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, going by day and by night, not taking away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people" (Exodus 13:20-22).

God's cloud of glory led the Israelites throughout their travels: "On the day the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle or tent of testimony. And in the evening it appeared on the tabernacle as fire until morning. So it was continuously. The cloud covered it [by day] and it appeared as fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle the people of Israel traveled, and in the place where the cloud stayed, there the people of Israel pitched their tents. At Jehovah's command the people of Israel

traveled, and at Jehovah's command they pitched their tents" (Numbers 9:15-18).

As in the past, Jehovah's cloud shields his end-time elect from their enemies and provides them with light during a time of darkness: "Although darkness covers the earth, and a thick mist the peoples, upon you Jehovah will shine; over you his glory shall be visible" (Isaiah 60:2); "Over the whole site of Mount Zion, and over its solemn assembly, Jehovah will form a cloud by day and a mist glowing with fire by night: above all that is glorious shall be a canopy. It shall be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, a secret refuge from the downpour and from rain" (Isaiah 4:5-6).

In the midst of enemy assaults, God's cloud of glory protects his elect people from harm: "You were a refuge for the poor, a shelter for the needy in distress, a covert from the downpour and shade from the heat. When the blasts of tyrants beat down like torrents against a wall, or like scorching heat in the desert, you quelled the onslaughts of the heathen: as burning heat by the shade of a cloud, you subdued the power of tyrants" (Isaiah 25:4-5). And as the angel of God accompanied his people in the past, so Jehovah accompanies their end-time travels: "Jehovah will go before you, the God of Israel behind you" (Isaiah 52:12).

### **17. Assyria's Siege of Jerusalem**

Assyria's siege of Jerusalem in Isaiah's day set another historical precedent that typifies an end-time such event by an end-time Assyria: "In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria marched against all the fortified cities of Judea and seized them. And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. And he took up a position by the aqueduct of the Upper Reservoir, on the road to the Laundry Plaza" (Isaiah 36:1-2).

While demanding the city's surrender on pain of death, the military commander vilifies King Hezekiah and attempts to win the people over: "Then Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in Judean, 'Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! Thus says the king: "Do not let Hezekiah delude you! He cannot deliver you. Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in Jehovah by saying, Jehovah will surely save us; this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Do not listen to Hezekiah!" Thus says the king of Assyria: "Make peace with me by coming out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and his own fig tree and drink water from his own cistern, until I come back and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and wine, a land of grain [fields] and vineyards. . . ." But they remained silent, replying nothing, for the king had commanded them not to answer him" (Isaiah 36:13–17, 21).

The king of Assyria himself follows the same tactic: "And the king of Assyria "sent messengers to Hezekiah, telling them, 'Speak thus to Hezekiah king of Judah: "Let not your God in whom you trust delude you into thinking that Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. You yourself have heard what the kings of Assyria have done, annexing all lands. Shall you then escape? Did the gods of the nations my fathers destroyed deliver them? [Did they deliver] Gozan and Haran, Rezeph and the Edenites in Tel Assar? Where are the kings of Hamath and Arpad and the kings of the cities of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?"

"And Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and read it. Then Hezekiah went up to the house of Jehovah and unrolled it before Jehovah. And Hezekiah prayed to Jehovah and said, 'O Jehovah of Hosts, God of Israel, who sits enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. It is you who made the heavens and the earth. O Jehovah, give ear and hear; O Jehovah, open your eyes and see. Listen to all the words Sennacherib has sent to mock

the living God. O Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have indeed destroyed all peoples and their lands, committing their gods to the fire. For they were no gods, but mere works of men's hands, of wood and of stone, and so they could destroy them. But now, O Jehovah our God, deliver us out of his hand, that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone are Jehovah" (Isaiah 37:9–20).

Because the people prove loyal to their king and the king proves loyal to God, Jehovah answers Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah: "To you shall this be a sign: This year eat what grows wild, and the following year what springs up of itself. But in the third year sow and harvest, plant vineyards and eat their fruit: the remnant of the house of Judah that survives shall once more take root below and bear fruit above. For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and from Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will accomplish it. Therefore, thus says Jehovah concerning the king of Assyria: 'He shall not enter this city or shoot an arrow here. He shall not advance against it with armor, nor erect siegeworks against it. By the way he came he shall return; he shall not enter this city,' says Jehovah. 'I will protect this city and save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.' Then the angel of Jehovah went out and slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp. And when men arose in the morning, there lay all their dead bodies!" (Isaiah 37:30–36; compare 2 Kings 19:29–35).

Just as King Hezekiah performs the spiritual role of a proxy savior to his people, so does God's servant in the end-time sequel to these events. As Hezekiah suffers a mortal illness to pay the price of his people's deliverance (Isaiah 38:1–20), so does God's servant when he is "marred beyond human likeness" by his enemies (Isaiah 52:14).

Having passed God's test of their loyalty, King Hezekiah and his people ascend to the next highest spiritual level: "O my Lord, by means of such [trials] comes [a newness of] life, and

throughout them all the renewal of my spirit. Surely, for my own good I am in such dire distress; [by its means] you draw my soul out of the Pit of Dissolution. For you have cast all my sins behind you, restoring and reviving me (Isaiah 38:16–17); “Comfort and give solace to my people,” says your God; ‘speak kindly to Jerusalem. Announce to her that she has served her term, that her guilt has been expiated. She has received from Jehovah’s hand double for all her sins’” (Isaiah 40:1–2). Having proven loyal to Israel’s God under the threat of death—the king individually, and the people collectively—he and they experience parallel rebirths as in the principle of the one and the many.

### **18. The Passover**

Perhaps one reason God commanded the Israelites to observe the Passover “throughout your generations” (Exodus 12:14, 42) was to foreshadow what he would do at the end of time when Jehovah would once again “pass over” his elect people while he destroyed their enemies. An ordinance centered around Jehovah’s proxy salvation of his people, moreover—typified by “a yearling lamb without blemish” (Exodus 12:5)—would have meaning in later generations when “the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world” would be slain by Israel’s high priest at Passover (John 1:29; 18:1–19:42). Ultimately, it was the Passover lamb that freed Israel from bondage in Egypt when all else failed:

“Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, ‘Pick out and take a lamb according to your families and kill the Passover. And take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood in the basin, and strike the lintel and two side posts with the blood from the basin. And let none of you go outside the door of his house until morning. For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and two side posts, Jehovah will pass over the door and won’t let the destroyer come into your houses to smite [you].’”

And you will perform this as an ordinance for you and your children forever. And it will be when you come into the land Jehovah gives you as he hath promised, that you will perform this ceremony. And it will be when your children say to you, “For what purpose is this ceremony?” that you will say, “It is the sacrifice of Jehovah’s Passover, when he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, and when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses.” And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

“So the people of Israel went and did as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, and they performed it. And it happened at midnight that Jehovah smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and also all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great outcry in Egypt for there wasn’t a house where there wasn’t one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night and said, ‘Rise up and go forth from among my people, both you and the people of Israel, and go and serve Jehovah as you have said. Also take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also.’ And the Egyptians urged the people to send them out of the land quickly, for they said, ‘[Otherwise] we are all dead men’” (Exodus 12:21–33).

Harking back to Israel’s ancient Passover, Isaiah predicts an end-time Passover in which those who rely of Jehovah’s proxy salvation escape his wrath upon a wicked world: “Come, O my people, enter your chambers and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves a little while until the wrath is past. For now will Jehovah come out of his dwelling place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities; the earth will uncover the blood shed upon it and no more conceal its slain” (Isaiah 26:20–21); “As birds hover over [the nest], so will Jehovah of Hosts guard Jerusalem; by protecting it he will deliver it, by passing over it, preserve it” (Isaiah 31:5).

Isaiah additionally depicts Jehovah as “a lamb led to slaughter” in the course of fulfilling his role as a proxy savior of his people: “He bore our sufferings, endured our griefs, though we thought him stricken, smitten of God, and humbled. But he was pierced for our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities; the price of our peace he incurred, and with his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep had gone astray, each of us headed his own way; Jehovah brought together upon himself the iniquity of us all. He was harassed, yet submissive, and opened not his mouth—like a lamb led to slaughter, like a sheep, dumb before its shearers, he opened not his mouth. By arrest and trial he was taken away. Who can apprise his generation that he was cut off from the land of the living for the crime of my people, to whom the blow was due?” (Isaiah 53:4–8).

After Jehovah himself becomes “an offering for guilt (Isaiah 53:10), no further Passover Lamb is needed to symbolize his atonement for transgression: “I required not that you bring me offerings from your flocks or pay me homage by sacrificial slaughter; I have not burdened you with oblations or wearied you with burning incense. [Nor have I burdened you] to buy me the fragrant calamus or sate me with the fat of immolations. Yet you have burdened me with your sins, wearied me with your iniquities. But it is I myself, and for my own sake, who blot out your offenses, remembering your sins no more” (Isaiah 43:23–25). In the earth’s millennial age, any animal sacrifice will be an abhorrence: “Whoever slaughters an ox is as one who kills a man, and whoever sacrifices a lamb, as one who breaks a dog’s neck” (Isaiah 66:3).

### **19. Jehovah’s Descent on the Mount**

Jehovah’s descent on Mount Sinai anciently put the Israelites in awe of him as they witnessed his display of power after being warned by Moses not to approach: “Jehovah said to Moses, ‘Go to the people and sanctify them today and



tomorrow. Let them wash their clothes and be ready the third day, for on the third day Jehovah will come down in the sight of all the people on Mount Sinai. Set bounds for the people round about, saying, "Take care not to go up the mountain or to touch the perimeter. Whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death"" (Exodus 19:10-12);

"And it happened on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain. The sound of the trumpet was very loud so that all the people in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. And Mount Sinai was altogether clouded over because Jehovah had descended on it with fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace and the entire mountain quaked tremendously. And after the sound of the trumpet had rung out a long time, growing louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him by a voice. Jehovah came down on Mount Sinai on top of the mountain, and Jehovah called to Moses to climb to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up. And Jehovah said to Moses, 'Go down and charge the people not to break through to Jehovah or to gaze [upon him] lest many of them perish'" (Exodus 19:16-21).

To the masses gathered at Mount Sinai, Jehovah appeared as a larger-than-life reality: "All the people saw the thunders and lightnings, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw it they moved away and stood at a distance. And they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear. But don't let God speak with us lest we die.' And Moses said to the people, 'Don't be afraid, for God has come to prove you in order that his fear may be before you, so that you will not sin.' And the people stood at a distance, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was" (Exodus 20:18-21).

To his elders who ascended with Moses on Mount Sinai, on the other hand, Jehovah was a personable and accessible

God in whose presence they ate and drank: “Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. And under his feet was, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone and as it were the firmament of heaven in its clarity. On the nobles of the people of Israel he did not lay his hand, but they saw God and ate and drank. And Jehovah said to Moses, ‘Come up to me in the mountain and stay there, and I will give you tablets of stone—a law and commandments, which I have written, so that you may teach them.’

“So Moses arose, and also Joshua his minister, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, ‘Stay here for us until we return to you. See, Aaron and Hur are with you. If anyone has a matter to deal with, let him come to them.’ And Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. The glory of Jehovah abode on Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it for six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of Jehovah was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the people of Israel. And when Moses got up into the mountain he went into the midst of the cloud. And Moses was in the mountain forty days and forty nights” (Exodus 24:9–18).

In the end-time version of these events, the enemies of God’s people are the ones who quail and quake before him, though these may include the evildoers of his own people: “O that you would rend the heavens and descend, the mountains melting at your presence—as when fire is lit for boiling water, which bubbles over from the heat—to make yourself known to your adversaries, the nations trembling at your presence—as when you performed awesome things unexpected by us: your descent [of old], when the mountains quaked before you!” (Isaiah 64:1–3); “Thus said Jehovah to me: ‘As a lion or a young lion growls over the prey when the shepherds muster in full force against him, and is not dismayed at the sound of

their voice nor daunted by their numbers, so shall Jehovah of Hosts be when he descends to wage war upon Mount Zion and upon its heights” (Isaiah 31:4); “Jehovah will cause his voice to resound, and make visible his arm descending in furious rage, with flashes of devouring fire, explosive discharges and pounding hail” (Isaiah 30:30).

Jehovah’s appearance to the elders of his people on Mount Sinai has a sequel in his end-time appearance to his elders at the time he comes to reign on the earth: “The moon will blush and the sun be put to shame, when Jehovah of Hosts manifests his reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and [his] glory in the presence of his elders” (Isaiah 24:23). Jehovah’s end-time descent on the mount thus parallels that in Moses’ day, while the spiritual categories of people who experienced Jehovah’s manifestation of his presence in different ways in the past match the ones who do so in the future.

## **20. Jehovah’s Consuming Fire**

There were times during Israel’s wilderness wandering when God’s consuming fire burned up the offenders among his people. While some of their leaders misused their authority, others murmured against Jehovah and against Moses, his prophet: “When the people complained, it displeased Jehovah. Jehovah heard it and his anger was kindled, and the fire of Jehovah burned among them and consumed those who were in the farthest parts of the camp” (Numbers 11:1); “The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died at the time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men. And they became a sign” (Numbers 26:10).

When Jehovah’s end-time coming to the earth draws near, his fire burns up both the offenders among his own people and his people’s enemies alike: “See, Jehovah comes with fire, his chariots like a whirlwind, to retaliate in furious anger, to rebuke with conflagrations of fire. For with fire and with his

sword shall Jehovah execute judgment on all flesh, and those slain by Jehovah shall be many” (Isaiah 66:15–16); “Whole nations have been burned like lime, mown down like thorns and set ablaze. Take heed what I have done, you who are far off; you who are near, be apprised of my might! The sinners in Zion are struck with fear; the godless are in the grip of trembling: ‘Who among us can live through the devouring fire? Who among us can abide eternal burning?’” (Isaiah 33:12–14).

Jehovah’s agent for burning up the wicked of his people and the nations is the king of Assyria and his alliance, who personify the fire that consumes them: “Your land is ruined, your cities burned with fire; your native soil is devoured by aliens in your presence, laid waste at its takeover by foreigners” (Isaiah 1:7); “In the heat of his anger he pours out on them the violence of war, till it envelopes them in flames—yet they remain unaware—till it sets them on fire; yet they take it not to heart” (Isaiah 42:25).

The very fate the king of Assyria brought upon others, however, he himself suffers when Jehovah makes an end of him: “Therefore will the Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, send a consumption into his fertile lands, and cause a fire to flare up like a burning hearth, to undermine his glory: the Light of Israel will be the fire and their Holy One the flame, and it shall burn up and devour his briars and thorns in a single day” (Isaiah 10:16–17); “Tophet has been prepared of old, [a hearth] indeed, made ready for rulers; broad and deep is its fire pit and ample its pyre; Jehovah’s breath burns within it like a river of lava” (Isaiah 30:33); “And they shall go out and look upon the corpses of the people who transgressed against me, whose worms do not die and whose fire shall not be extinguished. They shall be a horror to all flesh” (Isaiah 66:24).

As the earth was “baptized” with water in the days of Noah, so it is “baptized” with fire at the end of the world when it undergoes the same cycle of purification and sanctification as

Israel does collectively and as his holy ones do individually in their respective phases of spiritual ascent.

## **21. Israel's Conquest of the Promised Land**

After the Israelites learn to keep his law in the wilderness, God empowers them to conquer the land he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as a covenant blessing. Joshua leads Israel's battles against the peoples of the Land of Canaan who had corrupted themselves to the point that "their iniquity was full" (Genesis 15:16). Their idolatries had so degraded them that the younger generation had little chance of overcoming their societal dysfunctions (Leviticus 18:24-27; Deuteronomy 9:4):

"Joshua smote all the country of the hills and of the south and of the valleys and springs, and all their kings. He left none remaining but utterly destroyed all that breathed as Jehovah God of Israel had commanded. And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza and all the country of Goshen as far as Gibeon. All these kings and their lands Joshua captured at the same time because Jehovah God of Israel fought for Israel" (Joshua 10:40-42);

"And it happened that when Jabin king of Hazor heard those things, he sent to Jobab king of Madon and to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph and to the kings north of the mountains and of the plains south of Chinneroth and in the valley and in the vicinity of Dor on the west, to the Canaanites on the east and on the west, and to the Amorites and Hittites and Perizzites, the Jebusites in the mountains and the Hivites below Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. And they went forth, they and all their hosts with them, as many people as the sand on the seashore in number, with an abundance of horses and chariots. And when all these kings were met together they came and encamped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

“And Jehovah said to Joshua, ‘Don’t be afraid of them, for tomorrow about this time will I deliver them all up slain before Israel. You will slough their horses and burn their chariots with fire.’ So Joshua and all the men of war with him came against them by the waters of Merom and fell upon them unexpectedly. And Jehovah delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them and pursued them to greater Zidon and Misrephoth-maim and to the valley of Mizpeh on the east. And they smote them, leaving none remaining” (Joshua 11:1–8); “Thus Joshua captured the whole land according to all that Jehovah had told Moses. And Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war” (Joshua 11:23).

Isaiah predicts that at the time Israel’s end-time tribes gather from the four directions of the earth (Isaiah 11:11–12), Judah and Ephraim unite to conquer their enemies: “They will swoop on the Philistine flank toward the west, and together plunder those to the east; [they will take Edom] and Moab at hand’s reach, and the Ammonites will obey them” (Isaiah 11:14).

In that day, Jehovah again fights for them as he did in the past: “Jehovah will come forth like a warrior, his passions aroused like a fighter; he will give the war cry, raise the shout of victory over his enemies” (Isaiah 42:13); “Those who gather into mobs are not of me; whoever masses against you shall fall because of you. It is I who create the smith who fans the flaming coals, forging weapons to suit his purpose; it is I who create the ravager to destroy. Whatever weapon is devised against you, it shall not succeed; every tongue that rises to accuse you, you shall refute. This is the heritage of the servants of Jehovah, and such is their vindication by me,” says Jehovah” (Isaiah 54:15–17);

“See, all who are enraged at you shall earn shame and disgrace; your adversaries shall come to nought, and perish. Should you look for those who contend with you, you shall

not find them; whoever wars against you shall be reduced to nothing. For I, Jehovah your God, hold you by the right hand and say to you, 'Have no fear; I will help you. Be not afraid, you worms of Jacob; O men of Israel, [be not dismayed]: I am your help,' says Jehovah; 'your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. I will make of you a sharp-toothed threshing sledge of new design, full of spikes: you shall thresh mountains to dust and make chaff of hills. As you winnow them, a wind shall take them away, a tempest dispel them. Then will you rejoice in Jehovah and glory in the Holy One of Israel'" (Isaiah 41:11-16).

God's people whom the tyrannical king of Assyria takes captive, too, are freed from his power: "Can the warrior's spoil be taken from him, or the tyrant's captives escape free? Yet thus says Jehovah: 'The warrior's spoil shall indeed be taken from him, and the tyrant's captives escape free: I myself will contend with your contenders, and I will deliver your children. I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh; they shall be drunk with their own blood as with wine. And all flesh shall know that I Jehovah am your Savior, that your Redeemer is the Valiant One of Jacob'" (Isaiah 49:24-26).

As the millennial age dawns, God's people spread throughout the earth: "Your ruins and ravaged places, and your land laid waste, shall now be too small for your inhabitants, despite the departure of your devourers. The children born during the time of your bereavement shall yet say in your ears, 'This place is too cramped for us; give us space in which to settle!'" (Isaiah 49:19-20); "Expand the site of your tent; extend the canopies of your dwellings. Do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your offspring shall dispossess the nations and resettle the desolate cities" (Isaiah 54:2-3). Ultimately, the entire earth becomes the heritage of the people of God.

## 22. Israel's Victory over Midian

When the Midianites become a grave threat to Israel in the days of the judges, God raises up Gideon to defeat them: "There came an angel of Jehovah who sat under an oak tree in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abi-ezrite. His son Gideon was threshing wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of Jehovah appeared to him and said to him, 'Jehovah is with you, you mighty man of valor.' And Gideon said to him, 'Oh my Lord, if Jehovah is with us why then has all this befallen us? Where are all his miracles our fathers told us about, saying, "Didn't Jehovah bring us up out of Egypt?" But now Jehovah has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.' And Jehovah looked at him and said, 'Go in this your might and you will save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Haven't I sent you?' And he said to him, 'Oh my Lord, with what will I save Israel? See, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.' And Jehovah said to him, 'Surely, I will be with you and you will smite the Midianites as one man'" (Judges 6:11-16).

Still uncertain of success, Gideon asks for signs until he is convinced Jehovah is with him (Judges 6:17-22, 36-40; 7:9-15). Although Gideon gathers an army of thirty-two thousand men to fight a hundred and twenty thousand Midianites and Amalekites, God reduces their numbers to just three hundred (Judges 7:1-8)—in case the Israelites attribute their victory to themselves: "Jehovah said to Gideon, 'The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel boasts against me, saying, "My own hand saved me"' (Judges 7:2). As the battle approaches, "the Midianites and Amalekites and all the people of the east lay spread out in the valley like grasshoppers in number, their camels as countless as the sand by the seashore for multitude" (Judges 7:12).

Using a scare tactic, Gideon's men frighten their enemies so that they slay one another: "Gideon and his hundred men came outside the camp at the start of the middle watch just as they



had set the new guard. And they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers in their hands. All three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, holding the lamps in their left hands and the trumpets in their right to blow [them]. And they cried out, 'The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon!' And as they stood each man on his spot surrounding the camp, the entire army ran and cried out and fled. And while the three hundred blew the trumpets, Jehovah set every man's sword against his neighbor throughout the army. And the army fled to Bethshittah in Zererath and to the border of Abel-meholah toward Tabbath.

"And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, out of Asher and all of Manasseh and pursued after the Midianites. And Gideon sent messengers throughout Mount Ephraim, saying, 'Come down against the Midianites and take them at the waters toward Beth-barah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together and took them at the waters toward Beth-barah and Jordan. And they captured two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb and slew Oreb on the rock Oreb and slew Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. And they pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan'" (Judges 7:19–25).

Isaiah predicts similar such miraculous victories over an Assyrian alliance that threatens God's end-time people in which Jehovah's servant plays the role of Gideon: "When they cry out to Jehovah because of the oppressors, he will send them a savior, who will take up their cause and deliver them" (Isaiah 19:20); "Jehovah of Hosts will raise the whip against them, as when he struck the Midianites at the Rock of Oreb" (Isaiah 10:26); "You have smashed the yoke that burdened them, the staff of submission, the rod of those who subjected them, as in the Day of Midian" (Isaiah 9:4). As the type of a righteous judge and warrior in Israel, Gideon forms an integral

part of a composite of types Isaiah draws on that depict God's end-time servant.

### 23. Cyrus' Universal Conquests

The Persian monarch Cyrus, who captured Babylon in 539 B.C. and thereafter ruled its extensive territories, set a precedent of a benevolent ruler from the east who conquers an idolatrous world empire and rules over "all the kingdoms of the earth" (Ezra 1:2). In Isaiah's end-time version of that event, God's servant fulfills the role of Cyrus, retaking all the territories the king of Assyria's alliance of nations captures when it conquers the world. Because Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure identifies those territories as an integral part of Greater Babylon—a conglomerate of nations under Babylon's influence comparable to John's Babylon the Great (Isaiah 13–23; 47; compare Revelation 17:5), Cyrus' historical role as conqueror of the Babylonian empire makes him a suitable type of God's end-time servant.

Under the pseudonym of Jehovah's *Righteousness*—alluding to Abraham, who was a model of righteousness (Genesis 15:6)—God's servant, too, conquers all the kingdoms of the earth: "Who has raised up Righteousness from the east, calling him to [the place of] his foot? Who has delivered nations to him, toppled their rulers, rendering them as dust to his sword, as driven stubble to his bow? He puts them to flight, passing on unhindered by paths his feet have never trod. Who is at work accomplishing [this], foreordaining dynasties? I, Jehovah, first and last, am he. . . . I have raised up one from the north who calls on my name, who shall come from the direction of sunrise. He shall come upon dignitaries as on mud, tread them as clay like a potter" (Isaiah 41:2–4, 25).

Isaiah's actual mention of Cyrus by name in two instances that follow (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1), on the other hand, accords with his use of names in general, which occurs only when the person who is named sets a precedent that acts as the type of an

end-time person who fulfils a similar role. The two historical precedents in whose connection Isaiah cites the name of Cyrus are (1) of a world conqueror empowered by God who releases God's people from captivity in Babylon (Isaiah 45:1-3, 13); and (2) of one who commands the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its temple (Isaiah 44:28). In neither instance, however, is Isaiah speaking solely of Cyrus the Persian. In one instance, Isaiah combines the type of Cyrus with that of Moses, Jehovah's "shepherd," who led Israel through "the deep" (Isaiah 44:27-28; compare 63:11-13). In the other, he combines the type of Cyrus with that of David, Jehovah's "anointed" (Isaiah 45:1; compare 1 Samuel 16:13).

The second of these instances pertains to the type of Cyrus the Persian's universal conquests: "Thus says Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whom I grasp by the right hand, to subdue nations before him, to ungird the loins of rulers, opening doors ahead of him, letting no gates remain shut: 'I will go before you and level all obstacles; I will break in pieces brazen doors and cut through iron bars'" (Isaiah 45:1-2). As noted, by combining the type of Cyrus with that of David, Jehovah's "anointed" (1 Samuel 16:13), Isaiah here creates a *composite* of types that isn't limited to Cyrus.

Although Cyrus set historical precedents that Isaiah draws on, we thus see that Isaiah's Cyrus figure was never intended to simply depict the historical Cyrus. Rather, by combining his description of Cyrus with that of others, Isaiah creates a *composite* figure. That figure—God's end-time servant—resembles Cyrus, Moses, David, Abraham, and others in the various roles he performs. His universal mission is "for the sake of my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen" (Isaiah 45:4)—that is, for the sake of the twelve-tribed kingdom of Israel—not for the sake of the Jews Cyrus the Persian released from captivity in Babylon. Having seen both the time of Cyrus and the end of the world in a vision, Isaiah nevertheless

includes both the historical scenario and its end-time sequel in a single prophecy.

#### **24. The Davidic Monarchy**

The institution of kings in Israel comes in response to repeated threats to the nation from the surrounding peoples during the reign of Israel's judges. When Israel regresses in its allegiance to its God, it begins to lose his divine protection. Exacerbating the situation is that no unifying societal structure exists that governs people's actions: "In those days there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). On various occasions, judges such as Gideon are able to rally some of the Israel's tribes to meet these enemy threats. But when the Philistines and other nations imperil Israel's very existence, Israel's elders come to the prophet Samuel and demand a king, one who can command all of Israel's tribes to defend their land: "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5).

Under the terms of the Sinai Covenant, Israel as a whole has been required to keep God's law in order for the people to receive his divine protection. Under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, on the other hand—which God institutes in response to Israel's demands for a king—he requires only that the king to keeps his law while the people are required to keep the king's law. Both covenants follow the pattern of ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal covenants, in which Israel's God plays the role of emperor and the people or their king play the role of vassal. For the people of Israel, the Davidic Covenant thus constitutes a lesser law—they now merely need to obey their king to obtain God's protection. For the king, however, the Davidic Covenant is a higher law as he is now answerable for his people's disloyalties to Israel's God in order for God to extend his protection.

As all subsequent messianic prophecies and their fulfillment are based on these covenant patterns, it is important to

gain a clear understanding of them or the idea of a messiah can lead to confusion. Why do Jews and Christians, for example retain such divergent messianic hopes—Jews anticipating a messiah who obtains his people’s divine protection or temporal salvation, and Christian adhering solely to the idea of a spiritual messiah, one who obtains his people salvation from sin? In Isaiah’s repeat scenario of ancient events, God’s raising up a Davidic king—his end-time servant—follows the type of his raising up King David in response to his people’s need for divine protection. That occurs at a time when his people’s enemies are imperiling their very existence, just as their enemies did anciently.

God’s end-time servant, in other words, fulfills Jewish expectations of a *temporal* messiah, one who answers for his people’s disloyalties to Israel’s God in the pattern of ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal covenants. The idea of a Christian messiah, on the other hand—of a *spiritual* savior as vested in Jesus of Nazareth—has no precedent in the past that repeats itself in the end-time. Jehovah/Jesus doesn’t come to do physical battle in wars with Israel’s enemies in the pattern of King David—God’s servant does. Nor is the role of redeeming God’s people from their sins an end-time role. Rather, in an end-time context, Jehovah comes on the earth to reign as King of Zion after his servant has prepared a people to meet their God. In the interim, Jehovah gives his servant the victory over his enemies as he did King David. As a forerunner of Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth, the servant gathers and reunites Israel’s tribes, builds the temple in Jerusalem to which Jehovah comes, and establishes the political kingdom of God on the earth over which Jehovah reigns. Each messianic individual, in other words, plays a separate but complementary role.

King David and his righteous heirs, notably King Hezekiah, nevertheless act as types on a *temporal* level of Jehovah/Jesus’ proxy role on behalf of his people in obtaining their *spiritual* salvation. When projecting the idea of a spiritual

messiah, Isaiah creates a composite of types: (1) of a Davidic king who is prosecuted on account of his people's disloyalties to God in the pattern of emperor-vassal covenants (Isaiah 53:4-6, 8); and (2) of a sacrificial lamb that acts as "an offering for guilt" (*ʿāšām*) under the Law of Moses (Isaiah 53:7, 10). That is different from what most messianic prophecies depict, which deal with the redemptive mission of a latter-day David. As noted, moreover, Isaiah doesn't predict the earthly mission of a spiritual messiah as an end-time event, only as one that God's *arm*—his servant—points to it when seeking to renew end-time Israel's allegiance to its God (Isaiah 53:1).

David's rise to kingship—on the heels of Saul's demise—provides a type of the rise of God's end-time servant from an obscure background to prominence to displace a fallen leader. We observe this when God commands the prophet Samuel to anoint a son of Jesse: "When Jesse made seven of his sons pass in front of Samuel, Samuel said to Jesse, 'Jehovah hasn't chosen these.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your children here?' And he said, 'There is still the youngest and he is keeping the flock.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and fetch him, for we won't sit down until he comes here.' So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and altogether of a comely appearance and goodly to look upon. And Jehovah said, 'Arise and anoint him for this is the one.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of Jehovah came upon David from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16:10-13).

After David has ruled seven years over Judah and shown himself victorious over Israel's enemies, the northern tribes ask that he rule also over them: "Then all the tribes of Israel came to David in Hebron and spoke, saying, 'See, we are your bone and flesh. Also, in times past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led out and brought in Israel, and Jehovah said to you, "You will feed my people Israel and you will be a captain over Israel."' So all the elders of Israel came

to the king in Hebron, and King David made a compact with them in Hebron before Jehovah, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all of Israel and Judah” (2 Samuel 5:1–5).

Among David’s many accomplishments on behalf of Israel are his slaying the giant Goliath when the Philistines are about to overwhelm Israel (1 Samuel 17:31–51); slaying Israel’s enemies the Philistines with a great slaughter (1 Samuel 19:8; 23:5; 2 Samuel 5:18–25); delivering Israelite cities from the power of the Philistines (1 Samuel 23:5); suffering trials and afflictions on account of Saul, Israel’s first king, who makes him an outlaw and numbers him with criminals—while he remains loyal to Saul at all times (1 Samuel 18:10–11; 19:9–12; 20:34–41; 21:10–13; 22:1–5, 14; 23:6–26; 27:1); sparing Saul’s life on two occasions when Saul seeks to kill him (1 Samuel 24:3–19; 26:7–25); slaying Israel’s enemies the Amalekites and dividing their spoil among the people (1 Samuel 30:8–31); and conquering many nations and peoples of his empire and ruling them with justice and righteousness (2 Samuel 8:1–18; 10:1–19; 12:26–31). These typify many things God’s end-time servant does.

After David proves loyal to Israel’s God at all times, Jehovah makes an unconditional covenant with him after the pattern of ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal covenants: “I have found David my servant. With my holy oil I have anointed him. With him my hand will be established. My arm also will strengthen him. The enemy will not coerce him, nor the sons of wickedness afflict him. I will beat down his foes before his face and plague those who hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy will be with him, and in my name will his horn be exalted. I will set his hand in the sea and his right hand in the rivers. He will cry to me, ‘You are my father, my God, the rock of my salvation.’ And I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep with

him evermore and my covenant will stand fast with him. I will make his offspring endure forever and his throne as the days of heaven” (Psalm 89:20–29; compare Jeremiah 33:19–26).

These things typify God’s dealings with his end-time servant. Part III of Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 9–12; 41–46) depicts the servant undergoing a descent phase of trials and afflictions in the pattern of King David that is the prelude to his ascent phase. Acting as a proxy savior of his people as did David, the servant obtains their divine protection—at which point God exalts him and makes with him an unconditional covenant as he did with David. Jehovah first anoints his servant, an aspect that Isaiah covers under the servant’s Cyrus persona: “Thus says Jehovah to his *anointed*, to Cyrus, whom I grasp by the right hand” (Isaiah 45:1; emphasis added). An emperor’s grasping of a vassal by the right hand signifies his appointing the vassal to a particular task—in this instance, the overthrow of nations and peoples in order to release Israel’s captives (Isaiah 45:1–4, 13). Upon God’s anointing his servant, the Spirit of Jehovah comes upon him as it did upon David: “My servant whom I sustain, my chosen one in whom I delight, him I have endowed with my Spirit” (Isaiah 42:1).

A person’s anointing, on the one hand, and his Spirit endowment, on the other, however, are two inseparable messianic traits, as was the case with King David (1 Samuel 16:13). The fact that Isaiah separates them under two different messianic personas means that each exemplifies a particular aspect of the servant’s end-time mission, one spiritual, the other physical. Both ideas, for example—(1) of the servant’s “anointing,” and (2) of his endowment by Jehovah’s “Spirit”—come together in a passage Jesus quotes in part in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16–21), which passage he applies to himself: “The Spirit of my Lord Jehovah is upon me, for Jehovah has anointed me to announce good tidings to the lowly; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the eyes to the bound, to herald the year of



Jehovah's favor and the day of vengeance of our God" (Isaiah 61:1–2).

The part that Jesus omits from his reading—"and the day of vengeance of our God"—points to a key difference between the role of Jehovah/Jesus and that of his servant. As God's "day of vengeance" is an *end-time* event, the fuller context of the passage depicts the messianic mission of God's end-time servant, not that of Jehovah/Jesus (Isaiah 61:3–9). Both individuals, however, fulfill the redemptive parts of the prophecy, Jesus on a spiritual level and the servant on a temporal level. These things show that while God's servant follows closely the pattern of King David, his end-time role as a temporal messiah and that of Jesus as a spiritual messiah are similar in nature and overlap in many of their messianic attributes.

The end-time context of Isaiah's prophecy as a whole that Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure establishes nevertheless determines that the servant's mission is an *end-time* mission, one that exhibits two distinct phases: (1) a conditional or descent phase, in which the servant answers to Israel's God for the disloyalties of his people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant in order to obtain their divine protection when enemies threaten; and (2) an unconditional or ascent phase, in which the servant is crowned king as was King David by Israel's tribes. The first emphasizes the servant's "servant" phase, in which he fulfills the spiritual role of a proxy savior to God's people in the pattern of King Hezekiah. The second emphasizes his "son" phase, in which he fulfills the physical role of reconquering the world from the Assyrian alliance in the pattern of King David's conquest of the ancient Near East and of Cyrus the Persian's conquest of the Babylonian Empire.

The servant's proving loyal to Israel's God under all conditions in both his spiritual role as a proxy savior and his physical role as a world conqueror follows the pattern of ancient Near Eastern emperor–vassal covenants. While a vassal was known as the emperor's "servant" during the conditional phase of his

covenant, after he proved loyal to the emperor under all conditions the emperor adopted him unconditionally as his “son.” This same transition from servanthood to sonship, moreover, applies to all end-time servants of God who fulfill roles as proxy saviors to God’s people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. Part III of Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure’s conjoining of its two units of material into a single whole (Isaiah 9–12; 41–46)—one dealing with the servant’s “son” phase (Isaiah 9:6), the other with his “servant” phase (Isaiah 42:1; 44:26)—means that these messianic prophecies are to be perceived as inseparable depictions of the same end-time individual. That accords with emperor–vassal covenants in general, in which the terms “servant” and “son” together, not separately, designate a vassal king who proves loyal to an emperor (2 Kings 16:7).

It is only in the light of these historical patterns and precedents that messianic prophecies can properly be understood. Simply latching on to any messianic prophecy and applying it to Jesus regardless of its end-time context—ignoring what the prophecy’s words actually say, and neglecting its historical background—merely creates stumbling blocks and generates confusion. The idea of an end-time servant of Israel’s God called David, who reigns with him during the earth’s millennial age of peace, takes nothing away from the messianic mission of Jehovah/Jesus, the King of Zion. In fact, many other servants of God reign with him in that glorious age, all of whom follow the same pattern of serving God’s people as kings and priests under the terms of the Davidic Covenant (Isaiah 32:1; 49:23; 60:3–4, 10–11; 61:6–9). They, too, therefore, are “anointed” and endowed with God’s “Spirit” (Isaiah 59:21; 61:3).

Because Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure transforms the entire Book of Isaiah into an *end-time* scenario, as noted—in which even biographical material typifies or foreshadows things that repeat themselves—Isaiah’s messianic prophecies primarily portray the end-time mission of God’s servant. Those same messianic prophecies, however, may additionally

apply on another level in part to Jehovah/Jesus, as in the passage from Isaiah 61:1–2 that Jesus applied to himself. They may even characterize the redemptive missions of others who serve as kings and priests to God’s people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. The end-time reestablishment of the Davidic monarchy, however, as typified by the establishment of the Davidic monarchy in the days of King David, applies solely to God’s end-time servant and forms an integral part of “the restoration/restitution of all things” (Matthew 17:11; Mark 9:12; Acts 3:21). That restoration—as characterized by the series of ancient events that repeat themselves at the end of the world—precedes Jehovah/Jesus’ coming to reign on the earth and prepares the way before him.

In the course of acting as a proxy savior to God’s people in order to obtain their divine protection when their lives are imperiled, God’s servant suffers at the hands of vindictive and accusatory enemies from among his own people: “My Lord Jehovah has endowed me with a learned tongue, that I may know how to preach to those grown weary a word to wake them up. Morning by morning he wakens my ear to hear, as at study; my Lord Jehovah has opened my ear, and I rebel not, nor back away: I offered my back to smiters, my cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I hid not my face from insult and spitting. Because my Lord Jehovah helps me, I shall not be disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing I shall not be confounded. He who vindicates me is near me. Who has a dispute with me? Let us face one another! Who will bring charges against me? Let him confront me with them! See, my Lord Jehovah sustains me. Who then will incriminate me? Surely all such shall wear out like a garment; the moth will consume them. Who among you fears Jehovah and heeds the voice of his servant, who, though he walk in the dark and have no light, trusts in the name of Jehovah and relies on his God? But you are lighters of fires, all of you, who illuminate with mere sparks. Walk then by the light of your fires and by the sparks you have

kindled. This shall you have from my hand: you shall lie down in agony” (Isaiah 50:4–11).

Like King Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:1–20), God’s servant “pours out his soul unto death” when answering for the disloyalties of God’s people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, but when God empowers him he “divides the spoil with the mighty” as did King David: “He shall see the toil of his soul and be satisfied; because of his knowledge, and by bearing their iniquities, shall my servant, the righteous one, vindicate many. I will assign him an inheritance among the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the mighty, because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with criminals—he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:11–12). In each case, the proxy savior’s descent phase leads to his ascent phase: “My servant, being astute, shall be highly exalted; he shall become exceedingly eminent. His appearance was marred beyond human likeness, his semblance unlike that of men. Yet shall he yet astound many nations, kings shutting their mouths at him—what was not told them, they shall see; what they had not heard, they shall consider” (Isaiah 52:13–15).

After the servant is “despised as a person” and “abhorred by his people” (Isaiah 49:7)—yet proves faithful to God under all conditions in ministering to God’s people—Jehovah exalts and empowers him: “For now Jehovah has said—he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to restore Jacob to him, Israel having been gathered to him; for I won honor in the eyes of Jehovah when my God became my strength—he said: ‘It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore those preserved of Israel. I will also appoint you to be a light to the nations, that my salvation may be to the end of the earth’” (Isaiah 49:5–6);

He becomes a power of salvation to God’s exiled peoples: “Give ear and come unto me; pay heed, that your souls may live! And I will make with you an everlasting covenant: [my]

loving fidelity toward David. See, I have appointed him as a witness to the nations, a prince and lawgiver of the peoples. You will summon a nation that you did not know; a nation that did not know you will hasten to you—because of Jehovah your God, the Holy One of Israel, who gloriously endows you” (Isaiah 55:3–5); “In that day the sprig of Jesse, who stands for an ensign to the peoples, shall be sought by the nations, and his rest shall be glorious” (Isaiah 11:10).

Upon the servant’s vanquishing the enemies of God’s people and dividing their spoil as did King David, he is crowned king by Israel’s tribes as was David: “The people walking in darkness have seen a bright light; on the inhabitants of the land of the shadow of death has the light dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy; they rejoice at your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, or as men are joyous when they divide spoil. For you have smashed the yoke that burdened them, the staff of submission, the rod of those who subjected them, as in the day of Midian. And all boots used in battle and tunics rolled in blood have become fuel for bonfires. For to us a child is born, a *son* appointed, who will shoulder the burden of government. He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, One Mighty in Valor, a Father for Ever, a Prince of Peace—that sovereignty may be extended and peace have no end; that, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, [his rule] may be established and upheld by justice and righteousness from this time forth and forever” (Isaiah 9:2–7; emphasis added).

Although historically the above passage depicts the enthronement of King Hezekiah, it too typifies an end-time event—the enthronement of God’s servant upon his vanquishing the enemies of God’s people. As Jehovah’s “son”—denoting an emperor’s unconditional covenant with a vassal who proves loyal under all conditions—God’s servant reestablishes the Davidic monarchy. (Handel’s *Messiah*, based on a mistranslation in the King James Version of

verse 6, as well as on a misreading of the context of the passage—in which God’s servant subdues the Assyrian power and gathers Israel’s tribes—cannot be construed as a literal fulfillment of this messianic prophecy. No corroborating scriptural source, therefore, applies it to Jesus of Nazareth.)

The reestablishment of the Davidic monarchy appears a second time as an event connected to the servant’s vanquishing his people’s enemies in the pattern of King David: “When oppressors are no more and violence has ceased, when tyrants are destroyed from the earth, then, in loving kindness, shall a throne be set up in the abode of David, and in faithfulness a judge sit on it who will maintain justice and expedite righteousness” (Isaiah 16:4–5).

That judge—God’s servant—prepares end-time Israel to meet Jehovah/Jesus at his coming by clearing away his people’s stumbling blocks: “A voice calls out, ‘In the desert prepare the way for Jehovah; in the wilderness pave a straight highway for our God: every ravine must be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the uneven ground must become level and rough terrain a plain.’ For the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed and all flesh see it at once” (Isaiah 40:3–5); “Pass on, go through gates; prepare the way for the people! Excavate, pave a highway cleared of stones; raise the ensign to the nations! Jehovah has made proclamation to the end of the earth: ‘Tell the Daughter of Zion, “See, your Salvation comes, his reward with him, his work preceding him.”’ They shall be called the holy people, the redeemed of Jehovah; and you shall be known as in demand, a city never deserted” (Isaiah 62:10–12).

Finally, common messianic attributes of Jehovah/Jesus and his servant in messianic prophecies should be discerned in how they apply to each savior figure individually. Separated by time and location, the arena in which each fulfills his mission is personal to him and distinguishes one from the other. As in the following messianic passage, for example, linking ideas to

other parts of Isaiah’s prophecy—such as an endowment of God’s Spirit (Isaiah 42:1; 48:16; 61:1; 63:11), the attributes of counsel, valor, and righteousness (Isaiah 9:6–7; 28:29; 46:11–13; 49:26), and key words that act as codenames such as *righteousness*, *mouth*, and *lips* (Isaiah 41:2; 46:11–13; 49:2; 57:18–19)—designate mostly God’s servant in an end-time context as the subject of the passage but in a generic sense may apply to Jehovah himself, whom his servant and fellowservants seek to emulate:

“A shoot will spring up from the stock of Jesse and a branch from its graft bear fruit. The Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon him—the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of valor, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. His intuition will be [guided] by the fear of Jehovah; he will not judge by what his eyes see, nor establish proof by what his ears hear. He will judge the poor with righteousness, and with equity arbitrate for the lowly in the land; he will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips slay the wicked. Righteousness will be as a band about his waist, faithfulness a girdle round his loins” (Isaiah 11:1–5).

Jehovah’s coming to the earth to reign as King of Zion indeed constitutes the culminating fulfillment of the servant’s end-time reestablishment of the Davidic monarchy and completes Jehovah’s ascent phase. As with all who serve as proxy saviors under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, that ascent phase must be seen as inseparable from his descent phase in which he answers for his people’s disloyalties to the Most High God. His descent below all during his earthly ministry—when paying the price of his people’s spiritual salvation (Isaiah 53:1–10)—accords with his glorious ascent above all as King of Zion (Isaiah 52:7).

Based on the interplay between God’s justice and mercy—in which justice must be served before mercy can operate—Jehovah’s fulfilling his proxy role on behalf of his people establishes the theological premise that makes possible

humanity's long-awaited reversal of covenant curses, including death, and constitutes the singular event Jehovah alone can accomplish from which all salvation derives (Isaiah 25:7–8; 26:19; 44:22; 52:1–3; 53:5; 65:19–25). The redemptive mission Jehovah thus performs, though it is central to God's entire plan of humanity's salvation, nonetheless receives much less prominence in Isaiah's and other messianic prophecies than that of his end-time servant. That testifies to the divine modesty of Israel's King, who, besides passing through a multitude of other deprecating ordeals, is willing to be "despised and disdained by men, a man of grief, accustomed to suffering" (Isaiah 53:3) in the course of delivering his people from evil: "Truly you are a God who dissembles himself, O Savior, God of Israel" (Isaiah 45:15).

Sadly, as entire messianic constructs built up in people's minds on faulty interpretive foundations inherited from the Dark Ages of apostasy mislead the masses even to this day, it seems apparent that God's end-time servant and those servants of God who act of proxy saviors under the terms of the Davidic Covenant in restoring his end-time people and preparing them to meet Jehovah/Jesus at his coming must experience their descent phases of trials and afflictions at the hands of those very same misled masses who refuse to invest their time in analyzing Isaiah's and other messianic prophecies to determine for themselves what they actually say, but who instead are content to parrot back what they are led to believe they say. Such is the paradox of God's people's interpersonal relationships: that those who are most "vigilant for his word" (Isaiah 66:5)—as evidenced by their searching the scriptures to see "whether those things are so" (Acts 17:11)—should suffer most at the hands of ecclesiastical brethren who, to their own condemnation, hold fast to popular but scripturally unsupported "precepts of men" (Isaiah 29:13; 51:7; 61:7; 65:13–15; 66:5).



## 25. Rebuilding of the Temple

The event in Israelite history of rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem—for which Cyrus king of Persia sets a precedent—signifies the end of the Jews’ seventy years’ captivity in Babylon that Jeremiah had predicted (Jeremiah 29:10) and begins what is called the Second Temple Period. After Cyrus conquers Babylon and the Persian Empire replaces the Babylonian Empire, Cyrus issues a decree authorizing the Jews to return to their homeland to reestablish themselves and to rebuild Jerusalem and its temple:

“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘Jehovah, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms on the earth and charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judea. Who among you of all his people [is willing]? His God be with him to go up to Jerusalem in Judea to build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel (for he is the God) in Jerusalem. Whoever remains [of his people] wherever he lives, let the men of that place help him with silver and gold, with goods and beasts, besides free-will offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem.’ Then arose the chief elders of Judah and Benjamin, the priests and Levites, and all those whose spirit God raised up to go up and build the house of Jehovah in Jerusalem” (Ezra 1:1–5).

On their return to their homeland, “some of the chief elders, when they came to [the site of] the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, offered freely for the house of God to be erected in its own place, giving for the work into the treasury according to their means sixty-one thousand drams of gold, five thousand pounds of silver, and a hundred priestly garments. So the priests and Levites and some of the people—including the singers, porters, and Nethinim—dwelt in their cities as did all Israel” (Ezra 2:68–70).

After laying the temple’s foundation, the Jewish returnees celebrate the occasion: “When the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, they appointed the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of

Asaph with cymbals, to praise Jehovah according to the ruling of David king of Israel. And they sang together in their courses, praising and giving thanks to Jehovah—because he is good, for his mercy toward Israel endures forever. And all the people shouted with a great shout in praising Jehovah that now the foundation of the house of Jehovah had been laid. But many of the priests and Levites and chiefs of the elders—aged men who had seen the first house [of God]—when the foundation of this house had been laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice. And many [others] shouted aloud for joy, so that the people couldn't discern the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people. For the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard from far away" (Ezra 3:10–13).

Not all goes well with rebuilding the city and temple because "the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah and troubled them in building" (Ezra 4:4). Opposition grows so intense that half of the workers labor in rebuilding while the other half protects the workers, and everyone carries a weapon (Nehemiah 4:16–17). God sends help, however, as a second wave of Jews returns from Babylon to complete the work: "Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judea, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and worked in the house of Jehovah of Hosts, their God" (Haggai 1:14).

Under his Cyrus persona, God's end-time servant likewise announces the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem: "Thus says Jehovah, your Redeemer . . . who fulfills the word of his *servant*, who accomplishes the aims of his messengers, who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be reinhabited,' and of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be rebuilt, their ruins I will restore,' who says to the deep, 'Become dry; I am drying up your currents,' who says of Cyrus, 'He is my *shepherd*;

he will do whatever I will.’ He will say of Jerusalem that it must be rebuilt and its temple foundations relaid” (Isaiah 44:24, 26–28; emphasis added). Identifying the servant’s Cyrus persona as God’s “servant” and “shepherd” links the rebuilding of the temple to Israel’s exodus out of Egypt under Moses, Israel’s “shepherd,” who led Israel through “the deep” (Isaiah 63:11–14). The conjoining of these two events thus compares God’s servant to a new Moses and implies that the rebuilding of the temple occurs at the time God’s end-time people return in the new exodus to their homeland.

The rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, as magnificent a structure as it may be, nevertheless falls short of providing an actual dwelling for Israel’s God. The God who created the heavens and the earth cannot be contained in an earthly tabernacle: “Thus says Jehovah: ‘The heavens are my throne and the earth is my footstool. What house would you build me? What would serve me as a place of rest? These are all things my hand has made, and thus all came into being,’ says Jehovah. ‘And yet I have regard for those who are of a humble and contrite spirit and who are vigilant for my word” (Isaiah 66:1–2). In other words, Israel’s God dwells also with his humble, repentant people: “Thus says he who is highly exalted, who abides forever, whose name is sacred: ‘I dwell on high in the holy place, and with him who is humble and lowly in spirit—refreshing the spirits of the lowly, reviving the hearts of the humble” (Isaiah 57:15). Living in his presence when he comes to reign on the earth, his holy ones regenerate physically, as does all nature: “Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

## **26. The Reign of the Judges**

Israel’s reign of the judges anciently is an extension of a system Moses sets up at the suggestion of Jethro, his father-in-law, when Moses can’t handle all the people’s legal and

moral cases alone: “And it came to pass on the morrow that Moses sat down to judge the people, the people standing by Moses from morning to evening. And when Moses’ father-in-law saw all he was doing for the people, he said, ‘What is it that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone and all the people stand by you from morning to evening?’ And Moses said to his father-in-law, ‘Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a matter, they come to me and I judge between the one and the other and acquaint them with the statutes and laws of God.’

“Then Moses’ father-in-law said to him, ‘What you are doing isn’t good. You will certainly wear yourself out, you and these people with you. This is too burdensome a thing for you. You can’t undertake it all by yourself. Listen to me as I counsel you, then God will be with you. You be there for the people as God, bringing their causes to God. You teach them the ordinances and laws and show them the way they should go and the works they should do. But in addition arrange for able men from among the people—those who fear God, men of truth, who hate covetousness—and appoint them over them as rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. Let them judge the people at all times. Let them bring every serious matter to you, but let them judge every small matter themselves. Then will it be easier for you, and they will bear [the burden] with you. If you do that, and if God commands you [to do] so, then you will be able to endure it, and also all these people can go to their place in peace.’

“So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads of the people—rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all times. The hard cases they brought to Moses, but every small case they judged themselves” (Exodus 18:13–26).

After Moses and Joshua pass away, judges continue to judge the causes of the people, often acting as deliverers when

enemies threaten: “Jehovah raised up judges, who delivered them out of the hands of those who plundered them. And yet, they wouldn’t listen to their judges but went whoring after other gods, bowing themselves down to them. They quickly turned out of the way in which their fathers had walked who had obeyed Jehovah’s commandments, they not doing so. And when Jehovah raised up judges for them, Jehovah was with the judge and delivered them out of the hands of their enemies all the days of the judge. For Jehovah deplored their groanings on account of those who oppressed and vexed them” (Judges 2:16–18).

At the time he restores end-time Israel, Jehovah once again raises up judges to judge his people. In that day—Israel’s darkest hour—certain “servants” of Jehovah act as his people’s proxy saviors, Jehovah saving them from destruction “for the sake of his servants,” their deliverers: “Why, O Jehovah, have you made us stray from your ways, hardening our hearts so that we do not fear you? Relent for the sake of your servants, the tribes that are your inheritance. But a little while had your people possessed the holy place when our enemies trod down your sanctuary. Now we have become as those whom you have never ruled and who have not been known by your name” (Isaiah 63:17–19); “Thus says Jehovah: ‘As when there is juice in a cluster of grapes and someone says, “Don’t destroy it, it is still good,” so I will do for the sake of my servants by not destroying everything”’ (Isaiah 65:8).

Israel’s end-time judges assist in purifying and sanctifying the establishment of God’s people so that Jehovah may reconstitute all institutions that once existed: “I will restore my hand over you and smelt away your dross as in a crucible, and remove all your alloy. I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as in the beginning. After this you shall be called the City of Righteousness, a faithful city” (Isaiah 1:25–26). In the millennial age that ensues, both king and judges govern God’s people in the pattern of Moses and

Israel's judges: "Moses commanded us a law, the inheritance of the community of Jacob. He was king in Jeshurun when the heads of the people and Israel's tribes gathered together" (Deuteronomy 33:4–5); "A king shall reign in righteousness and rulers rule with justice" (Isaiah 32:1).

## **27. Jehovah's Covenant**

Jehovah's millennial covenant consists of a composite of all previous covenants God has made. While the Bible makes no mention of a covenant in connection with Adam and Eve, it is nevertheless clear that one existed: (1) because all commandments God gives, including those he gave Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28; 2:15–17), constitute the terms of a covenant; and (2) because the paradisiacal state Adam and Eve inherited was a covenant blessing. Those who live into the earth's millennial age, for example, similarly inherit a paradisiacal state as a covenant blessing. Their spousal relationships—which form an integral part of their covenant relationship with God—parallel Adam's and Eve's.

God also made a covenant with Noah: "See, I of myself bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh from under heaven in which is the breath of life. And everything in the earth will die. But with you I will establish my covenant, and you will come into the ark, you and your sons, your wife and your sons' wives, with you" (Genesis 6:17–18).

After the Flood, God made a second covenant with Noah, promising that humanity would never again be destroyed by a Flood: "God said, 'This is the token of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you for perpetual generations: I will set my bow in the clouds as a token of the covenant between me and the earth. And it shall be when I bring clouds upon the earth that the bow will be seen in the clouds. And I will remember my covenant between me and you and every living creature of all flesh, that the waters will no more become a flood to destroy

all flesh. The bow will be in the clouds, and I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh upon the earth.’ And God said to Noah, ‘This is the token of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh upon the earth’” (Genesis 9:12–17).

With Abraham, God made a covenant also—the Abrahamic Covenant—in which he promised to multiply him and make him fruitful, granting him and his descendants the Land of Canaan as an everlasting inheritance: “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am Almighty God. Walk before me and be perfect, and I will make my covenant between me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly.’ And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, ‘As for me, see, my covenant is with you, and you will be a father of many nations. Nor will your name be called Abram anymore, but your name will be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made you. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful. I will make nations of you, and kings shall come out of you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give you and your offspring after you the land in which you are a stranger—all the Land of Canaan, for an everlasting inheritance. And I will be their God’” (Genesis 17:1–8).

God further promised Abraham that his posterity would be innumerable: “In blessing I will bless you and in multiplying I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sands on the seashore. Your offspring shall inherit the gates of their enemies. And in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:17–18). Those two blessings—a Promised Land and an endless posterity—constitute the two basic blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. For Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others

after them, God promised those blessings unconditionally after they had proven loyal to him under all conditions.

Centuries later, God made a *collective* covenant with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—a covenant with Israel *as a nation*—called the Sinai Covenant: “When Moses went up to God, Jehovah called to him out of the mountain and said, ‘Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and tell the people of Israel: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles’ wings and have brought you to myself. Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then shall you be a peculiar treasure to me above all peoples, for the whole earth is mine. And you will be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words that you will speak to the people of Israel.’ So Moses came and called for the elders of the people and in their presence presented all these words as Jehovah had commanded him. And all the people responded as one and said, ‘All that Jehovah has spoken, we will do.’ So Moses returned [and conveyed] the words of the people to Jehovah” (Exodus 19:3–8).

Under the terms of the Sinai Covenant, God’s promise of land and posterity were conditional: “It will be that if you will diligently heed the voice of Jehovah your God and observe to keep all his commandments that I command you this day, that Jehovah your God will set you on high above all nations on the earth. And all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you will heed the voice of Jehovah your God: Blessed shall you be in the city and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the fruit of your ground, the fruit of your herds, the increase of your cattle and flocks of sheep. Blessed shall be your basket and storage. Blessed shall you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out. Jehovah will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be smitten before your face. They will come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. Jehovah will command



the blessing upon you in your storehouses and in all that you set your hand to do, and he will bless you in the land Jehovah your God gives you” (Deuteronomy 28:1–8);

“But it will be that if you won’t heed the voice of Jehovah your God and observe to keep all his commandments and statutes that I command you this day, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: Cursed shall you be in the city and cursed shall you be in the field. Cursed shall be your basket and storage. Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the fruit of your land, the increase of your cattle and flocks of sheep. Cursed shall you be when you come in and cursed shall you be when you go out. Jehovah will send upon you cursings, vexations, and rebukes in all that you set your hand to do until you are destroyed and have swiftly perished on account of the wickedness of your actions in which you forsake me. Jehovah will make the pestilence cleave to you until he has consumed you out of the land to which you are going to inherit it” (Deuteronomy 28:15–21).

In spite of covenanting with Jehovah to keep his law and word—the terms of the Sinai Covenant—his people already start breaking the covenant during their wilderness wandering. It is the younger generation, born in the wilderness and schooled by Moses in God’s law and word, that in the end inherits the Promised Land. When their parents who have come out of Egypt commit whoredoms with the Midianites, Phinehas of the tribe of Levi and the other Levites side with Jehovah against the evildoers. For their valor, Jehovah makes an unconditional covenant with Phinehas and the tribe of Levi—the Levitical Covenant—of an everlasting priesthood: “Jehovah spoke to Moses and said, ‘Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned away my wrath from the people of Israel, being zealous among them for my sake so that I didn’t consume the people of Israel in my jealousy. Therefore say, “See, I give him my covenant of peace. It is his and his offspring’s after him—the covenant of an

everlasting priesthood—because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel”” (Numbers 25:10–13).

With King David and his heirs, too, Jehovah made a covenant—the Davidic Covenant—through which the king and his people could obtain God’s divine protection, provided the king kept God’s law and the people kept the king’s law. Of the king’s role as a proxy savior of his people, King Hezekiah, David’s illustrious descendant, proved exemplary. After David had shown himself loyal under all conditions, Jehovah made his covenant unconditional, promising that his descendants would rule over Israel throughout endless generations: “I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn to David my servant: ‘Your offspring will I establish forever. I will build up your throne to all generations”” (Psalm 89:3–4). At Israel’s exile from its Promised Land, David’s descendants inherited thrones and dominions in Israel’s lands of exile. European and other monarchies, for example, trace their lineage to King David.

The prophet Jeremiah affirms that even with Israel’s exile the Davidic and Levitical covenants would remain in effect: “The word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, ‘Thus says Jehovah: “If you can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, that there should not be day and night in their appointed times, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant that he should not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the hosts of heaven can’t be numbered, nor the sands of the sea be measured, so will I multiply the offspring of David my servant and of the Levites who minister to me.”’ And the word of Jehovah came again to Jeremiah, saying, ‘Haven’t you considered what these people have spoken, saying, “The two families Jehovah chose he has now cast off?” So they despise my people that to them they should no more be a nation.’ Thus says Jehovah: ‘If my covenant isn’t with the day and the night, and if I haven’t appointed the

regulations of heaven and earth, then will I cast off the seed of Jacob and of David my servant so that I won't take of his offspring to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Jeremiah 33:19–26).

As noted, the millennial covenant Israel's God makes incorporates all the positive features of his former covenants. Unlike the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants, which he made with persons *individually*, the new covenant he makes is with his elect people *collectively*, as was the Sinai Covenant. Unlike the Sinai Covenant, however, which is a *conditional* covenant—dependent on whether God's people keep the terms of his covenant—the new covenant is *unconditional*. It follows his elect's proving loyal to Israel's God under all conditions as did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Phinehas the son of Aaron.

Under the metaphor of a wife whom he remarries, Jehovah establishes his covenant: “Sing, O barren woman who did not give birth; break into jubilant song, you who were not in labor. The children of the deserted wife shall outnumber those of the espoused,” says Jehovah. ‘Expand the site of your tent; extend the canopies of your dwellings. Do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your offspring shall dispossess the nations and resettle the desolate cities. Be not fearful, for you shall not be confounded; be not ashamed, for you shall not be disgraced. You shall forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood. For he who espouses you is your Maker, whose name is Jehovah of Hosts; he who redeems you is the Holy One of Israel, who is called the God of all the earth.

“Jehovah calls you back as a spouse forsaken and forlorn, a wife married in youth only to be rejected,’ says your God. ‘I forsook you indeed momentarily, but with loving compassion I will gather you up. In fleeting exasperation I hid my face from you, but with everlasting charity I will have compassion on

you,’ says Jehovah, who redeems you. ‘This is to me as in the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would no more flood the earth. So I swear to have no more anger toward you, never again to rebuke you. For the mountains shall be removed and the hills collapse with shaking, but my charity toward you shall never be removed, nor my covenant of peace be shaken,’ says Jehovah, who has compassion on you.

“Poor wretch, tempest-tossed and disconsolate! I will lay antimony for your building stones and sapphires for your foundations; I will make your skylights of jacinth, your gates of carbuncle, and your entire boundary of precious stones. All your children shall be taught by Jehovah, and great shall be the peace of your posterity. You shall be firmly established through righteousness; you will be far from oppression and have no cause to fear, far from ruin, for it shall not approach you” (Isaiah 54:1-14).

The above *unconditional* covenant blessings—(1) of a land endowed with a paradisiacal glory; (2) of offspring divinely protected; and (3) made after a cataclysmic destruction as in the days of Noah—are further complemented by God’s commissioning his elect as his priests and ministers in the pattern of the Levitical Covenant: “You shall be called the priests of Jehovah and referred to as the ministers of our God. You shall feed on the wealth of the nations and be gratified with their choicest provision. Because their shame was twofold, and shouted insults were their lot, therefore in their land shall their inheritance be twofold and everlasting joy be theirs. . . . I will appoint them a sure reward; I will make with them an eternal covenant. Their offspring shall be renowned among the nations, their posterity in the midst of the peoples; all who see them will acknowledge that they are of the lineage Jehovah has blessed” (Isaiah 61:6-9).

As God endowed his priests and Levites anciently with his holy Spirit, so he does his end-time elect: “As for me, this is my covenant with them,’ says Jehovah: ‘My Spirit which is upon

you and my words which I have placed in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of their offspring,' says Jehovah, 'from now on and forever'" (Isaiah 59:21). God's promise to ancient Israel to make his people "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6), he thus fulfills with his end-time elect—with all those who, for the first time in Israel's history, *collectively* prove loyal to him under all conditions.

That "nation" of God's elect consists of those who respond positively to his end-time servant, whom Jehovah appoints to minister to them: "I Jehovah have rightfully called you and will grasp you by the hand; I have created you and appointed you to be a *covenant* of the people, a light to the nations" (Isaiah 42:6; emphasis added); "Thus says Jehovah: 'At a favorable time I have answered you; in the day of salvation I have come to your aid: I have created you and appointed you to be a *covenant* of the people, to restore the Land and reapportion the desolate estates'" (Isaiah 49:8; emphasis added). As mediator of God's covenant in the pattern of Moses, the servant personifies God's covenant with his people—that is, God makes his unconditional covenant with his elect through the agency of his servant: "Give ear and come unto me; pay heed, that your souls may live! And I will make with you an everlasting covenant: [my] loving fidelity toward David. See, I have appointed him as a witness to the nations, a prince and lawgiver of the peoples. You will summon a nation that you did not know; a nation that did not know you will hasten to you" (Isaiah 55:3–5).

In sum, God's new covenant with his millennial people—with an end-time "nation" comprised of his elect—forms a composite of all previous covenants God has made. As an *unconditional* and *collective* covenant, it incorporates the positive features of the Adamic, Noachian, Abrahamic, Sinaitic, Levitical, and Davidic covenants when those with whom he covenants prove loyal under all conditions. On the heels of God's end-time servant's being "born"—being empowered

of God to minister to his people (compare Isaiah 9:6)—so is “born” the nation of God’s elect: “Before she is in labor, she gives birth; before her ordeal overtakes her, she delivers a son! Who has heard the like, or who has seen such things? Can the earth labor but a day and a *nation* be born at once? For as soon as she was in labor, Zion gave birth to her children. ‘Shall I bring to a crisis and not bring on birth?’ says Jehovah. ‘When it is I who cause the birth, shall I hinder it?’ says your God. Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all who love her; join in her celebration, all who mourn for her” (Isaiah 66:7–10; emphasis added). The nation of God’s people born in a “day”—God’s Day of Judgment—thus consists of those whom his servant rallies to God’s highest covenantal standard at the time God cleanses the earth of the wicked (Isaiah 11:10–12; 49:22; 51:9–11; 55:3–5).

## **28. Zion as Jehovah’s Residence**

Whether referencing a celestial city or a sacred city on the earth, “Zion” was known as the abode of Israel’s God Jehovah: “The mighty God Jehovah has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to its going down. Out of Zion—the perfection of beauty—God has shined. Our God shall come and not keep silent. A fire devours before him, it is turbulent round about him. He calls to the heavens from above and to the earth that he may judge his people: ‘Gather my saints together to me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.’ The heavens declare his righteousness” (Psalm 50:1–6); “Great is Jehovah and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for location, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the perimeters of the north, the city of the Great King. God is known in her palaces as a refuge” (Psalm 48:1–3); “Jehovah has chosen Zion. He has desired it for his dwelling place” (Psalm 132:13).

Jehovah is first seen to dwell “in Zion” in the Promised Land when Solomon builds and dedicates the temple in

Jerusalem and Jehovah's cloud of glory rests upon it: "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel—all the heads of the tribes and the chief fathers of the people of Israel—to King Solomon at Jerusalem that they might bring up the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah out of the city of David, which is Zion. And all the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the Feast [of Tabernacles] in the month Ethanim, the seventh month. All the elders of Israel came and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of Jehovah, the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle. These, the priests and Levites brought up.

"And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled to him were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen that couldn't be counted or numbered for multitude. And the priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah into its place in the holy of holies of the temple—into its most holy place under the wings of the cherubim. . . . And it happened, when the priests had come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of Jehovah so that the priests couldn't stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of Jehovah" (1 Kings 8:1-6, 10-11).

At the end of the world, when he comes to institute his millennial reign of peace, Jehovah again manifests his presence as he did to Solomon and Israel's elders at the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem and as he did to Moses and Israel's elders on Mount Sinai: "The moon will blush and the sun be put to shame, when Jehovah of Hosts manifests his reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and [his] glory in the presence of his elders" (Isaiah 24:23); "In this mountain will Jehovah of Hosts prepare a sumptuous feast for all peoples, a feast of leavened cakes, succulent and delectable, of matured wines well refined. In this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the shroud that

shrouds all nations, by abolishing death forever. My Lord Jehovah will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the reproach of his people from throughout the earth. Jehovah has spoken it. In that day you will say, ‘This is our God, whom we expected would save us. This is Jehovah for whom we have waited; let us joyfully celebrate his salvation!’” (Isaiah 25:6–9).

Following an end-time war to end all wars, Zion and Jerusalem gain prominence as the source of Jehovah’s law and word—the terms of his covenant—that go forth to all nations: “In the latter days the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall become established as the head of the mountains; it shall be preeminent among the hills, and all nations will flow to it. Many peoples shall go, saying, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may instruct us in his ways, that we may follow in his paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and from Jerusalem the word of Jehovah. He will judge between the nations and arbitrate for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks: nation will not lift the sword against nation, nor will they learn warfare any more” (Isaiah 2:2–4).

To the city of God come even former enemies of his people when Jehovah glorifies his dwelling place in the sight of all nations: “The splendor of Lebanon shall become yours—cypresses, pines, and firs together—to beautify the site of my sanctuary, to make glorious the place of my feet. The sons of those who tormented you will come bowing before you; all who reviled you will prostrate themselves at your feet. They will call you the City of Jehovah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Although you had been forsaken and abhorred, with none passing through [your land], yet I will make you an everlasting pride, the joy of generation after generation” (Isaiah 60:13–15); “Shout and sing for joy, O inhabitants of Zion, for renowned among you is the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 12:6).



## 29. The Creation

God's sequential creation—from his organizing of raw materials into celestial bodies to his forming living creatures from those same elements—points to his final molding of man into his own image and likeness: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1); “And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and seasons, for days and years.’ . . . And God said, ‘Let the waters abundantly bring forth moving creatures that have life, and fowls that fly above the earth in the open skies.’ . . . And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind—cattle and creeping things and the beasts of the earth after their kind.’ . . . And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, over cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image—in the image of God he created him: male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:14, 20, 24, 26–27);

“And Jehovah God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul. And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed” (Genesis 2:7–8); “And Jehovah God said, ‘It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helpmeet for him’” (Genesis 2:18); “And Adam called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20); “In the day God created man, in the likeness of God did he make him: male and female he created them” (Genesis 5:1–2).

From these depictions, one can nevertheless not assume that God created all of humanity in his image and likeness—only Adam and Eve. The fact that Adam and Eve inherited “all the earth” and attained a paradisiacal glory in the Garden of Eden puts them on a higher spiritual plane than humanity in general. The covenant blessings of inheriting the earth and

attaining a paradisiacal glory that accompanied Adam's and Eve's creation—which humanity in general has thus far not received—limits the idea of God's creating man in his own image and likeness to Adam and Eve and to those who at some point similarly inherit the earth and attain a paradisiacal glory as covenant blessings.

Additional scriptures, for example, affirm that not all of humanity inherits the earth, only certain elect individuals: "What man is there who fears Jehovah? Him will he teach in the way that he should choose. His soul will dwell at ease, and his offspring will inherit the earth. The secret of Jehovah is with those who fear him, whom he will show his covenant" (Psalm 25:12–14); "Evildoers will be cut off, but those who wait upon Jehovah, they will inherit the earth. For in just a little while shall the wicked be no more. Indeed, you will earnestly consider their place, yet it won't be [there]. But the meek shall inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psalm 37:9–11).

Nor does all of humanity attain a paradisiacal glory on the earth, only those who inherit the earth's millennial age of peace. Rather, Isaiah's concept of God's creation as "re-creation"—of both the heavens and the earth, and of humanity upon the earth—defines an ongoing process. That process started long before God created Adam and Eve in his own image and likeness, and it continues long after many of their descendants ascend to higher spiritual planes and similarly attain his image and likeness. Because God is the same yesterday, today, and forever and is no respecter of persons (2 Samuel 14:14; Acts 10:34; Hebrews 13:8), he will not do for one what he doesn't do for another. As God didn't create the man *in* the Garden of Eden but put him there afterwards, Adam and Eve must have had prior experience through which they qualified for inheriting the earth and attaining a paradisiacal glory. Similarly, we may compare God's elect—those whom God re-creates, who qualify to inherit the earth and attain a

paradisiacal glory in the earth's millennial age of peace—to new Adams and Eves, souls who continue God's cyclical creations throughout the eternities.

Isaiah's concept of God's creation as "re-creation" throws light on this unbroken process. By depicting God's entire creation as a *sequential* phenomenon—one that becomes progressively more refined—Isaiah reveals its ultimate intent. First, there occurs the creation of the heavens and the earth out of preexisting materials: "Who measured out the waters with the hollow of his hand and gauged the heavens by the span of his fingers? Who compiled the earth's dust by measure, weighing mountains in scales, hills in a balance?" (Isaiah 40:12). God's creation has a divine purpose: "Thus says Jehovah who *created* the heavens, the God who *formed* the earth—who made it secure and organized it, not to remain a chaotic waste, but who designed it to be inhabited . . ." (Isaiah 45:18; emphasis added). In accordance with his divine plan, God creates man: "It is I who *made* the earth and *created* man upon it" (Isaiah 45:12; emphasis added). Next, there comes the creation of nations and isles or continents: "The nations are but drops from a bucket, counting no more than dust on a balance; the isles he displaces as mere specks" (Isaiah 40:15).

The creation of a people of God follows: "Thus says Jehovah—he who *formed* you, O Jacob, he who *created* you, O Israel: 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name; you are mine'" (Isaiah 43:1; emphasis added). Although they are his people, those on the Jacob/Israel level tend to love idols and forget their God: "They are followers of ashes; their deluded minds have distracted them. They cannot liberate themselves [from them] or say, 'Surely this thing in my hand is a fraud.' Ponder these things, O Jacob, and you, O Israel, for you are my servant. I have *created* you to be my servant, O Israel; Do not disregard me. I have removed your offenses like a thick fog, your sins like a cloud

of mist. Return to me; I have redeemed you” (Isaiah 44:20–22; emphasis added).

Jehovah’s redeeming his people involves his intervening on their behalf: “I *fashion* light and *form* darkness; I occasion peace and cause calamity. I, Jehovah, do all these things. Rain down from above, O heavens; let the skies overflow with righteousness. Let the earth receive it and salvation blossom; let righteousness spring up forthwith. I, Jehovah, *create* it” (Isaiah 45:7–8; emphasis added). Upon his people’s repenting of transgression, they ascend spiritually to the Zion/Jerusalem level. At that point, Jehovah re-creates them, as it were, “from the dust”—from a chaotic or cursed condition—and empowers them: “Awake, arise; clothe yourself with power, O Zion! Put on your robes of glory, O Jerusalem, holy city. No more shall the uncircumcised and defiled enter you. Shake yourself free, rise from the dust; sit enthroned, O Jerusalem. Loose yourself from the bands around your neck, O captive Daughter of Zion” (Isaiah 52:1–2).

As they covenant with him and keep his law and word, Jehovah re-creates them on the son/servant level and brings them home from their places of exile to the Promised Land: “Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth—all who are called by my name, whom I have *formed*, *molded* and *wrought* for my own glory” (Isaiah 43:6–7; emphasis added). Accompanying his people’s re-creation is God’s re-creation of the cosmos: “See, I *create* new heavens and a new earth; former events shall not be remembered or recalled to mind. Rejoice, then, and be glad forever in what I create. See, I *create* Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy” (Isaiah 65:17–18; emphasis added).

These redemptive events occur at the time the Creator of heaven and earth reverses the adverse circumstances of his end-time servant by re-creating him on the seraph level and empowering him to restore his people: “Thus says Jehovah, God, who *frames* and suspends the heavens, who *gives form*

to the earth and its creatures, the breath of life to the people upon it, spirit to those who walk on it: 'I Jehovah have rightfully called you and grasp you by the hand; I have *created* you and appointed you to be a covenant for the people, a light to the nations, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from confinement and from prison those who sit in darkness'" (Isaiah 42:5-7; emphasis added);

"Thus says Jehovah: 'At a favorable time I have answered you; in the day of salvation I have come to your aid: I have *created* you and appointed you to be a covenant of the people, to restore the Land and reapportion the desolate estates, to say to the captives, "Come forth!" and to those in darkness, "Show yourselves!" They shall feed along the way and find pasture on all barren heights; they shall not hunger or thirst, nor be smitten by the heatwave or the sun: he who has mercy on them will guide them; he will lead them by springs of water. All my mountain ranges I will appoint as roads; my highways shall be on high. See these, coming from afar, these, from the northwest, and these, from the land of Sinim'" (Isaiah 49:8-12; emphasis added).

Many others at that time also ascend to exalted spiritual levels, fulfilling the ultimate purpose of God's creation: "They who hope in Jehovah shall be renewed in strength: they shall ascend as on eagles' wings; they shall run without wearying, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31). Isaiah compares those whom God re-creates on the highest levels to celestial bodies whom he names individually when their covenants with him become unconditional: "Lift your eyes heavenward and see: Who *formed* these? He who brings forth their hosts by number, calling each one by name. Because he is almighty and all powerful, not one is unaccounted for" (Isaiah 40:26; emphasis added); "And as the new heavens and new earth which I *make* shall endure before me,' says Jehovah, 'so shall your offspring and name endure'" (Isaiah 66:22; emphasis added).

### 30. Paradise

The Paradise Adam and Eve inherited as a covenant blessing informs us of the Paradise their descendants may inherit during the earth's millennial age of peace: "Jehovah God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And Jehovah God made grow out of the ground every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, the Tree of Life, also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it was parted and became four headwaters. . . . And Jehovah God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die'" (Genesis 2:8–10, 15–17).

At the inception of the millennial age that precedes Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth, a regeneration of the earth's natural environment occurs, commencing in Zion: "Jehovah is comforting Zion, bringing solace to all her ruins; he is making her wilderness like Eden, her desert as the garden of Jehovah. Joyful rejoicing takes place there, thanksgiving with the voice of song" (Isaiah 51:3); "I will open up streams in barren hill country, springs in the midst of the plains; I will turn the desert into lakes, parched lands into fountains of water. I will bring cedars and acacias, myrtles and oleasters in the wilderness; I will place cypresses, elms and box trees in the steppes—that all may see it and know, consider it, and perceive that Jehovah's hand did this, that the Holy One of Israel created it" (Isaiah 41:18–20).

In parallel with a regenerating wilderness, the bodies of God's elect also regenerate as Jehovah's coming draws near: "Wilderness and arid land shall be jubilant; the desert shall rejoice when it blossoms like the crocus. Joyously it shall break out in flower, singing with delight; it shall be endowed with

the glory of Lebanon, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. The glory of Jehovah and the splendor of our God they shall see [there]. Strengthen the hands grown feeble, steady the failing knees. Say to those with fearful hearts, 'Take courage; be unafraid! See, your God is coming to avenge and to reward; God himself will come and deliver you.' Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame leap like deer, and the tongue of the dumb shout for joy. Water shall break forth in the wilderness and streams [flow] in the desert. The land of mirages shall become one of lakes, the thirsty place springs of water; in the haunt of howling creatures [shall marshes break out], in the reserves shall come rushes and reeds" (Isaiah 35:1-7).

At Jehovah's coming in glory, Zion and its stakes become established as the joyful abode of God's elect: "Your eyes shall behold the King in his glory and view the expanse of the earth. . . . Behold Zion, the city of our solemn assemblies; let your eyes rest upon Jerusalem, the abode of peace—an immovable tent, whose stakes shall never be uprooted, nor any of its cords severed. . . . None who reside there shall say, 'I am ill'; the people who inhabit it shall be forgiven their iniquity. May Jehovah cause us to dwell there, a country of rivers and broad streams" (Isaiah 33:17, 20-21, 24); "In that day, sing of her as of a delightful vineyard of which I, Jehovah, am keeper. I water it constantly, watch over it night and day, lest anything be amiss" (Isaiah 27:2).

Wild animals become tame and all creatures on the earth live in peace: "Then shall the wolf dwell among lambs and the leopard lie down with young goats; calves and young lions will feed together, and a youngster will lead them [to pasture]. When a cow and bear browse, their young will rest together; the lion will eat straw like the ox. A suckling infant will play near the adder's den, and the toddler reach his hand over the viper's nest. There shall be no harm or injury done throughout my holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with the

knowledge of Jehovah as the oceans are overspread with waters” (Isaiah 11:6–9); “Blessed are you, who shall then sow by all waters, letting oxen and asses range free” (Isaiah 32:20).

Every vestige of disharmony and oppression disappears from the earth: “I will delight in Jerusalem, rejoice in my people; no more shall be heard there the sound of weeping or the cry of distress. No more shall there be infants alive but a few days, or the aged who do not live out their years; those who die young shall be a hundred years old, and those who fail to reach a hundred shall be accursed. When men build houses, they will dwell in them; when they plant vineyards, they will eat their fruit. They shall not build so that others may dwell, or plant so that others may eat. The lifetime of my people shall be as the lifetime of a tree; my chosen ones shall outlast the work of their hands. They shall not exert themselves in vain, or bear children doomed for calamity. For they are of the lineage of those Jehovah has blessed, and their posterity with them. Before they call I will reply; while they are yet speaking I will respond. The wolf and the lamb will graze alike, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; as for the serpent, dust shall be its food: there shall be no harm or injury done throughout my holy mountain” (Isaiah 65:19–25).

Zion’s beauty surpasses previous experience as the earth’s millennial inhabitants partake of the spiritual and temporal salvation God promises those who prove loyal to him through the evil time: “In place of copper I will bring gold, in place of iron, silver; in place of wood I will bring copper, in place of stones, iron. I will make peace your rulers and righteousness your oppressors: tyranny shall no more be heard of in your land, nor dispossession or disaster within your borders; you will regard salvation as your walls and homage as your gates. No longer shall the sun be your light by day, nor the brightness of the moon your illumination at night: Jehovah will be your everlasting light and your God your radiant glory. Your sun shall set no more, nor your moon wane: to you



## ANCIENT *TYPES* OF END-TIME EVENTS

Jehovah shall be an endless light when your days of mourning are fulfilled. Your entire people shall be righteous; they shall inherit the earth forever—they are the branch I have planted, the work of my hands, in which I am glorified. The least of them shall become a clan, the youngest a mighty nation” (Isaiah 60:17–22).



## PART FIVE

# KEYWORDS IN THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH

A network of word links in the Book of Isaiah reveals a prophecy within a prophecy that elucidates the meaning of many keywords scattered throughout the text. Most of these terms function as pseudonyms or aliases of the main actors in Isaiah's end-time drama. Their identity is determined either directly or by the synonymous, complementary, and antithetical parallel lines that characterize Hebrew poetry.

These keywords' additional meanings take nothing away from their literal meanings. Literal meanings—which are commonly based on a plain interpretation of a word or phrase—remain valid. Layered into them, however, are metaphorical meanings that augment and greatly enlarge the prophetic picture. Without coming to terms with these keywords, one can glean only a small fraction of Isaiah's message.

The main actors in Isaiah's end-time drama—who appear both under their own names and under pseudonyms or aliases—are (1) Jehovah God of Israel, who comes to establish his reign of peace on the earth; (2) Jehovah's servant, who pre-

prepares the way before him by restoring his people Israel; and (3) the king of Assyria/Babylon, an archtyrant who conquers the world by military force and who commits global genocide.

### I. **Jehovah God of Israel**

Isaiah characterizes Jehovah as a personification of “salvation”—as the epitome of a Savior of his people. His servant’s “work” of preparing a people to meet their God (Isaiah 40:10–11; 42:3) precedes Jehovah’s coming: “Tell the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your *Salvation* comes, his reward with him, his work preceding him” (Isaiah 62:11; emphasis added). As determined by synonymous parallel lines—in which one keyword appears as the equivalent of another—additional such metaphorical pseudonyms designate Jehovah: “You have forgotten your God, your *salvation*, and not remembered the *Rock*, your fortress” (Isaiah 17:10; emphasis added); “Ever trust in *Jehovah*, for Jehovah, Yah, is an everlasting *Rock*” (Isaiah 26:4; emphasis added); “Be our *arm* from morning to morning, our *salvation* in troubled times” (Isaiah 33:2; emphasis added).

God has two “arms,” however—“salvation” and “righteousness”—Jehovah and his servant. These intervene in the earth on behalf of his people. As we see in the following complementary parallel lines, “righteousness” prepares the way for “salvation” to come: “My *righteousness* shall be at hand and my *salvation* proceed; my *arms* shall judge the peoples” (Isaiah 51:5; emphasis added); “My *salvation* will soon come when my *righteousness* is revealed” (Isaiah 56:1; emphasis added). Further complementary parallel lines establish the interactive relationship between “salvation” and “righteousness”—Jehovah and his servant: “Your *righteousness* will go before you, and the glory of *Jehovah* will be your rearguard” (Isaiah 58:8; emphasis added); “My *righteousness* shall endure forever, my *salvation* through endless generations” (Isaiah 51:8; emphasis added).

## 2. Jehovah's End-Time Servant

Just as Jehovah personifies “salvation,” so his servant personifies “righteousness”—that is, he exemplifies keeping God’s law and word in a world and among a people who have become corrupt: “Who has raised up *Righteousness* from the east, calling him to [the place of] his foot?” (Isaiah 41:2; emphasis added); “Hear me, you stubborn-hearted, who are far from *righteousness*: I have brought near my *righteousness*; it is not now far off—my *salvation* shall no longer be delayed” (Isaiah 46:12–13). God’s “arm” of “righteousness” intervenes in the earth to prepare the way for “salvation” to come: “His *arm* brought about *salvation* for him; his *righteousness* rallied to his cause” (Isaiah 59:16; emphasis added); “Rain down from above, O heavens; let the skies overflow with *righteousness*. Let the earth receive it and *salvation* blossom” (Isaiah 45:8; emphasis added).

Additional pseudonyms designate Jehovah’s servant, as in the following parallel lines: “I will strengthen you; I will also succor you and uphold you with *righteousness*, my *right hand*” (Isaiah 41:10; emphasis added); “Jehovah has sworn by his *right hand*, his mighty *arm*” (Isaiah 62:8; emphasis added); “Jehovah will cause his *voice* to resound, and make visible his *arm* descending in furious rage” (Isaiah 30:30; emphasis added); “Who among you fears Jehovah and heeds the *voice* of his servant” (Isaiah 50:10; emphasis added); “I will put my words in your *mouth* and shelter you in the shadow of my *hand*” (Isaiah 51:16; emphasis added); “I will lift up my *hand* to the nations, raise my *ensign* to the peoples” (Isaiah 49:22; emphasis added); “In that day the *sprig* of Jesse, who stands for an *ensign* to the peoples, shall be sought by the nations: (Isaiah 11:10; emphasis added).

The servant’s function as a “light” to the nations contrasts the king of Assyria/Babylon’s function as a personification of “darkness” in the following synonymous, complementary, and antithetical parallel lines: “I will also appoint you to be a *light* to the nations, that my *salvation* may be to the end of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6; emphasis added); “I have created you and

appointed you to be a *covenant* for the people, a *light* to the nations” (Isaiah 42:6; emphasis added); “The people walking in *darkness* have seen a bright *light*; on the inhabitants of the land of the shadow of *Death* has the *light* dawned” (Isaiah 9:2; emphasis added); “They put *darkness* for *light* and *light* for *darkness*” (Isaiah 5:20; emphasis added); “We look for *light*, but there prevails *darkness*” (Isaiah 59:9; emphasis added); “The *darkness* confronting them I will turn into *light*” (Isaiah 42:16; emphasis added). And so forth.

### 3. The End-Time King of Assyria/Babylon

Just as the servant functions as Jehovah’s “hand/right hand,” “ensign,” “voice,” “mouth,” etc., so does the king of Assyria/Babylon. The metaphorical pseudonyms they share in common show their arch rivalry and struggle for people’s souls: “Raise the *ensign* on a barren mountain; sound the *voice* among them! Beckon them with the *hand* to advance into the precincts of the elite” (Isaiah 13:2; emphasis added). Additional such keywords, however, identify the king of Assyria/Babylon as a personification of Jehovah’s “anger” and “wrath” upon the wicked of his people and the nations: “Hail the Assyrian, the *rod* of my *anger*! He is a *staff*—my *wrath* in their *hand*” (Isaiah 10:5; emphasis added); “I trod them down in my *anger*; in my *wrath* I trampled them” (Isaiah 63:3; emphasis added); “For all this his *anger* is not abated; his *hand* is upraised still” (Isaiah 5:25; emphasis added).

Similar keywords identify the archtyrant as an oppressor and power of chaos: “My Lord will cause to come up over them the great and mighty waters of the *River*—the king of Assyria in all his glory” (Isaiah 8:7; emphasis added); “As a ravaging *hailstorm* sweeping down, or like an inundating *deluge* of mighty waters, he will hurl them to the ground by his *hand*” (Isaiah 28:2; emphasis added); “He shall be stirred up against them in that day, even as the *Sea* is stirred up” (Isaiah 5:30; emphasis added); “To retaliate in furious *anger*, to rebuke with

conflagrations of *fire*” (Isaiah 66:15; emphasis added); “At the *wrath* of Jehovah of Hosts the earth is scorched, and people are but fuel for the *fire*” (Isaiah 9:19; emphasis added); “I gave them into your *hand*, and you showed them no mercy; even the aged you weighed down heavily with your *yoke*” (Isaiah 47:6; emphasis added).

Just as Jehovah’s coming is preceded by his servant’s gathering a righteous people of God to whom Jehovah comes, so it is by the king of Assyria/Babylon’s cleansing of the wicked from the earth, of which he serves as Jehovah’s instrument: “Behold, Jehovah Omnipotent coming from afar! His *wrath* is kindled, heavy is his *grievance*; his *lips* flow with *indignation*, his *tongue* is like a devouring *fire*. His *breath* is like a raging *torrent* that severs at the neck. [He comes] to sift the nations in the *sieve* of falsehood; with an erring *bridle* on their jaws [he will try] the peoples” (Isaiah 30:27–28; emphasis added); “Jehovah’s *rage* is upon all nations, his *fury* upon all their hosts; he has doomed them, consigned them to the *slaughter*” (Isaiah 34:2; emphasis added); “As stubble they are burnt up in the *fire*, unable to escape the *hand* of the *flame*” (Isaiah 47:14; emphasis added).

As Jehovah’s agent for punishing the wicked, the king of Assyria/Babylon nevertheless attributes his success in committing global genocide to himself, exalting himself even over the God who empowered him: “Shall an *axe* exalt itself above the one who hews with it, or a *saw* vaunt itself over him who handles it? As though the *rod* wielded him who lifts it up! As though the *staff* held up the one who is not made of wood!” (Isaiah 10:15; emphasis added). In the end, therefore, he too perishes: “You have smashed the *yoke* that burdened them, the *staff* of submission, the *rod* of those who subjected them” (Isaiah 9:4; emphasis added); “Jehovah has broken the *staff* of the wicked, the *rod* of those who ruled” (Isaiah 14:5; emphasis added); “I am taking the cup of stupor from your *hand*; you shall drink no more from the bowl of my *wrath*” (Isaiah 51:22; emphasis added).

#### 4. The Metaphorical Pseudonyms

**Anger**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies Jehovah's *anger* toward his unrepentant people and the nations when Jehovah comes out in judgment against them (Isaiah 5:25; 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4–5, 25; 12:1; 13:3, 9, 13; 14:6; 27:4; 42:25; 54:9; 63:3, 6; 64:5; 66:15).

**Arm (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who personifies one of two *arms* of God who intervene in the earth to empower his elect against the Assyrian alliance in Jehovah's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 33:2; 51:5; 63:5).

**Arm (2)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, his *arm* of *righteousness*, through whom Jehovah intervenes in the earth to restore his people and prepare them for his coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 30:30; 40:10–11; 48:14; 51:5, 9; 52:10; 53:1; 59:16; 62:8; 63:5, 12).

**Arrow**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, his secret weapon, who resembles a straight *arrow* that Jehovah empowers to slay the enemies among his own people and the wicked of the world (Isaiah 49:2).

**Axe**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon as a destructive instrument and power of chaos that Jehovah uses to hew down the reprobates of his people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 10:15).

**Bird of prey**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who exemplifies righteousness in a time of wickedness, whom Jehovah raises up from the east as a bird of prey against his enemies (Isaiah 46:11).

**Bow (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who typifies the *bow* Jehovah uses against the Assyrian alliance when it has served his purpose of punishing evildoers in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 41:2).

**Bow (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who typify the *bow* or weapons of



war that slay Jehovah's unrepentant people and the nations in Jehovah's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 21:15).

**Branch**—A pseudonym of a descendant of David the son of Jesse, who represents Israel's natural lineages that are nurtured by its assimilated lineages as signified by the grafted *branch* (*nēšer*) that bears fruit (Isaiah 11:1).

**Breath (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who breathes life into Jehovah's people at the time of their backsliding but who breathes death or punishment on Jehovah's enemies (Isaiah 11:4).

**Breath (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies the fiery *breath* that burns up Jehovah's unrepentant people and the nations when the wicked destroy the wicked (Isaiah 30:28; 33:11).

**Bridle**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who goads and subjugates to their damnation the world's inhabitants who are persuaded by his lies in Jehovah's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 30:28).

**Broom**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, whom Jehovah empowers to sweep the earth clean of its corrupt inhabitants in his Day of Judgment before his millennial reign of peace (Isaiah 14:23).

**Covenant (1)** (May apply simultaneously with meaning 2)—Jehovah's everlasting covenant of peace and salvation with his people Israel and with individuals in all its forms, manifestations, and expressions (Isaiah 24:5; 54:10; 55:3; 56:4, 6; 59:21; 61:8).

**Covenant (2)** (May apply simultaneously with meaning 1)—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who personifies Jehovah's *covenant* and who acts as its mediator to God's people as did Moses (Isaiah 42:6; 49:8; 54:10; 55:3; 56:4, 6; 59:21; 61:8).

**Darkness**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who typifies the powers of *darkness*

in the world but from whose oppression Jehovah's servant releases those who repent (Isaiah 5:20; 9:2; 29:18; 42:7, 16; 45:7, 19; 49:9; 58:10; 59:9; 60:2).

**Death**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, a power of chaos who commits worldwide genocide and who attempts to destroy Jehovah's elect people in Jehovah's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 9:2; 25:8; 28:15, 18; 38:18).

**Deep**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos whom Jehovah's servant subdues as did Moses, facilitating a new exodus of Jehovah's elect to Zion (Isaiah 44:27; 51:10; 63:13).

**Deluge**—Storm imagery representing the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that inundates the lands of Jehovah's apostate people and the nations like a new Flood (Isaiah 28:2).

**Downpour**—Storm imagery representing the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that pours a Sodom-and-Gomorrah type of holocaust on a corrupt world and its inhabitants (Isaiah 4:6; 25:4).

**Dragon**—A pseudonym of Pharaoh king of Egypt, who enslaved Jehovah's people and tried to prevent Moses from delivering them, who typifies a similar oppressive ruler in Jehovah's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 51:9).

**East Wind (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant and those who vanquish the forces of chaos as they reconquer the earth for Jehovah from the power of the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance. (Isaiah 27:8).

**East Wind (2)**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who personify the burning *wind* that obliterates Jehovah's apostate people and the nations (Isaiah 27:8).

**Ensign (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who rallies a remnant of Jehovah's people dispersed among

the nations to renew their covenant with Jehovah and gather in a new exodus to Zion (Isaiah 11:10, 12; 18:3; 30:17; 31:9; 49:22; 62:10).

**Ensign (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who rallies an alliance of nations from the North against Jehovah's people and all nations as he pursues his goal of conquering the world (Isaiah 5:26; 13:2).

**Faithfulness**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who exemplifies *faithfulness* in fulfilling his covenants and promises to his people and who establishes among them his millennial reign of peace (Isaiah 11:5; 16:5; 25:1; 33:6; 38:18–19).

**Favor**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who reverses his people's circumstances when they prove loyal, who endows them in the holy priesthood and empowers them against enemies (Isaiah 61:2).

**Fiery flying serpent**—A messianic term and pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who acts as a seraph/savior to Jehovah's people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant in a time of peril (Isaiah 14:29; 30:6).

**Fire (1)**—A term signifying the presence of Jehovah, whose pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night rests on his holy ones to protect them when he comes out in judgment against the wicked of the world (Isaiah 4:5).

**Fire (2)**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, who personifies the *fire* that devours the Assyrian alliance when it threatens to destroy Jehovah's elect in Jehovah's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 10:16–17; 30:30; 31:9).

**Fire (3)**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies the *fire* that burns up Jehovah's apostate people and the nations in a Sodom-and-Gomorrah type of holocaust (Isaiah 1:7; 5:24; 9:18–19; 26:11; 30:27; 33:11, 14; 37:19; 43:2; 47:14; 64:11; 66:15–16).

**Flagstaff**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who musters a remnant of Jehovah’s people to his standard and qualifies them for deliverance from destruction in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 30:17).

**Flame (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah, who empowers his end-time servant and holy ones against the forces of evil typified by the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 10:17).

**Flame (2)**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies the *flame* that burns up Jehovah’s apostate people and the nations in a Sodom-and-Gomorrah type of holocaust (Isaiah 5:24; 29:6; 43:2; 47:14).

**Fury**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies Jehovah’s *fury* toward the miscreants of his people and the nations when Jehovah comes out in judgment against them (Isaiah 34:2; 59:17).

**Gloom**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who typifies the powers of darkness and causes pollutions that overspread the earth in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 5:30; 59:9).

**Grievance**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies Jehovah’s *grievance* toward his unrepentant people and the nations at the time Jehovah’s coming to the earth draws near (Isaiah 30:27).

**Hail (1)**—Storm imagery representing Jehovah’s end-time servant, who typifies the pounding *hail* that decimates the Assyrian alliance when it threatens Jehovah’s elect in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 30:30).

**Hail (2)**—Storm imagery representing the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that ravages Jehovah’s apostate people and the nations in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 28:17; 32:19).

**Hailstorm**—Storm imagery representing the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that ravages Jehovah’s apostate people and the nations in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 28:2).

**Hand (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, his *hand* of deliverance, who saves a repentant remnant of Jehovah’s people from a worldwide destruction wrought by the king of Assyria/Babylon (Isaiah 1:25; 5:12; 11:11, 14–15; 14:26–27; 19:25; 25:10; 26:11; 29:23; 34:17; 41:20; 43:13; 45:9, 11–12; 48:13; 49:2, 22; 50:2; 51:16, 22; 53:10; 59:1; 60:21; 62:3; 64:8; 65:2; 66:2, 14).

**Hand (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies the *hand* of punishment Jehovah empowers to smite his unrepentant people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 5:12, 25; 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4–5; 13:2; 14:26–27; 19:16, 25; 23:11; 25:10; 26:11; 28:2; 29:23; 31:3; 36:15, 18–20; 37:10, 20; 38:6; 40:2; 43:13; 45:9, 11; 47:6, 14; 50:11; 51:17, 23; 60:21; 64:7–8; 65:2).

**Hand (3)**—A pseudonym of a black non-native Afro-Egyptian pharaoh of Egypt, who subjugated his people in a time of moral decline and who acts as the type of a similar ruler of an end-time “Egypt” (Isaiah 19:4).

**Heat**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, whom Jehovah empowers to burn up the evildoers of his people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 4:6; 18:4; 25:4–5; 42:25).

**Indignation**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies Jehovah’s *indignation* toward his unrepentant people and the nations at the time Jehovah’s coming draws near (Isaiah 30:27).

**Lamb**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who resembles a sacrificial *lamb* during his earthly ministry, who acts as his people’s proxy savior, offering his life to atone for their transgressions (Isaiah 53:7).

**Light (1)**—A creation motif and pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who personifies the greater *light* that lights up the earth at his coming and that diffuses through the earth in his millennial reign of peace (Isaiah 60:19–20).

**Light (2)**—A creation motif and pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who personifies Jehovah’s *light* to the nations in a time of spiritual darkness and who instructs Jehovah’s people in his law and word (Isaiah 2:5; 5:20; 9:2; 10:17; 42:6, 16; 45:7; 49:6; 58:8, 10; 59:9; 60:1, 3; 62:1).

**Lion**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who are aroused like a *lion* against Jehovah’s people and take prey those who don’t repent in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 5:29).

**Lips (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who instructs Jehovah’s people in the law of Jehovah’s covenant in a time of apostasy and who pronounces covenant curses on Jehovah’s enemies (Isaiah 11:4; 57:19).

**Lips (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, whose lips flow with railing accusations and whom the wicked emulate at the time Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth draws near (Isaiah 30:27; 59:3).

**Mast**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, the driving force to destroy Jehovah’s people, whose alliance loses its strength when Jehovah takes the wind out of their sails (Isaiah 33:23).

**Mouth (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, Jehovah’s *mouth* or mouthpiece to the world, whom Jehovah appoints to speak in his name and teach his law and word in a time of apostasy (Isaiah 1:20; 11:4; 30:2; 34:16; 40:5; 45:23; 48:3; 49:2; 51:16; 55:11; 58:14; 59:21; 62:2).

**Mouth (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who represents the powers of hell and chaos, who mouth off against Jehovah and his elect people (Isaiah 5:14; 9:12; 37:29; 57:4).

**Nail (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, of whom Eliakim is a type, who acts as a proxy savior to a remnant of Jehovah’s people in delivering them from destruction in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 22:23).

**Nail (2)**—A pseudonym of an evil end-time servant, of whom Shebna is a type, who fails as a proxy savior to Jehovah’s people and whom Jehovah’s servant displaces in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 22:25).

**Nose**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who resembles an unruly beast that Jehovah must restrain to prevent him from getting out of control in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 37:29).

**Plant**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who typifies Jehovah’s holy ones, the “firstfruits” of the earth who survive a worldwide destruction and live into the earth’s millennial age of peace (Isaiah 4:2).

**Quarry (1)**—A pseudonym of Sarah, Abraham’s wife, who acts as a type of Jehovah’s elect people who leave house and kindreds behind to journey to lands of inheritance Jehovah promises them (Isaiah 51:1).

**Quarry (2)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s wife, the Woman Zion, the exemplar of righteous women, who marries Jehovah by an everlasting covenant and gives birth to a righteous posterity (Isaiah 51:1)

**Rage (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who manifests Jehovah’s *rage* toward the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance for their excesses in committing worldwide genocide (Isaiah 30:30).

**Rage (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies Jehovah’s *rage* toward his unrepentant people and the nations when Jehovah comes out in judgment against them (Isaiah 34:2; 51:13; 63:6; 66:14).

**Ravager**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, whom Jehovah empowers to forge weapons of war with which to destroy the wicked of his people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 54:16).

**Razor**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, Jehovah’s instrument for cutting off from the earth the evildoers of Jehovah’s people and the nations in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 7:20).

**Reprisals**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who carries out Jehovah’s *reprisals* on the reprobates of his people and the nations when Jehovah comes out in judgment against them (Isaiah 59:18).

**Retribution**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who executes Jehovah’s *retribution* on the evildoers of his people and the nations when Jehovah comes out in judgment against them (Isaiah 34:8; 59:18).

**Right Hand**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, his *hand* of deliverance, who restores Jehovah’s people beyond their former glory and prepares the way for Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 41:10, 13; 48:13; 62:8; 63:12).

**Righteousness**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who personifies Jehovah’s *righteousness* and who acts as an exemplar of righteousness to Jehovah’s people and the nations in a time of wickedness (Isaiah 1:21, 26–27; 5:16; 9:7; 10:22; 11:4–5; 16:5; 19:18; 26:9–10; 28:17; 32:1, 16–17; 33:5; 41:2; 42:21; 45:8, 19, 21, 23; 46:12–13; 48:1, 18; 51:1, 5–8; 54:14; 56:1; 58:2, 8; 59:4, 9, 14, 16–17; 60:17; 61:3, 10–11; 62:1–2; 63:1; 64:5).

**River**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, a power of chaos who overflows his banks like a *River* in flood, who inundates the lands of Jehovah’s people and the nations like a new Deluge (Isaiah 7:20; 8:7; 11:15; 27:12).

**Rock (r)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, the *rock* of his people’s salvation, who acts as a stronghold and sanctuary



to his people who repent but as a stumbling block to those who don't (Isaiah 8:14; 17:10; 26:4; 30:29; 44:8; 48:21; 51:1).

**Rock (2)**—A pseudonym of Abraham, Israel's righteous progenitor, who acts as a type of Jehovah's elect people who leave house and kindreds behind to journey to lands of inheritance Jehovah promises them (Isaiah 51:1).

**Rod (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah's end-time servant, whom Jehovah appoints to rule the nations at the time of Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth and during the earth's millennial age of peace (Isaiah 11:4).

**Rod (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who smite Jehovah's wicked people and the nations but from whose power Jehovah's servant delivers those who repent (Isaiah 9:4; 10:5, 15, 24; 14:5; 30:31).

**Rod (3)**—A pseudonym of King Ahaz, who acts as the type of an end-time ruler who smites the enemies of Jehovah's people who oppress and attempt to destroy them from their Promised Land (Isaiah 14:29).

**Salvation**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who personifies everlasting *salvation* to his repentant people by delivering them spiritually from their sins and temporally from their enemies (Isaiah 12:2–3; 17:10; 25:9; 26:1, 18; 33:2, 6; 43:12; 45:8, 17; 46:13; 49:6, 8; 51:5–6, 8; 52:7, 10; 56:1; 59:11, 16–17; 60:18; 61:10; 62:1, 11; 63:5).

**Sapling**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who typifies a *sapling* or *stalk* growing up among his apostate people but who maintains contact with the Most High God during his earthly ministry (Isaiah 53:2).

**Saw**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon as a destructive instrument and power of chaos that Jehovah uses to cut down the reprobates of his people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 10:15).

**Scourge**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, a power of chaos who ravages the earth in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment and who exterminates nations in his quest to conquer the world (Isaiah 28:15, 18).

**Sea (1)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that engulfs the lands of Jehovah’s people and the nations but that Jehovah’s servant subdues as did Moses (Isaiah 5:30; 10:26; 11:15; 27:1; 43:16; 50:2; 51:10, 15; 57:20; 60:5; 63:11).

**Sea (2)**—The port city of Tyre that typifies the multinational entity of a Greater Babylon and its shipping empire, which the king of Assyria/Babylon destroys in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 23:4, 11).

**Shoot**—A pseudonym of a descendant of David the son of Jesse, who represents Israel’s lineages that assimilated into the Gentiles as signified by the wild nature of the *shoot* (*hōter*) or “water spout” (Isaiah 11:1)

**Sieve**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who “sifts” the nations with his lies and propaganda as a test to whom they will prove loyal prior to Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 30:28).

**Slaughter**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who commits mass genocide of the miscreants of Jehovah’s people and the nations when their time expires in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 34:2; 65:12).

**Smith**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, whom Jehovah empowers to forge weapons of war with which to destroy the evildoers of his people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 54:16).

**Snake**—A messianic term and pseudonym of King Ahaz, who acts as the type of an end-time ruler who smites the enemies of Jehovah’s people who oppress them and who begets another ruler like him (Isaiah 14:29).

**Sprig**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, a descendant of David the son of Jesse, who represents Israel’s natural lineages as signified by the *sprig* (*šōres*) that grows into a fruit-bearing *branch* (Isaiah 11:10).

**Staff (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, whom Jehovah empowers over the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance as he empowered Moses over the Egyptians and the Amalekites (Isaiah 10:26; 30:32).

**Staff (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, whom Jehovah empowers to subjugate his alienated people and the nations who don’t repent after they are warned (Isaiah 9:4; 10:5, 15, 24; 14:5).

**Stalk**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who typifies a *stalk* or *sapling* growing up among his apostate people but who maintains contact with the Most High God during his earthly ministry (Isaiah 53:2).

**Stock (1)**—A pseudonym of a descendant of David the son of Jesse, who represents the ethnic or natural lineages of Israel as signified by the primary or core nature of the tree’s *stock* (*geza’*) or “trunk” (Isaiah 11:1)

**Stock (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who rules briefly on the earth when it serves Jehovah’s purpose to punish the wicked but who withers and dies when he takes power to himself (Isaiah 40:24).

**Stone**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, a *stone* or seer who receives divine revelation during a dearth of revelation and who establishes righteousness among those who believe it (Isaiah 28:16).

**Storm (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant and those who vanquish the forces of chaos as they reconquer the earth for Jehovah from the power of the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance (Isaiah 17:13; 40:24).

**Storm (2)**—Storm imagery representing the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that ravages the wicked of Jehovah’s people and the nations in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 32:2; 40:24).

**Sword (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who typifies the *sword* Jehovah empowers against the king of Assyria/Babylon when he has served Jehovah’s purpose of punishing the wicked (Isaiah 27:1; 31:8; 37:7; 41:2; 49:2).

**Sword (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who typify the *sword* of justice Jehovah empowers to slay his wicked people and the nations in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 1:20; 2:4; 3:25; 13:15; 14:19; 21:15; 27:1; 34:5–6; 51:19; 65:12; 66:16).

**Tempest**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant and those who vanquish the forces of chaos as they reconquer the earth for Jehovah from the power of the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance (Isaiah 41:16).

**Tongue (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant and those whom Jehovah empowers to speak in his name, who praise Jehovah during their wilderness journey to meet Jehovah at his coming (Isaiah 35:6; 41:17).

**Tongue (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who typify the alien *tongue* the world’s evildoers emulate in falsely accusing Jehovah and his people (Isaiah 3:8; 11:15; 28:11; 30:27; 33:19; 54:17; 57:4; 59:3).

**Torch**—A pseudonym of Jehovah God of Israel, who comes to establish his reign of peace on the earth and whose presence with his elect in Zion shines like a beacon for the entire world to see (Isaiah 62:1).

**Torrent**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, a power of chaos that inundates the earth and wreaks destruction on a scale unknown to humanity since the Flood (Isaiah 30:28; 59:19).

**Trumpet**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who rallies a remnant of Jehovah’s people dispersed among the nations to renew their covenant with Jehovah and gather in a new exodus to Zion (Isaiah 18:3; 27:13; 58:1).

**Vapor**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who typifies the burning *vapor* that vaporizes the miscreants of Jehovah’s people and the nations in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 57:13).

**Vengeance**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who execute Jehovah’s *vengeance* on the wicked of his people and the nations in Jehovah’s Day of Judgment (Isaiah 10:6; 34:8; 47:3; 59:17; 61:2; 63:4).

**Vindication**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who typifies Jehovah’s *vindication* or *righteousness* by acting as a proxy savior to his people and empowering additional servants of Jehovah (Isaiah 45:24; 54:17).

**Viper**—A messianic term and pseudonym of King Hezekiah, Ahaz’ son, who restores the pure worship of Jehovah among his people and who acts as a type of Jehovah’s end-time servant (Isaiah 14:29).

**Voice (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, Jehovah’s *voice* to his people, who receives divine revelation during a dearth of revelation and who rebukes the enemies of Jehovah’s people (Isaiah 24:14; 28:23; 29:4; 30:19, 30–31; 32:9; 40:3, 6, 9; 48:20; 50:10; 51:3; 52:8; 58:1, 4; 66:6).

**Voice (2)**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, the *voice* or spokesman of the wicked, who rails against Jehovah and his people and rallies an alliance of nations to invade and destroy them (Isaiah 13:2; 31:4; 33:3; 37:23).

**Whip**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, whom Jehovah empowers over the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance as he empowered Gideon over the Midianites and delivered his people (Isaiah 10:26).

**Wind (1)**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant and those who vanquish the forces of chaos as they reconquer the earth for Jehovah from the power of the king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance. (Isaiah 11:15; 17:13; 41:16).

**Wind (2)**—A chaos motif and pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon and his alliance, who personify the burning *wind* that obliterates the miscreants of Jehovah’s people and the nations (Isaiah 4:4; 26:18; 32:2; 57:13).

**Wrath**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies Jehovah’s *wrath* toward the wicked of his people and the nations when Jehovah comes out in judgment against them (Isaiah 9:19; 10:5, 25; 13:5, 9, 13; 14:6; 26:20; 30:27; 48:9; 51:13, 17, 20, 22; 59:18; 63:3, 5).

**Yoke**—A pseudonym of the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, whom the wicked emulate in imposing bondage on others but from whose power Jehovah’s servant delivers those who repent (Isaiah 9:4; 10:27; 14:25; 47:6; 58:6).

**Zeal**—A pseudonym of Jehovah’s end-time servant, who exemplifies Jehovah’s *zeal* for his people in restoring them beyond their former glory and preparing the way for Jehovah’s millennial reign of peace (Isaiah 9:7; 26:11; 37:32; 63:15).

## PART SIX

# OVERVIEWS OF ISAIAH'S PROPHECY

The following website postings, many of which encapsulate subjects already discussed, reiterate how Isaiah's prophetic message relates to the geo-political configuration of our present world and how becoming familiar with it prepares us to participate in the events Isaiah predicts.

### I. INTERPRETATION OF ISAIAH

#### **Defining Isaiah—The Man and His Message**

As one might expect, a prophet who teaches a profusion of divine truths such as Isaiah is often also a cause of controversy. If his admonitions hit too close to home, or if the future he predicts looks too gloomy, let us take issue with it. Or, if we don't want to bother with Isaiah at all, let us reduce his writings to a few "quaint symbolisms" of a non-threatening nature. Either way, by treating them lightly, we relieve ourselves of their relevance to us. Or do we? The fact is that Isaiah's message will sooner or later affect all of humanity in a big way. So

if we are willing to pay the price of learning it, it is just possible that a brighter spiritual horizon may open to our view.

From New Testament times to America's Founding Fathers, Isaiah has been the most often quoted prophet. Yet, the Christian version of him was born in an age of apostasy. Modern liberal scholarship—a profession of nonbelievers—has further distorted the man and his message. Precepts of men prevent people from receiving more of God's word as Isaiah teaches it. If people haven't heard something a thousand times, then it can't be true. Although what they believe may have no basis of fact, they won't search the scriptures to see if those things are so (Acts 17:11). Ought not a prophet who saw our day, who so eloquently spells it out, be our daily walk and talk?

### **The Book of Isaiah—New Scriptural Paradigm**

Any serious study of the scriptures must take into account the Book of Isaiah; and any serious study of the Book of Isaiah must take into account its literary features that are there in evidence. Those literary elements reveal an entirely different paradigm of what Isaiah's message is all about than the one that has come down to us from past tradition. Besides Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure, other holistic structures—layered one on top of another—reveal the inner workings of Isaiah's writings and establish important prophetic concepts all their own. An entire series of interconnected events as well as a network of linking terms and ideas richly reward one's inquiry.

As all new paradigms seem threatening and meet with opposition from those who have a vested interest in maintaining the old, so that is the case here. Anyone deeply investigating the Book of Isaiah in the light of its many literary features will incur the same response. As “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing,” moreover, and as “discretion is the better part of valor,” the real challenge is to learn the prophet's message *before* attempting to convert souls to Isaiah. It takes several years of



diligent effort to assimilate a paradigm so all-embracing and comprehensive as Isaiah's and at the same time match it up with the current state of political and ecclesiastical affairs.

### **Reading in Context—An Interpretive Principle**

Built into Isaiah's prophecy—and indeed into all scripture—are two different ways one may interpret them. The first is superficial, presumptive, and conceited. The second is in-depth, inquiring, and unassuming. That is one way God divides people—"rendering void the knowledge of their sages and the intelligence of their wise men insignificant" (Isaiah 29:14)—when the truth finally comes out. Besides inheriting a Christian tradition that bears little resemblance to the religion of Jesus, the modern world has inherited an entire array of scriptural interpretations that don't reflect what their texts actually say. Particularly is that the case with the writings of Isaiah.

One of the first principles of scriptural interpretation is to read everything *in context*—meaning you can't isolate even one word, verse, or idea and let that become a point of focus without taking into account all its interconnections and word links to other parts of the text. In Isaiah's case, however, that principle extends to the entire book, as all its components—literary patterns, typologies, codenames, keywords, and concepts—are interwoven into one grand tapestry. These mechanics of Isaiah's prophecy, in other words, preclude the casual reader from coming to understanding, even as they inspire a kind of divine awe in the reader who unravels them.

### **Hebrew Thinking—Typological, Not Logical**

Without taking a leap of logic, the Western mind simply cannot comprehend the prophecy of Isaiah. Underlying the Hebrew worldview is that history is cyclical, not linear. We say history repeats itself, but the Hebrew prophets carry that idea one step further. As a case in point, Isaiah prophesies

nothing new unless he bases it on something old. He predicts “the end from the beginning” (Isaiah 46:10) not simply by telling us what will happen at the end but by drawing on events that occurred in the beginning of Israel’s history that typify and foreshadow the end. In other words, the historical events Isaiah chooses to talk about form an allegory of the end-time.

Isaiah can do this because he has seen the end from the beginning in a great cosmic vision—a vision of the past, present, and future. For that reason, he doesn’t attempt to talk about all the events of the past, only those that typify end-time events. In that way, he may be addressing people of his own day about matters familiar to them but at the same time be addressing people at the end of the world about things that will happen then. Isaiah, moreover, lived in perhaps the most portending period of Israel’s history, when many events of his day—such as the apostasy of God’s people and Assyria’s invasion of the Promised Land—would repeat themselves at the end.

### **Distinguishing between Literal and Figurative**

Neither a wholly literal way of interpreting Isaiah’s prophecy nor a wholly figurative one has ever worked for uncovering its message. Isaiah’s use of metaphors, allegories, codenames, keywords, etc., often requires both a literal and figurative interpretation. His depiction of the king of Babylon’s aspiring to “make myself like the Most High [God],” then falling “from the heavens” and ending up in “the utmost depths of the Pit” (Isaiah 14:4, 12–16), for example, begs the question of whether Isaiah is talking about a primordial fallen angel. Yet, the ability of this tyrannical “man” to “ascend above the altitude of the clouds” (*ibid.*) is feasible given today’s technology.

In another instance, Isaiah recalls the events of Israel’s exodus out of Egypt: “Awake, arise; clothe yourself with power, O arm of Jehovah! Bestir yourself, as in ancient times, as in generations of old. Was it not you who carved up Rahab, you

who slew the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the Sea, the waters of the mighty deep, and made of ocean depths a way by which the redeemed might pass?" (Isaiah 51:9–10). While Isaiah here alludes to the angel of God who led the camp of Israel (Exodus 14:19; compare Isaiah 63:9–13), the context is an end-time exodus (Isaiah 51:11) led by God's *arm*—his servant—whom God empowers to subdue the forces of chaos.

### **The Book of Isaiah—A Sealed Book Unsealed**

It is no secret that for any practical purpose the Book of Isaiah has been a sealed book to most readers probably since the time of the prophet himself. Of course, its author—Isaiah—was not just aware of that but he purposely intended it to be so at the time he wrote it. It served a divine purpose of keeping his book unaltered, while those with eyes to see and ears to hear would comprehend much of it and thus increase their understanding. In fact, an ancient writing attributed to Isaiah affirms that the book which he “openly proclaimed”—that is, the Book of Isaiah—was written “in parables” or as an allegory so that not everyone would understand it (Ascension of Isaiah 4:20).

God commanded Isaiah to write it: “Go now, write on tablets concerning them; record it in a book for the end-time, as a testimony forever” (Isaiah 30:8). While the “tablets” or “plates” (*luah*) Isaiah wrote are yet to be found, his message is intended for the end-time: “In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind see out of gross darkness” (Isaiah 29:18). As a type of other sealed books that are to be unsealed in the end-time, the Book of Isaiah—his “sealed book” (Isaiah 29:11)—thus harbors an important message for our day. Analysis of Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure and other literary features has unsealed the greater part of it.

### **The Book of Isaiah—A Blueprint of Our Time**

What sets the Book of Isaiah apart from all other prophetic writings is its all-inclusiveness in depicting an end-time scenario. Even more comprehensive in portraying the end of the world than apocalyptic writings such as Daniel and Revelation, it spells out a great confluence of events humanity is about to experience. Using Israel's ancient history as a foreshadowing of the end of the world, it predicts the future by drawing on events of the past. Only a prophet-poet with extraordinary literary skills could have predicted "the end" based on ancient beginnings (Isaiah 46:10). Only a visionary who saw both time periods could have crafted this prophetic masterpiece.

While the Book of Isaiah's apocalyptic message accords with Jewish tradition, and while its literary features reveal its twofold relevance—to Isaiah's day and to the end-time—it still requires uncommon faith to believe that it is a handbook for our day. For one thing, it may mean discarding much or all of what we thought we knew before. Isaiah foresees just such confusion when he speaks of the deaf "hearing" and the blind "seeing" the words of his book. Only then—in a day when barely a few "disciples" would know its true message (Isaiah 8:16)—would "those who erred in spirit gain understanding and those who murmured accept instruction" (Isaiah 29:18, 24).

### **Earth's End-Time—History Repeating Itself**

A reassuring thing about Isaiah's prophecy is that Isaiah limits himself to predicting new things based on old things when describing the end of the world. Over thirty ancient events—some that occurred before, some contemporary with, and some soon after Isaiah's day—typify end-time events. To God's people who know their history, who have searched Isaiah's writings for answers, therefore, those events won't appear unfamiliar when they unfold. To those who are acquainted with them and experience them, hindsight will

turn to foresight. Perhaps that is one reason why God commanded his people to celebrate ancient events such as Israel's Passover.

Of course, when those former events repeat themselves in the end-time, they won't do so in the order they occurred before nor take thousands of years. This time around, moreover, they will happen on a world scale and won't be limited to the Jews in the State of Israel. While the ancient names that Isaiah uses to describe nations and persons function as codenames of end-time ones, they don't apply to nations and persons with the same names today. Rather, a sure way to identify which nations or entities Isaiah is speaking of in today's world is to be guided by the way Isaiah *characterizes* them and then to match them up with their possible modern counterparts.

### **The Domino Effect—Concealing the Message**

Because Isaiah's literary devices are meant to conceal and also reveal his prophetic message, much of that message remains hidden until uncovered by the sincere seeker of truth. One thing Isaiah conceals and reveals in this way is the actual *sequence* of end-time events leading up to the coming of Jehovah to reign on the earth. Instead of making it easy for the reader, therefore, he predicts things piecemeal, breaking up the sequence by depicting an event several times in combination with other events. The entire series appears only when we connect all the dominos. And they act like dominos also—be-falling in rapid succession until all have transpired.

A passage in Isaiah 49:9–12, for example, combines the end-time release of God's people from bondage with their wandering in the wilderness and return from a worldwide exile: "To say to the captives, 'Come forth!' and to those in darkness, 'Show yourselves!' They shall feed along the way and find pasture on all barren heights. They shall not hunger or thirst, nor be smitten by the heat wave or the sun: he who has mercy on them will guide them; he will lead them by springs of water. All

my mountain ranges I will appoint as roads; my highways shall be on high. See these, coming from afar, these, from the northwest, and these, from the land of Sinim.”

### **Getting It Right—Isaiah’s Checks and Balances**

Because Isaiah has permeated his prophecy with checks and balances, one rarely needs to second-guess his meaning. Seldom does Isaiah mention an event or idea just once, never to return to it. Rather, he frequently reiterates things in different contexts to ensure that the reader gets his message. Thus, Isaiah’s repeating events in different combinations with other events creates an entire *web* of interconnected events, which, taken together, define what he means by the end-time or end of the world. Such synchronized phenomena make the Book of Isaiah a literary work of extraordinary complexity that is at the same time simple when its literary keys are applied.

Linking ideas establish definitions of terms and entire scenarios. In one place, Isaiah may predict a new exodus of God’s people out of Babylon (Isaiah 48:20–21). In another, he identifies “Babylon” as the world and its wicked inhabitants that God destroys in his Day of Judgment (Isaiah 13:1, 9, 11, 19). Elsewhere, he predicts that God’s people will return from throughout the earth at the time of a worldwide destruction (Isaiah 27:12–13). Further, God’s people’s exodus is from the four directions of the earth to Zion (Isaiah 43:5–6). Finally, he depicts remnants of all nations streaming to Zion in the “end-time,” giving us a time frame (Isaiah 2:2–3). And so forth.

### **Israel from National to Universal to Individual**

One of several layered holistic literary structures of the Book of Isaiah—this one based on Egyptian narrative patterns—divides the book into *Trouble at Home* (Isaiah 1–39), *Exile Abroad* (Isaiah 40–54), and *Happy Homecoming* (Isaiah 55–66). These three different historical settings, rather than being grounds for multiple authors of the Book of Isaiah,

demonstrate its literary integrity and show it to be the work of a single author, a prophet–poet who saw to the end of time. Coinciding with this literary division, Israel appears as a national entity in Isaiah 1–39, as a universal entity in Isaiah 40–54, and as an entity comprised of repentant individuals in Isaiah 55–66.

It is a national Israel—Israel still in its homeland—that finds itself in trouble for breaking the terms of God's covenant. Israel's exile abroad occurs as a consequence of its apostasy. All is not lost, however. Dispersion among and assimilation into the nations of the world has the effect of refining God's people and renewing their cognizance of Israel's spiritual heritage. Additionally, it provides a chance for the nations of the world to enter into God's covenant together with Israel's natural lineages. In the end, those who return and reconstitute a new nation of Israel called Zion consist of righteous individuals who come out of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples.

### **God's Threefold Test of His People's Loyalty**

Three tests of loyalty determine who will live into a millennial age of peace. As God tried the loyalty of his people in the past, so he will again. Isaiah structures his writings according to a Mesopotamian literary pattern that depicts the three tests. We find a similar pattern of three tests the hero Odysseus must pass in the Greek legend *The Odyssey*. Isaiah's king of Assyria presents the first. Will God's people give him their allegiance or will they remain loyal to Israel's God even on pain of death? Idolaters and their worldliness present the second—an enticement God's people may succumb to without being aware. Ecclesiastical leaders' abuse of authority forms the third.

The order of the three tests may be reversed from their sequence in the Book of Isaiah. Certain "brethren" who exercise ecclesiastical authority "abhor" and "exclude" persons who are

vigilant for God's word (Isaiah 66:5). In the end, however, God appoints as his priests and ministers those who suffer "shouted insults" and "twofold shame" for his sake (Isaiah 61:6-7). Spiritual blindness—resulting from an entrenched culture of materialism—makes God's people trust in "gods that cannot save" when trouble looms (Isaiah 42:17-25; 44:9-21; 45:20). Lastly, the king of Assyria may conquer the whole world, but he and his ilk don't prevail for long (Isaiah 10:5-27).

### **Holy War Justified on What Spiritual Grounds?**

When Israel conquered the Promised Land anciently, its "holy war" (if we may call it that) occurred on several conditions. First, the iniquity of the inhabitants had to be full (Genesis 15:16); that is, such wickedness had to prevail in the land that the rising generation had little or no hope of growing up in righteousness. Second, the only valid reasons for making war with a people was self-defense or when commanded by God through a prophet like Moses (Numbers 21:10-35; 31:1-54). Third, the land had to be promised to God's people's ancestors by an unconditional covenant, as God had sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 6:8; Deuteronomy 1:8).

Even with these stipulations in place, however, God's people couldn't simply go and conquer their Promised Land. They themselves had to keep the terms of God's covenant (the Sinai Covenant) *as a nation* in order to inherit it. The generation of God's people that grew up in the wilderness, whom Moses taught the law of the covenant, qualified to inherit it. Just so, God's end-time people conquer their promised lands: "Your sons shall hasten your ravagers away; those who ruined you shall depart from you" (Isaiah 49:17). When empowered by God's "hand," they "thresh mountains to dust and make chaff of hills" (Isaiah 41:10-16), speaking figuratively.



### **An “Assyrian” Identity for the Ten Lost Tribes**

Isaiah predicts that three branches of God's people will live into a millennial age of peace: “In that day Israel shall be the third party to Egypt and to Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth. Jehovah of Hosts will bless them, saying, ‘Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance’” (Isaiah 19:24–25). Five cities in the land of “Egypt,” moreover, will in that day swear loyalty to Israel's God and their inhabitants covenant with him by sacrifice. These covenanters appear to be the sole survivors when God smites Egypt with a civil war and a foreign invasion. In the end, God sends them a savior and heals Egypt (Isaiah 19:2–22).

When Israel's ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom went captive into Assyria in 722 B.C. (2 Kings 15:29; 17:6), they disappeared from known historical records. The emergence of an end-time people of God called “Assyria”—which parallels the similar emergence of an end-time people of God called “Egypt”—thus implies that those of end-time Assyria who survive God's Day of Judgment consist of the descendants of those who were taken captive into ancient Assyria. While the Assyrian armies who conquer the world ultimately perish (Isaiah 10:16–18, 24–26; 14:24–27; 30:30–32; 31:8–9), *these* “Assyrians,” whose names are “recorded,” survive (Isaiah 10:19).

## 2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### **Jehovah's Commission of Isaiah as a Prophet**

Isaiah receives his commission as a prophet to God's people Israel “in the year of King Uzziah's death” (742 B.C.), when he sees Jehovah “seated on a throne, highly exalted, the skirt of his robe filling the sanctuary” (Isaiah 6:1). Jehovah appoints him to “say to these people, ‘Go on hearing, but not understanding; Go on seeing, but not perceiving’” (Isaiah 6:9), signifying that his people as a whole are already beyond the point where an appeal to repentance might restore them to

righteousness. The prognosis is that in spite of his best efforts their “cities will lie desolate and without inhabitant, the houses without a man, and the land ravaged to ruin” (Isaiah 6:11).

The purpose of Isaiah’s call nevertheless emerges from the pages of his prophecy. First, a remnant of God’s people, consisting of Jehovah’s “disciples” (Isaiah 8:16), heeds Isaiah’s appeal to repent. They survive the destruction God’s people as a whole are bringing upon themselves by their collective guilt (Isaiah 8:13–15). Second, Isaiah’s prophecy will have a dual fulfillment, one in his own day and another at the end of the world. That second fulfillment, however, will prove more portentous than the first. Requiring people to exercise faith in an ancient writing that predicts their day seems an ingenious way of identifying a repentant remnant of God’s people.

### **Actual Text as Opposed to Historical Origins**

In their zeal to publish articles and books for the motive of gaining academic tenure or notoriety in their field, liberal scholars have paid much attention to the “historical origins” of the Book of Isaiah rather than to its message. In other words, they have focused on Isaiah’s role as a historian instead of as a prophet of God. Although the setting in which Isaiah prophesies helps verify historical events, those events themselves don’t address God’s intent in speaking through his prophet. To convey his divine message, for example, Isaiah records historical incidents and events only selectively, so that on that basis he could not even be considered a good historian.

As a case in point, King Hezekiah’s historical actions vary somewhat from the way Isaiah presents them. The biblical record reveals the king’s ambivalence in how he responds to Assyria’s invasion of Judea: (1) by paying tribute to the Assyrian King Sennacherib yet preparing to defend himself against him (2 Kings 18:13–16; 2 Chronicles 32:1–6); and (2) by trusting in Jehovah his God to deliver him and his people from the Assyrians (2 Kings 19:15–19; 2 Chronicles 32:7–8). As the type

of a similar deliverance from an end-time “Assyrian” invasion of God’s people’s land, only Hezekiah’s second response appears in the Book of Isaiah (Isaiah 36:1–38:7).

### **The Divided Kingdom—A National Tragedy**

A divisive spirit among Israel’s twelve tribes extends back to Jacob’s twelve sons themselves, particularly in their hatred of Joseph and their desire to kill him, although Judah persuades them to sell him (Genesis 37). Disputes among the tribes arise in the era of Israel’s judges, as when the prideful Ephraimites balk at Gideon’s miraculous victory over the hosts of Midian and Amalek (Judges 7:1–8:1); or when the tribe of Benjamin slays tens of thousands of Israelites in defense of its own lewdness (Judges 19–20). After the death of Saul, its first king, Israel divides into northern and southern tribes, although seven years later David heals their rift (2 Samuel 1–5).

When Solomon’s son Rehoboam raises Israel’s taxes against the advice of his elders, Israel’s ten northern tribes install Solomon’s Ephraimite servant Jeroboam as their king. From that time forward, Rehoboam and succeeding generations of kings of David’s lineage rule only over the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and the priestly tribe of Levi. A few remnants of Israel’s ten tribes who abhor Jeroboam’s idolatry in the Northern Kingdom additionally flee to the Southern Kingdom of Judah where the worship of Israel’s God Jehovah is maintained (1 Kings 12; 2 Chronicles 11:5–17). Israel’s division into separate entities continues even after they go into exile.

### **The Davidic Dynasty—A Monarchy in Stone**

When the kings of Aram (Syria) and Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom of Israel) seek to replace King Ahaz of the Southern Kingdom of Judah with a king who isn’t of the lineage of David, Isaiah categorically informs Ahaz that such a thing can’t happen (Isaiah 7:1–7). Although Ahaz endangers the lives of his people through his disloyal actions (Isaiah 7:17–25),

nothing can void God's unconditional covenant with his ancestor David of an enduring dynasty to rule on David's throne (2 Samuel 7:16; Psalms 132:11–18). Even upon Israel exile, God transplants David's heirs to other lands (Ezekiel 17:22–23). From there, moreover, they are someday to return:

“Thus says Jehovah, ‘David shall never want a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel. . . . If you can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, that there should not be day and night in their season, Then may my covenant also be broken with my servant David that he should not have a son to reign on his throne. . . . As the hosts of heaven can't be numbered, nor the sands of the sea measured, so will I multiply the offspring of my servant David’” (Jeremiah 33:17, 20–22); “There shall enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he and his servants and his people” (Jeremiah 22:4).

### **King Ahaz' Response to Assyria's Hegemony**

Neo-Assyrian expansion in the ancient Near East commences its most aggressive phase under Tiglath-Pileser III (747–727 B.C.). His incursions into Syria and Palestine put on edge local kings such as Ahaz, who ruled Judea. Syria's King Rezin and the Northern Kingdom of Israel's King Pekah seek to bring Judea into an alliance against Assyria's domination of the Levant. Ahaz' refusal leads to these kings' military incursion into Judea and their slaughter of Ahaz' people (2 Kings 16:5; 2 Chronicles 28:5–7). Isaiah notes Ahaz' fear: “The king's mind and the minds of his people were shaken, as trees in a forest are shaken by a gale” (Isaiah 7:2).

Instead of joining these kings' alliance, Ahaz appeals to Tiglath-Pileser to deliver him from them. Calling himself his “servant and son”—paying him tribute moneys with the temple's gold and silver—he makes himself his vassal (2 Kings 16:7–8). By structurally paralleling Ahaz' *disloyal* response to Jehovah under the terms of the Davidic Covenant

with King Hezekiah's *loyal* response at a similar instance of Assyrian aggression a generation later, Part II of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 6–8; 36–40 foreshadows a repeat performance of these events: two end-time Davidic kings—contemporaries—react in opposite ways to the same “Assyrian” threat.

### **King Hezekiah's Response to Assyria's Threat**

On the heels of revolts by vassal states against Assyrian rule, Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.) invades Syria and Palestine in 701 B.C., the fourteenth year of the reign of Judea's King Hezekiah. Sennacherib claims to have captured 46 walled cities of Judea, including the fortress of Lachish (2 Kings 18:13; 2 Chronicles 32:9; *ANET*, 287–88; *ANEP*, 371–74). Although a few years earlier the Northern Kingdom of Israel had fallen to Assyria, Hezekiah revolts and prepares his people to defend themselves against Assyria in Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:7; 2 Chronicles 32:1–8). Paying off Sennacherib with tribute moneys (2 Kings 18:14–16) purchases him time to prepare.

At Assyria's siege of Jerusalem, Hezekiah and Isaiah appeal to Jehovah to deliver the people who have taken refuge there (2 Kings 19:1–4, 15–19; 2 Chronicles 32:20). Isaiah's version of these events in Part II of his Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 6–8; 36–40) focuses on Hezekiah's loyal response to Jehovah under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, causing Jehovah to deliver him and his people from the Assyrians (Isaiah 37:30–36). By linking Hezekiah's suffering of a mortal illness to Jehovah's promise of his people's deliverance (Isaiah 38:2–6), Isaiah emphasizes Hezekiah's spiritual role as a proxy savior of his people rather than his political role.

### **Storied Connections between Egypt and Israel**

Abram (Abraham) arrives in the Land of Canaan from Haran in northwestern Mesopotamia only to find that the famine he leaves behind prevails there also. When he

continues south to Egypt, Pharaoh showers him with gifts, but he also takes Sarai (Sarah), returning her to him only when he discovers she is Abram's wife (Genesis 12). When Joseph—whom his brothers sell into Egypt—interprets Pharaoh's dreams of seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, Pharaoh appoints him vice-regent of all Egypt. Soon after the same famine hits the Land of Canaan, Joseph's brothers and father Jacob find livelihood with Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37, 39–47).

Thereafter, Egypt provides a refuge for Jacob's descendants for 400 years (Genesis 15:13; Exodus 12:40). In a manner of speaking, Egypt gives birth to Israel as a nation at their exodus out of Egypt when Jehovah covenants with Jacob's descendants to be their God and they his people (Exodus 6:7; Leviticus 26:12–13). Throughout biblical history, Egypt continues to be a haven for Israel's refugees (1 Kings 11:40; 2 Kings 25:26; Jeremiah 26:20–21; Matthew 2:13–14). Still, Isaiah decries his people's reliance on Egypt instead of on Jehovah when enemies threaten (Isaiah 30:1–5; 31:1–3), and Jeremiah reprimands the Jews who escape there (Jeremiah 42–44).

### **Assyria—Conqueror of the Ancient Near East**

Assyrian domination of the ancient Near East has its beginnings in the early Middle Assyrian Period (1274–1077 B.C.). The Neo-Assyrian Period, however (911–612 B.C.), sees Assyria reach its zenith as a world power. Prominent among Assyrian conquerors are Assurnassirpal II (883–859 B.C.), who captures Aramean and Phoenician territories; Shalmaneser III (858–824), who expands Assyrian rule westward; Tiglath-Pileser III (747–727 B.C.), who makes himself king of Babylon and whose army reaches as far south as Gaza; Shalmaneser V (727–722 B.C.) and Sargon II (721–705 B.C.), whose military campaigns end the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

In Isaiah's day, Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.) invades Judea but fails to take Jerusalem. His son Esarhaddon (680–669 B.C.)

and grandson Assurbanipal (668–667 B.C.) conquer major cities in Egypt. Assyria is a militaristic world power, not a civilizing one. It sets a precedent as conqueror of the ancient world, which Isaiah uses as the type of an end-time “Assyria” that similarly conquers the world. He depicts Assyria as “a nation dreaded far and wide, a people continually infringing” (Isaiah 18:2, 7). Its demise begins with a repeat performance of King Hezekiah’s intercession with Jehovah on behalf of his people when Assyria besieges Jerusalem.

### **Assyria’s Exile of Israel’s Ten Northern Tribes**

From the time Israel’s northern tribes break away from the southern tribes of Judah, the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel consists of one continuous round of coups and assassinations as individuals rise up and usurp power. Israel’s instability during almost its entire history stems from the worship of idols that Jeroboam, its first king, institutes that is maintained thereafter: God cannot bless and prosper those who “do not believe in Jehovah their God” but who instead “serve idols,” who “go after the heathen round about” and “become vain” like them, who “provoke Jehovah to anger” until he “removes them out of his sight” (2 Kings 17:7–17).

When Assyrian expansion threatens the region toward the end of the Northern Kingdom, Menahem submits to vassalship (2 Kings 15:19). Pekah, however, allies himself with Rezin of Aram (Syria) to resist Assyria (Isaiah 7:1). In their day, the Assyrian Tiglath Pileser III captures a large portion of Israel and deports its inhabitants to Assyria (2 Kings 15:29). Israel’s last king, Hoshea, assassinates Pekah and at first submits to vassalship. But he then rebels and appeals in vain to Egypt for help (2 Kings 17:3–4). Finally, in 722 B.C., Shalmaneser V and his successor Sargon II take Samaria and remove Israel’s captives to Assyria (2 Kings 17:6; 18:9–10).

### **Babylon's Exile of the Jewish Southern Tribes**

A turning point for the Southern Kingdom of Judah occurs in the reign of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah. When he sets up idols for his people and “seduce[s] them to do more evil than did the nations whom Jehovah destroyed before the people of Israel” (2 Kings 21:9), Jehovah declares he will make them “a prey and a spoil to all their enemies” (2 Kings 21:14). He will “cause them to be removed to all kingdoms on the earth because of Manasseh,” who “shed innocent blood” in Jerusalem “from one end to the other” (2 Kings 21:16; Jeremiah 15:4). Other misfortunes that happen in Judea, too, are blamed on “the sins of Manasseh” (2 Kings 24:1–4).

Judea's fall occurs during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, at the height of Neo-Babylonian expansion. In 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar lays siege to Jerusalem and takes its king, leading citizens, and craftsmen captive to Babylon. He pillages the temple of treasures accumulated from the time of King Solomon and installs Zedekiah as his vassal (2 Kings 24:10–17). In spite of warnings by Jeremiah to remain loyal to Nebuchadnezzar, after nine years Zedekiah rebels, leading to another siege of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:1–2; Jeremiah 27:12–13; 38:17–18). In 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar takes the city and deports all but its poor to Babylon.

### **The Ascendancy of Cyrus and Fall of Babylon**

By 550 B.C., Cyrus II's consolidation of the Medes and Persians, and his benevolent administrative abilities—in which he improves the infrastructures of conquered nations—lead to the formation of a Persian Empire that continues for over 200 years. Cyrus first expands westward, taking Assyria in northern Mesopotamia, Cilicia, and large parts of Asia Minor, including the Lydian capital of Sardis and Greek Ionia. He then sets his sights on Babylon, seat of the Neo-Babylon Empire that replaced Assyria. After reinforcing local elements opposed to



Nabonidus king of Babylon, Cyrus leads his army into the city in 539 B.C. and takes it without a fight.

Cyrus divides his now extensive realm into twenty satrapies—provincial administrative areas that govern local communities headed by nobles who swear allegiance to Cyrus. Their semi-autonomy, and Cyrus' respect for local customs, constitutes a reprieve from the Assyrian and Babylonian empires' autocratic rule. Cyrus' further decree that permits peoples who had been taken captive into Babylon to return to their homelands wins him notoriety, especially among the Jews who had been exiled seventy years earlier. Thousands return to Jerusalem and rebuild its temple. These become the Jewish nation that inhabits Palestine in New Testament times.

### **The Return of the Jews from Exile in Babylon**

Cyrus' decree as Persian emperor that the Jews deported to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar may return to their homeland fulfills Jeremiah's prediction of a seventy-year Jewish exile (Jeremiah 25:8–13; 29:10; Daniel 9:2; 2 Chronicles 36:21–23). Over forty-two thousand return with the temple's former treasures to rebuild Jerusalem and its temple (Ezra 1:5–11; 2:64). Led by Yeshua the high priest and Zerubbabel the governor, they rebuild the altar, offer sacrifices, and resume observance of Israel's feasts and religious worship. They then reestablish the order of the priests and Levites and lay the second temple's foundation (Ezra 3:2–5, 8–11).

Because of opposition from local and surrounding peoples who inhabit the land, however (Ezra 4), work on the temple doesn't begin in earnest until some twenty years later during the reign of Darius, about 520 B.C. With the encouragement of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the people, led by Zerubbabel and Yeshua, finally complete the temple (Ezra 5–6). During the reign of Artaxerxes, another migration of Jews from Babylon accompanies Ezra the scribe (Ezra 7–8), who helps the Jewish community rebuild (Ezra 9–10). Under the leadership of

Nehemiah, a returnee sent by Artaxerxes, Jerusalem's walls, too, are ultimately rebuilt (Nehemiah 2–6).

### **Forty Years of Isaiah's Ministry as a Prophet**

Isaiah's prophetic ministry begins in 742 B.C. at Jehovah's appearance to him in the temple. Jehovah forewarns him, however, that his people's reception of him won't be favorable (Isaiah 6:1–13). Isaiah nevertheless faithfully performs his role as Jehovah's oracle. As was the custom, his early prophecies are likely spoken inside the gates of Jerusalem or its temple in the hearing of Judah's elders (compare Joshua 20:4; Jeremiah 7:2). Isaiah's giving his sons prophetic names during Ahaz' unrighteous rule, however (Isaiah 7:3; 8:3, 18), indicates that at times he is prevented from openly declaring his people's evils and their consequence (compare Isaiah 8:16–17).

While Isaiah's early ministry is to "both houses of Israel" (Isaiah 8:14), the Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria in 722 B.C. in the sixth year of the reign of King Hezekiah, Ahaz' son (2 Kings 18:10). Hezekiah's appeal to Isaiah at Assyria's siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C., and his own intercession with Jehovah on behalf of his people (Isaiah 37:1–5, 15–20), show Hezekiah's righteousness. During Hezekiah's reign, following a great vision of the end from the beginning (Sirach 48:22–25), Isaiah writes the second half of his prophecies. Although the two dates relating to Isaiah are forty-one years apart, his ministry may have lasted as long as fifty-five years.

### **Isaiah's Execution at the Hands of Manasseh**

While Paul makes a veiled allusion to the manner of Isaiah's death through being "sawn asunder" (Hebrews 11:37), an ancient document, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, depicts Isaiah's being sawn in half by King Hezekiah's son Manasseh (*Ascension of Isaiah* 5:1, 11). Manasseh is there depicted as possessed from his youth by the spirit of Satan, who harbors great wrath toward Isaiah on account of his prophecies (*Ascension of Isaiah*

2:2; 3:13; 5:1, 15–16). Although Isaiah and his prophet associates escape to a mountain and subsist on wild herbs, after two years his accusers discover them and betray Isaiah to Manasseh (Ascension of Isaiah 2:7–11; 3:1, 6–12).

The *Ascension of Isaiah* further describes the ascent of Isaiah's spirit up through several lower heavens to the seventh, where he sees God and the "Beloved" who is to descend to this earth (Ascension of Isaiah 6–11; compare Isaiah 5:1). What stands out is that Isaiah's theology of ascent and his end-time prophecy as revealed in his Seven-Part Structure and other literary features embedded in the Book of Isaiah accord in almost every respect with those of the *Ascension of Isaiah*. In that document, Isaiah describes his book as being written in "parables" (Ascension of Isaiah 4:20). Indeed, his book's literary features require one to read it as allegory, not as history.

### 3. GOD'S DAY OF JUDGMENT

#### **Isaiah's Apocalyptic Vision of the End-Time**

By characterizing his book as a single "vision" (Isaiah 1:1) and claiming to "foretell the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:10), Isaiah is evidently giving his own interpretive guidelines that he expects readers to follow. If they don't, very likely they won't understand his message. Indeed, synchronous holistic literary structures in the Book of Isaiah, such as Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure, require readers to view his book synchronously or as depicting a single scenario. Although grounded in historical events that occurred in Isaiah's day and shortly thereafter, such events, without taking away from their historical origins, additionally portend end-time events.

But how did Isaiah come to have such an amazing apocalyptic vision? And how was he able to use historical events so selectively that they foreshadow such an end-time scenario? One answer may be that he lived in a portentous time of history, when many world events paralleled events that would occur

in the end-time. Another may be that after serving forty years as a prophet from the time Jehovah appointed him (Isaiah 6), he had an apocalyptic vision in which he saw to the end of time (Isaiah 40). Assigned a new role, one similar to the seraphs who had ministered to him, Isaiah wrote new prophecies and re-worked former ones into a single end-time “vision.”

### **Political and Religious Leadership in Parallel**

A recurring pattern in Isaiah’s descriptions of both ancient and end-time events is that the political and ecclesiastical affairs of God’s people parallel one another both for good and for evil. That becomes particularly apparent in the leadership of God’s people as God’s Day of Judgment approaches: “Jehovah will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm top and reed, in a single day; the elders or notables are the head, the prophets who teach falsehoods, the tail. The leaders of these people have misled them, and those who are led are confused” (Isaiah 9:14–16). Only when God’s people again keep his law and word can the millennial age commence (Isaiah 2:3–4).

For a time, however, God allows dark days to prevail to try his people’s loyalties: “As for my people, babes subject them; women wield authority over them. O my people, your leaders mislead you, abolishing your traditional ways” (Isaiah 3:12); “The godless utter blasphemy; their heart ponders impiety: how to practice hypocrisy and preach perverse things about Jehovah, leaving the hungry soul empty, depriving the thirsty soul of drink” (Isaiah 32:6). Before Zion forms, God comes out in judgment against his “enemies”—that is, against his people’s leaders: “Woe to them! I will relieve me of my adversaries, avenge me of my enemies” (Isaiah 1:23–24).

### **Lies and Falsehoods Test People’s Loyalties**

A paradox of life is that God allows lies and falsehoods to exist alongside the truth. Often, the truth of God’s “good news” lies buried beneath a heap of misrepresentations, while

the purveyors of these falsehoods cast in a bad light those who adhere to the truth. The Accuser makes sure that those whose lifestyles are less than impeccable will fall prey to his deceptions, while persons who desire to know the truth will discover it for themselves. When Jesus says of the end-time that, *if it were possible*, the very elect would be deceived (Matthew 24:24), he at once defines the elect as those who have processed through the lies and can no longer be deceived.

According to Isaiah, leaders who mislead and prophets who deceive will be the order of the day (Isaiah 9:15–16; 28:7, 15; 32:6). The poor and needy—God's favored candidates for his covenant people (Isaiah 14:30; 25:4)—are also the favored targets of his people's reprobates: "Rogues scheme by malevolent means and insidious devices to ruin the poor, and with false slogans and accusations to denounce the needy" (Isaiah 32:7). Lies predominate in the time that precedes Jehovah's coming to cleanse the earth of wickedness: "[He comes] to sift the nations in the sieve of falsehood; with an erring bridle on their jaws [he will try] the peoples" (Isaiah 30:28).

### **Three Years' Warning Followed by Judgment**

As "God will do nothing unless he reveals his secret to his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7), he gives ample warning before cleansing the earth of wickedness—in the end-time as anciently. In Isaiah's day, for example, God commands Isaiah to go naked and barefoot for three years as a portent of Assyria's invasion of Egypt (Isaiah 20:2–4). (Not known for being politically correct by modern standards, God ever leaves room for doubters to spurn his warnings.) Similarly, God gives Moab, a kindred people, three years' warning—"like the term of a lease"—before Moab's glory turns to shame, its large populace perishes, and but few inhabitants remain (Isaiah 16:14).

Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure, however, makes both Egypt and Moab integral parts of a multinational conglomerate of foreign powers that come under a "Babylon" umbrella.

This Greater Babylon—akin to John’s Babylon the Great (Revelation 17:5)—goes into the dust at the time Zion rises from the dust (Isaiah 47:1; 52:1–2). For a time, a righteous remnant of God’s people dwells in the wilderness, surviving on nomads’ food (Isaiah 7:14–15, 21–22; 37:30). As the events of the past that Isaiah records function as types or patterns of end-time events, this scenario will repeat itself when God destroys end-time “Babylon” and delivers his people Zion.

### **The Day of Jehovah—God’s Day of Judgment**

Whether they lived before or after Israel’s exile from the Promised Land, the Hebrew prophets predict a great future “Day of Jehovah” or “Day of the Lord” upon all nations (Isaiah 13:6, 9; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 2:1, 11, 31; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14, 18; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:1, 5). This Day of Judgment upon a wicked world will come “as a violent blow from the Almighty,” “as a cruel outburst of anger and wrath to make the earth a desolation, that sinners may be annihilated from it” (Isaiah 13:6, 9). Precedents from the past—such as Assyria’s world conquest in Isaiah’s day—typify that great and dreadful end-time event.

John’s vision of “the Lord’s day” or “Day of the Lord” (Revelation 1:10) depicts the same events. Whereas Isaiah encodes his end-time vision in the historical events of his day, John encodes it in imagery. When you match up the characters, you see that both describe the same end-time scenario. The “great whore” that “corrupts the earth with her fornications” (Revelation 19:2) is the harlot Babylon who rules as “Mistress of Kingdoms” (Isaiah 47:5–8). The woman who flees into the wilderness for three and a half years (Revelation 12:6) is the Virgin Daughter of Zion who flees destruction in an exodus out of Babylon (Isaiah 52:1, 11–12). And so forth.

### **Doing the Unexpected—A Way of Dividing**

While Isaiah predicts “sudden ruin such as you have not imagined” for the harlot Babylon who rules the nations (Isaiah 47:11; compare Revelation 17:1–5), he predicts the same for God’s people whose wickedness puts them in the same category as Babylon. But before God’s Day of Judgment arrives—before the heavens “vanish as by smoke” and the earth’s inhabitants “die in the manner of vermin”—God gives the world a chance to repent: “The law shall go forth from me, and my precepts shall be a light to the peoples. Then, suddenly, I will act” (Isaiah 51:4, 6). Those who prove righteous participate in an exodus to Zion even while the wicked perish (Isaiah 51:7–12).

So inured do many of God’s people become toward him, however, that they grow derelict in their duties: “You have heard the whole vision; how is it you do not proclaim it? Yet as of now, I announce to you new things, things withheld and unknown to you, things now coming into being, not hitherto, things you have not heard of before, lest you should say, ‘Indeed I knew them!’ You have not heard them, nor have you known them; before this your ears have not been open to them” (Isaiah 48:6–8). At that point, God “annuls the predictions of impostors and makes fools of diviners,” he “turns wise men about and makes nonsense of their knowledge” (Isaiah 44:25).

### **God’s People—Catalyst of God’s Judgments**

Believers in the scriptures understand that the world will be destroyed and cleansed of the wicked before Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth. But do they know what precipitates such destruction? Patterns from the past tell us what to look for that will signal the commencement of God’s end-time judgments. Paul draws on the prophecies of Isaiah when he says that those events won’t happen until “there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the Son of

Perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Isaiah uses models or types from ancient Near Eastern history and mythology to describe this end-time Antichrist as the “king of Babylon” (Isaiah 14:3–21).

Isaiah also makes clear that it is the “falling away” of God’s people that precipitates the world’s destruction by the king of Assyria/Babylon. (Assyrian conquerors of Babylon in Isaiah’s day called themselves “King of Babylon.”) Former destructions of the ancient world—first by Assyria and then by Babylon—occurred only when God’s people of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel had apostatized. Those who profess to be God’s people today, therefore, fall into this pattern before God’s end-time judgments commence. If it were not so, the archtyrant could have no power. He is merely God’s instrument for destroying the wicked from the earth.

### **A Pattern of World Conquerors from the North**

Both the Assyrians and Babylonians who ruthlessly conquer the ancient world hail from the North in relation to God’s people Israel when they turn to wickedness. Those successive events establish a pattern that repeats itself before Jehovah comes to the earth to institute his millennial reign of peace. This time, however, it isn’t the ten-tribed Northern Kingdom of Israel or the Southern Kingdom of Judah that suffers invasion and destruction by an aggressive world power but God’s people who turn to wickedness in the modern world. This time it is an end-time world power from the North that overruns the world, following the pattern of those ancient events.

When his end-time people attain the same level of wickedness Israel did of old, God responds the same way he did then: “Hail the Assyrian, the rod of my anger! He is a staff—my wrath in their hand. I will commission him against a godless nation, appoint him over the people [deserving] of my vengeance, to pillage for plunder, to spoliage for spoil, to tread



underfoot like mud in the streets. Nevertheless, it shall not seem so to him; this shall not be what he has in mind. His purpose shall be to annihilate and to exterminate nations not a few" (Isaiah 10:5-7). "From the North shall come [pillars of] smoke, and no place he has designated shall evade it" (Isaiah 14:31).

### **The King of Assyria/Babylon—An Antichrist**

Isaiah's version of an end-time Antichrist is the king of Assyria/Babylon, whom Isaiah portrays as a *composite* of types; that is, he combines several precedents of ancient tyrannical rulers to project a single end-time one—an all-time archtyrant. Setting a precedent for world conquerors from the North are the kings of Assyria (Isaiah 10:5-14; 37:18, 21-27). To that type, Isaiah adds the "king of Babylon," perhaps the same world conqueror from the North but one who styles himself as a demi-god and who exemplifies Babylon's idolatrous ideology (Isaiah 14:3-21; 47:1-8). In the end, however, the archtyrant perishes because of the loyalty of God's elect.

Isaiah thus predicts that in that day those who survive destruction will rejoice: "How the tyrant has met his end and tyranny ceased! Jehovah has broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of those who ruled—him who with unerring blows struck down the nations in anger, who subdued peoples in his wrath by relentless oppression. Now the whole earth is at rest and at peace; there is jubilant celebration!" (Isaiah 14:4-7); "Those who catch sight of you stare at you, wondering, 'Is this the man who made the earth shake and kingdoms quake, who turned the world into a wilderness, demolishing its cities, permitting not his captives to return home?'" (Isaiah 14:16-17).

### **Gaining the World but Losing Your Own Soul**

Jesus' saying, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26) wasn't just wise counsel against covetousness but also a prediction

of what would occur at the end of the world. Indeed, just such a person conquers the world by force—the end-time king of Assyria/Babylon. As God’s instrument for eliminating the wicked, he causes “utter destruction upon the whole the earth” (Isaiah 10:23; 13:5; 21:1–2; 28:22; 37:18; 51:13). God raises him up for that purpose: “It is I who create the smith who fans the flaming coals, forging weapons to suit his purpose; it is I who create the ravager to destroy” (Isaiah 54:16).

In the end, however, he dies too: “Woe to you, despoiler, who yourself was not despoiled; O treacherous one, with whom none have been treacherous: when you have done with devastating, you shall be devastated; when you are through betraying, they shall betray you!” (Isaiah 33:1); “Prepare for the massacre of their sons, in consequence of their fathers’ deeds, lest they rise up again and take possession of the world, and fill the face of the earth with cities” (Isaiah 14:21); “For Tophet has been prepared of old, [a hearth] indeed, made ready for rulers; broad and deep is its fire pit and ample its pyre; Jehovah’s breath burns within it like a river of lava” (Isaiah 30:33).

### **Jehovah’s Coming and the Thief in the Night**

Referring to Jesus’ prediction that events surrounding his second coming would resemble a thief breaking and entering a house when its owner isn’t watching (Matthew 24:43), both Peter and Paul predict that the “Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night” (1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10). According to the Hebrew prophets, the “Day of the Lord” or “Day of Jehovah” is a worldwide judgment that precedes Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:31; Amos 5:18). It isn’t Jehovah/Jesus who comes as a thief in the night, therefore, but rather the events associated with his coming.

On the other hand, there *is* an actual thief who precedes Jehovah’s coming—the end-time “king of Assyria.” As a world conqueror, he robs the world of its wealth, boasting, “I have

done it by my own ability and shrewdness, for I am ingenious. I have done away with the borders of nations, I have ravaged their reserves, I have vastly reduced the inhabitants. I have impounded the wealth of peoples like a nest, and I have gathered up the whole world as one gathers abandoned eggs; not one flapped its wings, or opened its mouth to utter a peep" (Isaiah 10:13–14). In the end, however, the archtyrant's booty fails to benefit him (Isaiah 10:15–18, 24–27).

### **Cosmic Cataclysm Prior to the Millennial Age**

Isaiah's method of predicting end-time events based on ancient events includes the idea of cosmic cataclysm. Just as God anciently destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by a hail of fire and brimstone (Genesis 19:24), so he destroys end-time Babylon—an idolatrous, materialistic world (Isaiah 13:1, 9, 11, 19): "The stars and constellations of the heavens will not shine. When the sun rises, it shall be obscured; nor will the moon give its light. . . . I will cause disturbance in the heavens when the earth is jolted out of place by the anger of Jehovah of Hosts in the day of his blazing wrath" (Isaiah 13:10, 13). Not many escape destruction (Isaiah 13:12).

At fault are God's covenant people, whose apostasy is the catalyst of God's Day of Judgment: "The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants: they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, set at nought the ancient covenant" (Isaiah 24:5). "When the windows on high are opened, the earth shall shake to its foundations. The earth shall be crushed and rent; the earth shall break up and cave in; the earth shall convulse and lurch. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, sway back and forth like a shanty; its transgressions weigh it down, and when it collapses it shall rise no more" (Isaiah 24:18–20). Only a few "gleanings" survive (Isaiah 24:13–16).

### **Babylon's Sodom-and-Gomorrah Destruction**

Of the thirty end-time events Isaiah predicts that resemble past events, Babylon's violent overthrow—"as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (Isaiah 13:19)—is the most condemnatory. And yet it implicates most of the earth's population. In his oracle addressed to "Babylon," Isaiah defines Babylon as both a people and a place—the "sinners" and the "wicked" of the "earth" and the "world." He predicts that God "will make the earth a desolation that sinners may be annihilated from it." God has "decreed calamity for the world, punishment for the wicked." He "will put an end the arrogance of insolent men and humble the pride of tyrants" (Isaiah 13:1, 9–13).

Part IV of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 13–23; 47) additionally provides a structural definition of Babylon. That literary device defines Babylon as a multinational conglomerate of nations and peoples that opposes Zion. Even God's people who refuse to repent ultimately become an integral part of this Babylon as the world polarizes into two opposite camps. In that end-time context, God even calls his own people by the names "Sodom" and "Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1:10), signifying that in that day their wickedness resembles ancient Sodom's and Gomorrah's. Their fate, too, therefore, is that of Sodom and Gomorrah in all its damning finality.

### **A "Sweeping" with the Broom of Destruction**

Isaiah's likening God's Day of Judgment upon the world to a doomsday for the wicked means that those who haven't repented when their time runs out must suffer through a worst-case scenario. In that day, Babylon—the world at large in its wicked state (Isaiah 13:1, 9, 11)—falls, its idol gods "razed to the ground" (Isaiah 21:9), its terrain swept clean of all that offends: "I will rise up against them," says Jehovah of Hosts. 'I will cut off Babylon's name and remnant, its offspring and descendants,' says Jehovah. 'I will turn it into

swamplands, a haunt for ravens; I will sweep it with the broom of destruction,' says Jehovah of Hosts" (Isaiah 14:22–23).

As in the end God's people who don't repent identify with Isaiah's Babylon category, they suffer the same judgments: "As a blazing fire consumes stubble, and as dry weeds wane before the flame, so shall their roots decay away and their blossoms fly up like dust. For they have despised the law of Jehovah of Hosts and reviled the words of the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 5:24). To perish without "roots" or "blossoms" is to sever all familial connections—a covenant curse (Job 18:16–17; Malachi 4:1). To likewise leave behind no "name" or "remnant," "offspring" or "descendants" (Isaiah 14:22) is to have all remembrance of one's existence erased from the earth.

#### 4. PIVOTAL END-TIME EVENTS

##### **God's People—This Time Around It Is Us!**

Applying Isaiah's prophecy to ourselves for our profit and learning, we immediately face several inconvenient truths. As God holds us accountable for transgressing his law and word, the misfortunes that befall us as a people are a consequence of our collective guilt. As society breaks down, we may attribute our troubles to a failing economy, human error, freaks of nature, the forces of evil, and so forth. But to God we have set in motion an escalating series of covenant curses. Israel's sliding into apostasy in former generations precipitated those same troubles and loss of privileges or covenant blessings. If we miss that point, we are wallowing in denial.

Isaiah declares our chief sins: idolatry and injustice. We worship idols when we pursue the things of this world—whatever steals our hearts away from God. The effect on us is spiritual blindness. We still assume we are right with God even as our religion becomes but a substitute for that deeper relationship with him that he offers us. Such religiosity isn't enough to save us in his coming Day of Judgment. Injustices

assume many forms: inequality, enmity, evil speaking, oppression, predatory practices, persecution, tyranny, and so forth. Through Isaiah, God offers us better way—to acknowledge our sins and keep his law and word so that he may heal us.

### **“My People Are Taken Over without Price!”**

Can we disregard the relevance of Isaiah’s prophecies to the present day yet suffer no consequences? Can we prepare to deal with the hardships that are almost upon us with no foreknowledge of them? “Better the devil you know than the devil you don’t know,” a wise man said. Isaiah’s use of events in the past as types of ones in the future helps us understand our day a lot better. The functioning of God’s people of Isaiah’s day as a type of those in the end-time turns the past into a window of the future. Applying to ourselves what Isaiah declares, therefore—the good and the evil—gives us so much more the advantage when his end-time scenario unfolds.

A big part of Isaiah’s prophecy deals with the “Day of Jehovah”—God’s Day of Judgment on a wicked world. Characterizing that phase of world history is God’s people’s suffering bondage: “My people are taken over without price. Those who govern them act presumptuously,” says Jehovah ‘and my name is constantly abused all the day’” (Isaiah 52:5). Economic distress—a covenant curse—gives his people’s leaders the chance to subjugate them. Isaiah compares the severity of that subjugation to Israel’s former bondage in Egypt and servitude to Assyria (Isaiah 52:4). In other words, things will get that bad before deliverance comes (Isaiah 52:8–10).

### **Social Anarchy—Prelude to Foreign Invasion**

Economic distress leads to anarchy and the division of God’s people into clans or bands, each fighting for survival: “Jehovah of Hosts deprives Judea and Jerusalem of both staff and crutch—all food supply and water supply. . . . I will make

adolescents their rulers; delinquents will lord it over them. People will oppress one another, every man his neighbor. . . . Then will a man apprehend a kinsman of his father's house: 'You have a tunic: be our leader and take charge of this ruin!' But he will raise [his hand] in that day and swear, 'I am no physician. There is neither food nor clothing in my house; you cannot make me a leader of the people'" (Isaiah 3:1, 4, 6–7).

Just as the names Babylon and Zion, Assyria and Egypt act as codenames Isaiah uses to designate end-time nations and entities, so "Judea" and "Jerusalem" act as codenames of those who profess to be God's end-time people. Their corrupt state and internal collapse lead to foreign invasion: "Your land is ruined, your cities burned with fire; your native soil is devoured by aliens in your presence, laid waste at its takeover by foreigners" (Isaiah 1:7). All is not lost, however, as a repentant remnant of God's people escapes destruction: "Had not Jehovah of Hosts left us a few survivors, we should have been as Sodom or become like Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1:9).

### **Nearing the End—"To Your Tents, O Israel!"**

During times of social upheaval, God's people anciently resorted to the nomadic lifestyle of their ancestors, saying, "To your tents, O Israel!" (1 Kings 12:16). According to Isaiah, conditions at the end of the world will resemble those during ancient times of distress: "In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and a pair of sheep. And because of their plentiful milk, men will eat the cream. All who remain in the land will feed on cream and honey" (Isaiah 7:21–22); "To you, this shall be a sign: This year eat what grows wild, and the following year what springs up of itself. But in the third year sow and harvest, plant vineyards and eat their fruit" (Isaiah 37:30).

Although God's people will pass through hard times to try their faith, God provides for them: "Tell the righteous it shall be well with them; they shall eat the fruits of their own labors. But woe to the wicked when calamity [overtakes them]:

they shall be paid back for the deeds they have done!” (Isaiah 3:10–11). Of the one, Isaiah says: “They shall dwell on high; the impregnable cliffs are their fortress. Bread is provided them, their water is sure;” of the other: “The sinners in Zion are struck with fear; the godless are in the grip of trembling: ‘Who among us can live through the devouring fire? Who among us can abide eternal burning?’” (Isaiah 33:14, 16).

### **Isaiah Predicts End-Time Prophets and Seers**

Isaiah—a prophet and seer who saw to the end of time—predicts that prophets and seers will exist in that future day. These persons fall into two categories. First are those who have “gone astray,” who “err as seers” (Isaiah 28:7), “prophets who teach falsehoods” (Isaiah 9:15), whose eyes God closes because of the wickedness of his people (Isaiah 29:10). These watchmen of God’s people are “blind and unaware; all of them but dumb watchdogs unable to bark, lolling seers fond of slumber. Gluttonous dogs, and insatiable, such indeed are insensible shepherds. They are all diverted to their own way, every one after his own advantage” (Isaiah 56:10–11).

Second are “watchmen” who prophesy in the day of power, when God “bares his holy arm in the eyes of all nations” (Isaiah 51:9–11; 52:8, 10). They stand on the watchtower day and night, are “most vigilant” and “fully alert” to approaching dangers, and report what they “see” and “hear” (Isaiah 21:6–10). They herald Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth and prepare God’s people for their end-time exodus out of Babylon to Zion (Isaiah 52:7–8, 11–12; compare 48:20–21). They “raise their voice as one” at the time Jehovah comes (Isaiah 52:8). They call upon God without ceasing for the welfare of his people and don’t keep silent day or night (Isaiah 62:6–7).

### **Separation of the Righteous and the Wicked**

An entire separation of the righteous and the wicked occurs at the end of the world. While a glorious new age dawns



for those of God's people who repent, doomsday in all its horrors overtakes those who don't. After sending prophets to warn humanity one last time, God brings on his judgment: "Come near, you nations, and hear! Pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth give heed, and all who are upon it, the world, and all who spring from it. Jehovah's rage is upon all nations, his fury upon all their hosts; he has doomed them, consigned them to the slaughter. . . . For it is Jehovah's day of vengeance, the year of retribution on behalf of Zion" (Isaiah 34:1-2, 8).

The "year of retribution on behalf of Zion" entails Jehovah's delivering his people from the power of their enemies at his coming to Zion: "I had resolved on a day of vengeance, and the year of my redeemed had come" (Isaiah 63:4); "According to what they deserve, he will repay them: wrath upon his adversaries, reprisals upon his enemies; to the isles he will render retribution. From the west men will fear Jehovah Omnipotent, and from the rising of the sun his glory. For he will [come upon] them like a hostile torrent impelled by the Spirit of Jehovah. But he will come as Redeemer to Zion, to those of Jacob who repent of transgression" (Isaiah 59:18-20).

### **The New Flood—Assyria's World Conquest**

Just as the world experienced the Flood anciently—"because all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth" and "the earth was filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11-13)—and just as God saved Noah and his family from the Flood because "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generation" (Genesis 6:9), so, when the same end-time conditions occur, God sends a Flood and saves "just men made perfect." The new Flood, however, isn't by water (signifying the earth's baptism by water) but by fire (signifying its baptism by fire): "For with fire and with his sword shall Jehovah execute judgment on all flesh, and those slain by Jehovah shall be many" (Isaiah 66:16).

Personifying the Flood is the king of Assyria, who resembles "an inundating deluge of mighty waters" (Isaiah 28:2). His

evil allies, who “rage like the raging of the seas—tumultuous nations, in commotion like the turbulence of mighty waters!” (Isaiah 17:12)—overrun the earth like “a flooding scourge” (Isaiah 28:17–22). Still, the destruction they cause is by fire: “Whole nations have been burned like lime, mown down like thorns and set ablaze” (Isaiah 33:12); “Wickedness shall be set ablaze like a fire, and briars and thorns shall it consume; it shall ignite the jungle forests [cities], and they shall billow upward in mushrooming clouds of smoke” (Isaiah 9:18).

### **An End-Time Exodus out of Babylon to Zion**

Of the thirty ancient events of which Isaiah predicts new, end-time versions, a new exodus—patterned after Israel’s ancient exodus out of Egypt—is similarly followed by a new wandering in the wilderness. The new exodus, however, is out of the whole world—out of “Babylon”—which God is about to destroy: “Go forth out of Babylon, flee from Chaldea! Make this announcement with resounding voice; broadcast it to the end of the earth. Say, ‘Jehovah has redeemed his servant Jacob.’ They thirsted not when he led them through arid places: he caused water to flow for them from the rock; he cleaved the rock and water gushed out” (Isaiah 48:20–21).

As Lot was led out of Sodom, so are participants in the new exodus: “The righteous disappear, and no man gives it a thought; the godly are gathered out, but no one perceives that from impending calamity the righteous are withdrawn” (Isaiah 57:1). “Come out of her and be pure, you who bear Jehovah’s vessels. But you shall not leave in haste or go in flight: Jehovah will go before you, the God of Israel behind you” (Isaiah 52:11–12). “I will bring your offspring from the east and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, ‘Give up!’ to the south, ‘Withhold not! Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth’” (Isaiah 43:5–6).

### **Wilderness Wandering with God and Angels**

According to Isaiah, Israel's end-time exodus from the four directions of the earth leads through waters, mountains, deserts, steppes, and fire (Isaiah 41:9, 17–19; 42:16; 43:2, 5–8, 16, 19–21; 48:21; 49:9–12). Like the ancient exodus out of Egypt, however, God's people who return from their worldwide dispersion are carried to Zion by certain (spiritual) kings and queens of the Gentiles: "Thus says my Lord Jehovah: 'I will lift up my hand to the nations, raise my ensign to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders. Kings shall be your foster fathers, queens your nursing mothers'" (Isaiah 49:22–23).

Israel's end-time wandering in the wilderness is a joyous occasion, resembling Israel's ancient annual pilgrimage to Zion: "For you there shall be singing, as on the night when a festival commences, and rejoicing of heart, as when men march with flutes and drums and lyres on their way to the mountain of Jehovah, to the Rock of Israel" (Isaiah 30:29); "Let the ransomed of Jehovah return! Let them come singing to Zion, their heads crowned with everlasting joy; let them obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away" (Isaiah 51:11). God will be with those who return: "Jehovah will go before you, the God of Israel behind you" (Isaiah 52:12).

### **Divine Protection under God's Cloud of Glory**

Just as God's cloud of glory hovered over the Israelites and protected them from Pharaoh's army and from physical elements at Israel's exodus out of Egypt (Exodus 13:21–22; 14:19–20), so it protects God's righteous people from end-time hostile forces. In that day, they sing Songs of Salvation: "You were a refuge for the poor, a shelter for the needy in distress, a covert from the downpour and shade from the heat. When the blasts of tyrants beat down like torrents against a wall, or like scorching heat in the desert, you quelled the onslaughts of the

heathen. As burning heat by the shade of a cloud, you subdued the power of tyrants” (Isaiah 25:4–5).

“Over the whole site of Mount Zion, and over its solemn assembly, Jehovah will form a cloud by day and a mist glowing with fire by night: above all that is glorious shall be a canopy. It shall be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, a secret refuge from the downpour and from rain” (Isaiah 4:5–6). While the “day” mentioned signifies God’s Day of Judgment, Isaiah’s heatwave and storm imagery typifies the evil powers God lets loose upon a wicked world. The idea of a “canopy,” moreover, denotes a renewal of the marriage covenant between God and his end-time people: “He who espouses you is your Maker, whose name is Jehovah of Hosts” (Isaiah 54:5).

### **New Descent on the Mount and New Passover**

Among the new versions of ancient events Isaiah predicts is God’s Descent on the Mount. As Jehovah descended on Mount Sinai in a display of power and might (Exodus 19:16–24), so he does on Mount Zion: “As a lion or a young lion growls over the prey when the shepherds muster in full force against him, and is not dismayed at the sound of their voice nor daunted by their numbers, so shall Jehovah of Hosts be when he descends to wage war on Mount Zion” (Isaiah 31:4); “Jehovah will cause his voice to resound, and make visible his arm descending in furious rage, with flashes of devouring fire, explosive discharges and pounding hail” (Isaiah 30:30).

Isaiah similarly predicts a new Passover. As the angel of death passed over Israel’s firstborn sons when he smote Egypt’s first-borns (Exodus 12:1–29), so he passes over a remnant of God’s people when the Assyrians lay siege to them: “As birds hover over [the nest], so will Jehovah of Hosts guard Jerusalem; by protecting it he will deliver it, by passing over it, preserve it” (Isaiah 31:5); “I will protect this city and save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David. Then the angel of Jehovah went out and slew a hundred and eighty-five

thousand in the Assyrian camp. And when men arose in the morning, there lay all their dead bodies!" (Isaiah 37:35–36).

### **The Gathering of Israel's Outcasts from Exile**

A hard fact of Isaiah's end-time scenario is that it isn't those who *appear* to be God's people whom God saves in the end but those who are rejected by the majority. These "outcasts" suffer "reproach" and "ridicule," are "excluded" from God's people, and, like God's servant who gathers them, are "despised" and "abhorred" until God reverses their circumstances (Isaiah 49:7–8; 51:7; 60:15–16; 61:7, 9; 66:5–8). In the end, those who are excluded and betrayed by their own people are gathered with God's righteous remnant: "Thus says my Lord Jehovah, who gathers up the outcasts of Israel: 'I will gather others to those already gathered'" (Isaiah 56:3, 8).

God answers the loyalty of his people's outcasts by uniting them with other outcasts who return from exile in an exodus to Zion or Jerusalem: "In that day a loud trumpet shall sound, and they who were lost in the land of Assyria and they who were outcasts in the land of Egypt shall come and bow down to Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem" (Isaiah 27:13). Those who gather are surprised to learn of others besides them: "From a sector of the earth we hear singing: 'Glorious are the righteous!' Whereas I thought, 'I am wasting away; I am weakening; woe is me; the traitors have been treacherous, the turncoats have deceitfully betrayed!'" (Isaiah 24:16).

### **The End-Time Reunion of Ephraim and Judah**

When Solomon's son Rehoboam refused to heed the counsel of Israel's elders and raised the people's taxes, Jeroboam, Solomon's servant, began ruling over Israel's northern tribes (1 Kings 11:29–32; 12:1–20). Because Ephraim was its leading tribe, the Northern Kingdom was often referred to simply as Ephraim (Isaiah 7:1–9; Hosea 5:1–14). Likewise, because the tribe of Judah led the Southern Kingdom, that kingdom was

known simply as Judah (*ibid.*). That day—“the day Ephraim broke away from Judah” (Isaiah 7:17)—became a national tragedy, a symptom of wickedness and a covenant curse. Since that day, the nation of Israel has remained divided.

And yet, Isaiah predicts that Ephraim and Judah will reunite when God gathers Israel from dispersion in an end-time exodus from the four directions of the earth: “In that day my Lord will again raise his hand to reclaim the remnant of his people—those who shall be left out of Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and the islands of the sea. He will raise the ensign to the nations and assemble the exiled of Israel; he will gather the scattered of Judah from the four directions of the earth. Ephraim’s jealousy will pass away and the hostile ones of Judah will be cut off; Ephraim will not envy Judah, nor Judah resent Ephraim” (Isaiah 11:11–13).

### **The Gathering and Reunion of Israel’s Tribes**

Since Israel’s ten northern tribes broke away from the southern tribes of Judah in 924 B.C., then disappeared after being deported to Mesopotamia in 722 B.C., the “two houses of Israel” have never reunited. Still, as David reunited the northern and southern tribes in his day (2 Samuel 5:1–5), so does an end-time David, his descendant—God’s servant. Isaiah predicts that God’s servant will “raise up the tribes of Jacob and restore those preserved of Israel” (Isaiah 49:6). At that time, all of Israel’s tribes return from dispersion to promised lands in an exodus from the four directions of the earth (Isaiah 11:10–16; 43:1–8; 49:9–12, 22; compare Hosea 3:5).

Ezekiel, too, predicts this: “Behold, I will take the people of Israel from among the heathen where they have gone, and I will gather them on every side and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be a king to them all. And they shall no more be two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. . . . And they shall

dwelt in the land I gave Jacob my servant, in which your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they and their children and their children's children forever. And my servant David shall be their prince forever" (Ezekiel 37:21–22, 25).

## 5. ISAIAH'S USE OF TYPES

### **Isaiah's Use of Names as Precedents and *Types***

We may suppose that when Isaiah names a person or nation, such names are incidental to his prophecy. Rather, the opposite is the case. Names of persons and nations in the Book of Isaiah serve an important function by identifying precedents in the past that establish models or *types* of the future. Because whatever Isaiah predicts for the end-time possesses a type in the past, his use of names of persons or nations means that events similar to those associated with those names will repeat themselves. In other words, the ancient names Isaiah uses function as codenames for persons or nations that exist in the end-time, that being typical of the way Isaiah prophesies.

As Moses led Israel to the Promised Land, so shall one like Moses: "Then his people recalled the days of Moses of old: 'Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he who put into him his holy Spirit, who made his glorious arm proceed at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them, making an everlasting name for himself?'" (Isaiah 63:11–13). As God called Abraham from a far country to the Promised Land, so he calls end-time Israel: "You, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, offspring of Abraham my beloved friend, you whom I have taken from the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 41:8–9).

### **Patterns from Israel's Past—A Sure Guideline**

Isaiah's method of prophesying end-time events based on types or patterns from the past provides a safeguard against

counterfeits, which inevitably precede and accompany the real thing. False prophets and messiahs, delusive promises of deliverance, spurious “miracles”—all will test people’s faith in God and their knowledge of the facts. The comforting thing about Isaiah’s prophecies is that they are true to the principle of “what has been shall be” (Ecclesiastes 1:9). If something is of God it will follow the patterns of the past; if it isn’t, then informed persons ought to exercise their prerogative to reject it even though a majority of people accept it.

A deep understanding of Isaiah’s prophecy—gained from diligent searching of his words until they are clear—provides the best guide to knowing the true from the false. One can’t disregard this requirement and assume one already knows what there is to know, then still expect to be able to discern between what is of God and what is not in the time of confusion that has been foretold. God allows counterfeits to abound for the express purpose of weeding out those who treat lightly the prophecies they have received (Isaiah 30:28). Many in times past believed they were right in other such situations, yet sadly ended up “fighting against God” (Acts 5:39).

### **Babylon—A Codename for the World Today**

The use of codenames by ancient prophets who predict end-time events occurs throughout the scriptures. In the Book of Revelation, John uses the name Babylon to depict a multinational socio-economic system that drives the economy of a world ripening in wickedness (Revelation 17–18). And yet, in John’s day the empire that once was Babylon no longer exists. Daniel predicts a great world conflict involving the kingdoms of Persia, Greece, and other nations of his day. However, the angel who shows him these things tells Daniel to shut up the words and seal them in a book because they aren’t about his day but the “time of the end” (Daniel 12:1–12:4).

Anciently, the Babylonian empire epitomized an idolatrous, materialistic world civilization. Isaiah combines that model



with others to create a composite entity, a kind of Greater Babylon. Part III of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 13–23, 47) pulls an entire series of foreign nations and entities that once came under Babylon's influence into this "Babylon" conglomerate. Forming a part of this arch entity is ancient Tyre's worldwide shipping empire (Isaiah 23). It is Isaiah's model that John draws on when projecting his end-time Babylon the Great. Of course, Isaiah's use of codenames extends beyond the name Babylon to all others in his book.

### **Zion—A Codename for Persons Who Repent**

Several depictions of Zion exist in the scriptures. Zion is the "citadel" David captures from the Jebusites that becomes the "City of David" (1 Chronicles 11:4–7). The "holy hill of Zion" is the place where Jehovah dwells (Psalms 2:6; 9:11). Isaiah's literary devices reveal his definition of Zion. Forty instances of the name Zion in the Book of Isaiah, for example, show a pattern associated with the name Zion consisting of (1) God's destruction of the wicked from the earth; (2) his deliverance of a righteous remnant of his people; and (3) the presence of a Davidic king, whom Isaiah identifies either directly by name or indirectly under one of several aliases.

Contextually, Zion consists of God's people Jacob or Israel who "repent" (*šwb*) of transgression (Isaiah 1:27; 59:20). Zion is also the place to which they "return" (*šwb*) from among the nations in an end-time exodus when the wicked perish (Isaiah 35:10; 51:11). In the Book of Isaiah, Zion, together with Jerusalem, is one of seven spiritual levels or categories of people. They consist of persons who ascend from the Jacob/Israel level to the Zion/Jerusalem level. They receive a remission of their sins when they prove their covenantal allegiance to God. In the end, the whole world divides into spiritual categories affiliated with either Zion or Babylon.

**Immanuel, Shear-Jashub, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz**

By our limiting Isaiah's prophecy of Immanuel to Matthew's application of it to Jesus (Matthew 1:23), much is lost in understanding the historical context of this prophecy (Isaiah 7:14). A prophecy about Jesus would not have been a "sign" to King Ahaz, who was dealing with an invasion of Judea by Aram and Ephraim and who was appealing to the king of Assyria for help instead of to his God. The name Immanuel, in fact, occurs three times in the same context. All three deal with Assyria's invasion of Judea following Ahaz' disloyalty to Jehovah (Isaiah 8:8, 10). And each of these three predictions were fulfilled by King Hezekiah, Ahaz' son.

In its historical context, moreover, Immanuel is but one of three sons with portending names: (1) Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz ("Hasten the Plunder, Hurry the Spoil," Isaiah 8:3); (2) Shear-Jashub ("A Remnant Shall Repent," Isaiah 7:3); and (3) Immanuel ("God Is with Us"). Part II of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 6–8; 36–40) shows that they represent three categories of God's people: (1) those whom the king of Assyria destroys together with idolaters (Isaiah 37:18–19); (2) a remnant of people that repents and survives (Isaiah 37:4, 31–32); and (3) persons such as King Hezekiah who serve as saviors of their people (Isaiah 38:4–6).

**Abraham and Sarah—Exemplars of Blessedness**

Isaiah's drawing on the names of Israel's ancestors as exemplars of their descendants reveals a divine design: emulating persons on higher spiritual levels such as Abraham and Sarah may lead to ascent to their level and to their degree of blessedness. When God says, "Look to Abraham your father, to Sarah who bore you. He was but one when I called him, but I blessed him by making him many. For Jehovah is comforting Zion, bringing solace to all her ruins; he is making her wilderness like Eden, her desert as the garden of Jehovah" (Isaiah 51:2–3), he

shows that by emulating Abraham and Sarah their descendants may inherit the blessings they did.

By responding to God's end-time call, in other words, Abraham and Sarah's descendants may obtain an innumerable posterity and hasten the earth's transformation to a paradisiacal state. Indeed, by covenanting with Israel, God sought to do for his people *as a nation* what he did for their ancestors individually. Thus, Isaiah predicts that when certain individuals—"one" here and "one" there (Isaiah 51:2)—form a new nation of God's people that proves loyal through the earth's end-time chaos, God blesses them with an innumerable posterity and brings about the earth's transformation to a paradisiacal state (Isaiah 41:8–20; 54:6–14; 55:3–13; 60:13–22).

### **End-Time "Assyria"—A Militaristic Alliance**

Featuring prominently in the Book of Isaiah is a militaristic superpower that seeks to conquer the world. In fact, God commissions its king figure—an end-time archtyrant—to punish his people when they rebel and do evil: "Hail the Assyrian, the rod of my anger! He is a staff—my wrath in their hand. I will commission him against a godless nation, appoint him over the people [deserving] of my vengeance, to pillage for plunder, to spoliat for spoil, to tread underfoot like mud in the streets. Nevertheless, it shall not seem so to him; this shall not be what he has in mind. His purpose shall be to annihilate and to exterminate nations not a few" (Isaiah 10:5–7).

In the pattern of ancient Assyria, this ruthless world power and its alliance of nations commits genocide on a world scale: "Hark! A tumult on the mountains, as of a vast multitude. Hark! An uproar among kingdoms, as of nations assembling; Jehovah of Hosts is marshaling an army for war. They come from a distant land beyond the horizon—Jehovah and the instruments of his wrath—to cause destruction throughout the earth. Lament, for the Day of Jehovah is near; it shall come as a violent blow from the Almighty" (Isaiah 13:4–6). Although all

nations suffer destruction in their wicked state, the apostasy of those who were God's people precipitates it.

### **End-Time “Egypt”—A Superpower in Decline**

Isaiah's use of types of ancient world powers that foreshadow end-time ones extends to the great superpower Egypt. As with all nations and persons who appear in the Book of Isaiah, their true identity appears from the way Isaiah characterizes them, not from historical or archaeological data, though at times these may help. In searching the world today for a superpower that matches Isaiah's description of “Egypt,” the sole candidate is America. That connection is further strengthened by the fact that God's people anciently dwelt in Egypt, that Joseph ruled Egypt, and that the birthright tribe of Ephraim sprang from Joseph and Asenath, an Egyptian woman.

“Egypt,” however, is a superpower imploding: “The ministers of Zoan have been foolish, the officials of Noph deluded; the heads of state have led Egypt astray. Jehovah has permeated them with a spirit of confusion; they have misled Egypt in all that it does, causing it to stagger like a drunkard into his vomit. . . . Manufacturers of combed linen and weavers of fine fabrics will be dismayed. The textile workers will know despair, and all who work for wages suffer distress. . . . I will stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians; they will fight brother against brother and neighbor against neighbor, city against city and state against state” (Isaiah 19:2, 9–10, 13–14).

### **The Struggle within America—Isaiah Saw It**

The importance of understanding Isaiah's message increases daily as world events line up like the planets for the fulfillment of his prophecy. Under the codename “Egypt”—the great superpower of Isaiah's day—America is predicted to suffer spiritual decline, political ineptitude, economic collapse, internal anarchy, and invasion by a ruthless military world power from the North—an end-time “Assyria.” On the other hand, a community

of covenanters in Egypt turns back to God, who sends them a savior and delivers them (Isaiah 19–20). In the end, as the millennial age begins, “Egypt” again becomes “my people”—a righteous covenant people of God (Isaiah 19:25).

A dichotomy of events surrounding Egypt thus typifies the nation in general, which incurs misfortunes or covenant curses for its wickedness even as a righteous category of persons within the nation becomes Egypt’s salvation: “Jehovah will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know Jehovah in that day. They will worship by sacrifice and offerings, and make vows to Jehovah and fulfill them. Jehovah will smite Egypt, and by smiting heal [it]: they will turn back to Jehovah, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them” (Isaiah 19:21–22). To be “healed” of iniquity and to “know” Israel’s God is to be his covenant people indeed.

### **Isaiah Prophecies Using Composites of Types**

Having seen “the end from the beginning” (Isaiah 46:10), Isaiah selectively draws on Israel’s ancient history in order to cover both time frames—the past and the future—the “end” being contained in the “beginning.” God’s people anciently, in other words, in the very events in which they participated, were predicting end-time events, something only God is capable of orchestrating: “Who predicts what happens as do I, and is the equal of me in appointing a people from of old as types, foretelling things to come? Be not perturbed or shaken. Have I not made it known to you from of old? Did I not foretell it, you being my witnesses?” (Isaiah 44:7–8).

When something in the past isn’t an exact type of the end-time, on the other hand, Isaiah may combine several types from the past to round out his prediction of the future. That is, he may use *composites* of types to portray a single end-time person or event. Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure, for example, portrays both Babylon and the king of Babylon as composites of types, including the events associated with them. The

end-time itself, moreover, consists of over thirty ancient events that repeat themselves—although in a different order—that are compressed into a single scenario of a few years known as the “Day of Jehovah” or God’s Day of Judgment.

### **The Tyrant and Servant—Composites Figures**

Among Isaiah’s prophecies based on composites of types, two figures feature prominently—the tyrant and the servant. Because no one person in the past alone adequately exemplifies in his life the actions either of these end-time figures performs, Isaiah combines several ancient types when describing them. Isaiah’s tyrant figure, for example, resembles both the ancient kings of Assyria—militaristic rulers from the North who establish a precedent for conquering the known world (Isaiah 10:5–14; 37:18, 21–27)—and the king of Babylon, who accomplishes the same thing but who additionally establishes a precedent as an idol ruler (Isaiah 14:4–23).

Similarly, the way Isaiah characterizes Jehovah’s servant combines many types of Israel’s past heroes who establish precedents for the servant’s redemptive roles. They include Moses, Israel’s lawgiver, who leads God’s people out of bondage through the Red Sea into the Promised Land (Isaiah 42:4, 7, 16; 43:2, 5–8, 16–17; 44:26–27; 48:20–21; 49:1–12; 51:9–11; 52:11–13; 55:4–5, 12–13; 63:11–13); Joshua, who conquers the Promised Land and allocates God’s people their inheritances (Isaiah 41:11–16; 49:8); and Cyrus, who conquers Babylon and reestablishes God’s people in the Promised Land (Isaiah 41:2–3; 44:26, 28; 45:1–2, 13; 46:11).

### **Isaiah’s “Cyrus” Identifies a Composite Figure**

Isaiah’s mention of Cyrus, the Persian monarch who conquers Babylon—who establishes the Persian Empire, ruling from 558–530 B.C.—forms a key point on which liberal scholars divide the Book of Isaiah. They assert that there must have existed at least two “Isaias,” one who prophesied in Isaiah’s

day (742–701 B.C.) and another in the time of Cyrus. In other words, liberal scholars don't believe that a prophet of God (who saw to the end of time) could have seen a world ruler who lived a hundred and eighty years beyond Isaiah's day. To them, the best any prophet could do was to document the events of his own day—like these scholars themselves!

Isaiah's "Cyrus," however, was never intended to depict a purely historical person. While Cyrus' mention by name is consistent with Isaiah's practice of naming persons who set historical precedents, many of those precedents function as types of God's end-time servant. Thus, passages in which Cyrus is named (Isaiah 44:26–28; 45:1) consist of *composites* of types. The first combines a Cyrus typology (rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple) with a Moses typology (the deep becoming dry), while the second combines a Cyrus typology (subduing nations to set free Israel's exiles) with a David typology (Jehovah's "anointed"). All typify end-time events.

### **The Woman Zion—A Role Model for Women**

While scriptural role models for women are few compared with those for men, Isaiah offers a preeminent role model: the Woman Zion. She not only represents God's people—Jehovah's wife under the terms of the covenant—she also typifies the ideal woman. Like all humankind, she is subject to sin and transgression. But by repenting and "serving her term," she expiates her guilt (Isaiah 40:2). Rejecting false suitors and proving loyal to her husband (Isaiah 37:22), she gives birth to a new nation of God's people: "Can the earth labor but a day and a nation be born at once? For as soon as she was in labor, Zion gave birth to her children" (Isaiah 66:8).

When her covenant with Jehovah becomes unconditional (Isaiah 54:10), she flourishes in the earth: "You shall no more be called the forsaken one, nor your land referred to as desolate; you shall be known as her in whom I delight and your land considered espoused. . . . As the bridegroom rejoices over the

bride, so shall your God rejoice over you” (Isaiah 62:4–5). Her holdings increase: “Expand the site of your tent; extend the canopies of your dwellings. Do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. For you shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your offspring shall dispossess the nations and resettle the desolate cities” (Isaiah 54:2–3).

### **The Harlot Babylon—Anti-Ideal for Women**

In opposition to the Woman Zion in the Book of Isaiah appears the Harlot Babylon. Besides typifying a wicked world, she exemplifies the undesirable traits of womanhood and acts as a kind of anti-ideal or false model. Engrossed in herself, she manipulates those who inhabit her world—including the Woman Zion—to serve her selfish purposes: “I was provoked by my people, so I let my inheritance be defiled. I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy; even the aged you weighed down heavily with your yoke. You thought, ‘I, the Eternal Mistress, exist forever!’ and did not consider these, or remember her final destiny” (Isaiah 47:6–7).

As her domination of her environment expands, she begins to rival God. So he judges her: “Secure in your wickedness, you thought, ‘No one discerns me.’ By your skill and science you were led astray, thinking to yourself, ‘I exist, and there is none besides me!’ Catastrophe shall overtake you, which you shall not know how to avert by bribes; disaster shall befall you from which you cannot ransom yourself: there shall come upon you sudden ruin such as you have not imagined” (Isaiah 47:10–11). In Isaiah’s structural model of a Greater Babylon, God’s people who possess her manipulative traits form an integral part of Babylon and thus suffer her fate.



## 6. ISAIAH'S USE OF ALLEGORY

### **“Mountains” and “Hills” Are Nations/Peoples**

An integral part of encoding Isaiah's message—of layering a prophecy within a prophecy—is his use of allegory and metaphor. Prophets besides Isaiah do this but none so well. Apart from its literal meaning, for example, the term “mountain” can mean “nation”: Babylon is a “destroying mountain” (Jeremiah 51:25); the “stone cut out of a mountain without hands” becomes a great “mountain that fills the whole earth” (Daniel 2:35, 45). Using synonymous parallel lines, Isaiah establishes the idea of “mountains” as a metaphor for “nations” or “kingdoms” (Isaiah 13:4; 64:1–3). In that way, he predicts things only those who search his words understand.

We can thus read the “mountain of Jehovah's house” (Isaiah 2:2) as the nation of his house. Zion as the “head of the mountains” (*ibid.*) may mean the head of the nations—a blessing of the Sinai Covenant (Deuteronomy 28:12–13). The feet of the messenger heralding good tidings “on the mountains” (Isaiah 52:7) infers that the gospel is taken to all nations. The ensign lifted up “in the mountains” at the sound of the trumpet (Isaiah 18:3) is to all nations. Jacob/Israel's “threshing mountains to dust and making chaff of hills” (Isaiah 41:15) suggests it conquers the Assyrian alliance of nations and peoples that participates in a world takeover. And so forth.

### **“Forests” and “Trees” Are Cities and People**

Just as “mountains” and “hills” may mean “nations” or “kingdoms” in the Book of Isaiah, so “forests” and “trees” may mean “cities” and “people.” A literal *and* metaphorical meaning may apply. Isaiah thus again reveals more than meets the eye. He establishes such dual meanings by using synonymous parallel lines, as in Isaiah 32:19: “By a hail shall forests be felled, cities utterly leveled.” Or by simile, as in Isaiah 7:2: “The king's mind and the minds of his people were shaken, as trees in a

forest are shaken by a gale.” “Rivers,” too, may refer to rivers of people, as in Isaiah 18:2: “A people continually infringing, whose rivers have annexed their lands.”

Note how the king of Assyria recounts his world conquest: “Because of my vast chariotry I have conquered the highest mountains, the farthest reaches of Lebanon. I have felled its tallest cedars, its choicest cypresses. I have reached its loftiest summit, its finest forest. I have dug wells and drunk of foreign waters. With the soles of my feet I have dried up all Egypt’s rivers!” (Isaiah 37:24–25). When the tyrant passes away, “the pine trees rejoice over you, as do the cedars of Lebanon: ‘Since you have been laid low, no hewer has risen against us!’” (Isaiah 14:8). Those who rebuild are “called oaks of righteousness, planted by Jehovah for his glory” (Isaiah 61:3–4).

### **Precious, Semi-precious, and Common Stones**

Stones and metals add to Isaiah’s metaphors that designate people. Even God is called “the Rock of Israel,” “the Rock, your fortress,” “an everlasting Rock” (Isaiah 17:10; 26:4; 30:29). To the reprobates of his people, however, he is “a stumbling stone or an obstructing rock” (Isaiah 8:14). When the people of Ephraim and their leaders scoff and deceive themselves, and God’s judgments are about to come upon them, God “lays in Zion a stone, a keystone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation” (Isaiah 28:16). Before Jehovah comes to the earth to reign, his watchmen are to prepare the way—to “pave a highway cleared of stones” (Isaiah 62:10–11).

Isaiah uses such imagery to categorize people. Common stones and metals identify people on a low spiritual level, semi-precious on a higher level, and precious on a high level. When God destroys the wicked, for example, he “will make mankind scarcer than fine gold, men more rare than gold of Ophir” (Isaiah 13:12). Zion’s children who return from dispersion in an exodus at that time belong in the precious category: “You will adorn yourself with

them all as with jewels, bind them on you as does a bride” (Isaiah 49:18). In the millennial age, only precious and semi-precious kinds—“gold,” “silver,” “copper,” and “iron”—remain (Isaiah 60:17).

### **The Cosmos—An Order of Celestial Bodies**

Isaiah’s use of cosmic imagery to express spiritual concepts resembles that of other prophets. Stars, for example, denote an exalted category of persons: “Lift your eyes heavenward and see: Who formed these? He who brings forth their hosts by number, calling each one by name. Because he is almighty and all powerful, not one is unaccounted for” (Isaiah 40:26). Calling a person by name signifies royal investiture in ancient Near Eastern and Hebrew religion: “To them I will give a handclasp and a name within the walls of my house that is better than sons and daughters; I will endow them with an everlasting name that shall not be cut off” (Isaiah 56:5).

Isaiah’s use of light imagery similarly nuances spiritual concepts. Just as the light of the moon is less than the sun’s, so one might figuratively compare persons on lower spiritual levels to lesser lights but those on higher levels to greater lights. God appoints his end-time servant, for example, as a “light to the nations” (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6) to prepare them for Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 62:10–11). Jehovah himself, however, is the Light that lights up the millennial age (Isaiah 60:19–20). Accordingly, ascending spiritual levels may resemble moons, planets, and suns but descending ones resemble chaotic bodies such as comets and asteroids.

### **Isaiah’s Use of Aliases to Prophecy Subliminally**

By using pseudonyms or aliases, Isaiah’s writings again reveal a prophecy within a prophecy. While Isaiah mostly limits himself to prophesying new versions of ancient events when predicting the end of the world, in instances where ancient events fall short of portraying all that happens, he resorts to

metaphors that denote persons. Of the king of Assyria, for example, who boasts of his conquests, God says, “Shall an *axe* exalt itself above the one who hews with it, or a *saw* vaunt itself over him who handles it? As though the *rod* wielded him who lifts it up! As though the *staff* held up the one who is not made of wood!” (Isaiah 10:15; emphasis added).

When rallying his forces to conquer the world, the king of Assyria additionally appears as God’s *ensign*, *voice*, and *hand*: “Raise the *ensign* on a barren mountain; sound the *voice* among them! Beckon them with the *hand* to advance into the precincts of the elite” (Isaiah 13:2; emphasis added). Isaiah depicts God’s end-time servant under similar pseudonyms or aliases, though his mission is to gather God’s people to safety: “Thus says my Lord Jehovah: ‘I will lift up my *hand* to the nations, raise my *ensign* to the peoples; and they will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders” (Isaiah 49:22; emphasis added; compare 11:10–12).

### ***Sea and River*—Borrowing from Mythology**

A Canaanite god of chaos called *Sea* and *River* has a counterpart in the Book of Isaiah. The Ugaritic myth of Baal and Anath depicts the hero god Baal reestablishing order in the world by subduing *Sea/River*, who threatens humanity. Isaiah thus depicts the king of Assyria as *Sea* and *River*: “Jehovah will cause to come up over them the great and mighty waters of the *River*—the king of Assyria in all his glory. He will rise up over all his channels, overflow all his banks. He will sweep into Judea like a flood and, passing through, reach the very neck; his outspread wings will span the breadth of your land, O Immanuel” (Isaiah 8:7–8; emphasis added).

The archtyrant will be “stirred up” against God and against God’s people “even as the *Sea* is stirred up” (Isaiah 5:30; emphasis added; compare 37:28). In the “Day of Jehovah,” he and his alliance of nations commit worldwide genocide, causing destruction throughout the earth (Isaiah 10:5–7; 13:4–6). After

serving God's purpose of destroying the wicked, however, they too suffer destruction: "Woe to the many peoples in an uproar, who rage like the raging of the seas—tumultuous nations, in commotion like the turbulence of mighty waters! . . . At evening time shall be the catastrophe, and before morning they shall be no more" (Isaiah 17:12, 14).

### ***Righteousness and Salvation—The Two Arms***

By using the imagery of two *arms* of God, Isaiah depicts God's intervention in the affairs of his people. Each serves as an agent of God's salvation, one mostly temporal, the other mostly spiritual. God's *arm* of "righteousness"—God's end-time servant—personifies righteousness and serves as an exemplar of righteousness. He establishes righteousness in the earth, preparing the way for Jehovah's coming. God's *arm* of "salvation"—Jehovah—personifies salvation and serves as his people's Savior. Each is a "judge" of God's people (Isaiah 51:5): *Righteousness* puts the wicked to flight, while *Salvation* comes to reward the righteous (Isaiah 41:2–3; 62:11).

Linguistic interconnections and synonymous parallels—as in *righteousness* and *right hand* (Isaiah 41:10); *right hand* and mighty *arm* (Isaiah 62:8); *arm* and *righteousness* (Isaiah 59:16); and so forth—define God's servant. Thus, in "the day of salvation"—God's Day of Judgment—God "bares" or "reveals" his *arm* of righteousness to all nations (Isaiah 49:1–9; 51:9–11; 52:10; 56:1). God's people who "follow righteousness," who "know righteousness," participate in an end-time exodus led by *Righteousness* (Isaiah 51:1, 7; 58:8). Those who are called "oaks of righteousness," *Righteousness* empowers and *Salvation* saves (Isaiah 61:1–10).

### ***The Light of Jehovah and the Sparks of Men***

When Jehovah comes to reign among his people in the millennial age, "No longer shall the sun be your light by day, nor the brightness of the moon your illumination at night: Jehovah

will be your everlasting Light and your God your radiant glory. Your sun shall set no more, nor your moon wane: to you Jehovah shall be an endless Light when your days of mourning are fulfilled” (Isaiah 60:19–20). While Israel’s God then acts as the greater *Light*, he also appoints his servant as a *light* to prepare the way before him: “I have created you and appointed you to be a covenant for the people, a light to the nations, to open eyes that are blind” (Isaiah 42:6–7).

His people to whom God first sends his servant, however, are mostly unreceptive to the servant’s message: “Who among you fears Jehovah and heeds the voice of his servant, who, though he walk in the dark and have no light, trusts in the name of Jehovah and relies upon his God? But you are lighters of fires, all of you, who illuminate with mere sparks. Walk then by the light of your fires and by the sparks you have kindled. This shall you have from my hand: you shall lie down in agony” (Isaiah 50:10–11). Those who prove receptive, on the other hand, are Israel’s scattered tribes, who gather from exile in an end-time exodus to Zion (Isaiah 49:5–22).

### **The Censure of Ephraim in Isaiah’s Prophecy**

Isaiah’s prophecy about Ephraim consists mostly of re-proofs. Ephraim lives in the past, acting as if former glories are current ones: “Woe to the garlands of glory of the drunkards of Ephraim! Their crowning splendor has become as fading wreaths on the heads of the opulent overcome with wine” (Isaiah 28:1). The king of Assyria—a new Flood (Isaiah 8:7–8)—will invade Ephraim’s land: “My Lord has in store one mighty and strong: as a ravaging hailstorm sweeping down, or like an inundating deluge of mighty waters, he will hurl them to the ground by his hand. The proud garlands of the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden underfoot” (Isaiah 28:2–3).

Ephraim plows the same ground over and over, never moving beyond the basic principle of “line upon line and precept upon precept” to personal revelation (Isaiah 28:9–13, 24–29).

Its prophets are drunk: "These too have indulged in wine and are giddy with strong drink: priests and prophets have gone astray through liquor. They are intoxicated with wine and stagger because of strong drink; they err as seers, they blunder in their decisions" (Isaiah 28:7). When God "lays in Zion a stone," many disbelieve: "Scoff not, lest your bonds grow severe, for I have heard utter destruction decreed by my Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, upon the whole earth" (Isaiah 28:16, 22).

### **Tables Full of Vomit—The Learning of Men**

Isaiah spares no words when indicting God's people, particularly their leaders. When he says of Ephraim's priests and prophets, "All tables are full of vomit; no spot is without excrement" (Isaiah 28:8), his intent is figurative. The context of this entire chapter relates to Ephraim's self-deception, its reluctance to receive direct revelation from God, instead relying solely on the beginner's method of learning—"line upon line, precept upon precept" (Isaiah 28:10). Half-digested truths are regurgitated for God's people to swallow, so much that God intervenes to restore his word—but not until that state of affairs provokes his judgments (Isaiah 28:11–22).

When Sabbath meetings, fast days, and temple ordinances become mere routine (Isaiah 1:10–15; 58:1–3), when people's piety toward God "consists of commandments of men learned by rote" while their hearts remain far from him (Isaiah 29:13), when his people's prophets and seers have fallen into a deep sleep (Isaiah 29:10), God intervenes for good and for evil. For good, when he "lay[s] in Zion a stone, a keystone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation" (Isaiah 28:16). For good, when he brings forth "the words of the book" (Isaiah 29:18). For evil, when he brings "a flooding scourge" upon those who mock at how he intervenes (Isaiah 28:14–22).

### Isaiah's Wild and Natural Olive Tree Branches

Isaiah's mini-allegory of an olive tree in Isaiah 11:1, 10 appears to be the inspiration for other scriptural olive tree allegories. The old tree no longer bears fruit, so a new procedure is needed for it again to do so. In Isaiah's case, a "watersprout" (*ḥōter*, also "rod") is allowed to grow out of the "trunk" (*geza'*, also "stem") of the tree. However, watersprouts, being wild by nature, don't bear fruit. That is why they are cut out of fruit trees in the spring. Still, if a tree is failing and a watersprout can keep it alive, it can be permitted to grow strong enough to sustain a "graft" (*šōreš*, also "root/sprig") that will eventually become a fruit-bearing "branch" (*nēšer*).

The analogy of Gentiles as a wild branch or branches that don't bear fruit, and the house of Israel as a natural branch or branches that do bear fruit, seems self-evident. The upshot of this, however, is that in God's Day of Judgment most of the wild branch or branches of God's people are "cut off" (*ker*, Isaiah 9:14; 22:25; 29:20; 48:19) so that the natural branch or branches may be grafted in. Only those parts of the wild branch or branches that sustain the natural ones that are grafted in remain with the tree. In short, the Gentiles' receiving the good news when Israel rejects it is but an interim phase toward a more glorious, fruit-bearing phase (see Romans 11).

### Wild Fruit—A Setting for Divine Intervention

Isaiah uses the allegory of a "vineyard"—which starts off as a national locale but ends up as the entire earth—to show God's loving care for his people (Isaiah 5:1–7; 27:2–6). God cultivates the vineyard, clears it of stones, plants it with choice vines, builds a watchtower in its midst, and hews a winepress for it. When he expects it to yield grapes, it yields only "wild grapes" (*bê'ūšim*)—grapes that rot before they ripen. So God says, "I will have its hedge removed and let it be burned; I will have its wall broken through and let it be trampled. I will make



it a desolation: it shall neither be pruned nor hoed, but briars and thorns shall overgrow it” (Isaiah 5:5–6).

Because this allegory applies to God’s end-time people as well as to those of Isaiah’s day, the scenario of God’s people apostatizing, followed by a foreign power invading their land, repeats itself at the end. Isaiah’s predictions of Assyria’s invasion of the Promised Land and its conquest of the world illustrate the fulfillment of the allegory—how the wickedness of God’s people precipitates God’s Day of Judgment and how God uses his people’s enemies to punish them (Isaiah 5:26–30; 10:5–14; 13:4–13; 28:14–22). In the end, however, the good fruit a righteous remnant of God’s people brings forth fills the whole earth (Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; 27:6; 37:31–32).

### **Storm Imagery Denotes the Day of Judgment**

Isaiah’s use of storm imagery—when the elements will be in commotion—allows him to portray many aspects of God’s Day of Judgment. When Jesus spoke of a wise man who built his house on bedrock—that when the rains descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, it didn’t fall because it was founded on a rock (Matthew 7:25)—he wasn’t just teaching a spiritual principle but also predicting an end-time scenario. In that day, God’s people will be “chastened by Jehovah of Hosts” for their wickedness “with thunderous quakings, resounding booms, tempestuous blasts and conflagrations of devouring flame” (Isaiah 29:6).

These events precede his coming: “Jehovah comes with fire, his chariots like a whirlwind, to retaliate in furious anger, to rebuke with conflagrations of fire” (Isaiah 66:15); “By a hail shall forests be felled, cities utterly leveled” (Isaiah 32:19); “I will lay waste mountains and hills and make all their vegetation wither; I will turn rivers into dry land and evaporate lakes” (Isaiah 42:15). God’s people’s enemies, who wreak this devastation, suffer the same: “They will be driven before the wind like chaff on the mountains or as whirling [dust] in a storm” (Isaiah

17:13); “By his fierce blasts they were flung away in the day of the burning east wind” (Isaiah 27:8).

### **The Hosts of Heaven—Friendly or Unfriendly?**

Celestial bodies such as stars often symbolize exalted persons in the scriptures—as when God promises Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob descendants as many as the stars (Genesis 15:5; 22:17; 26:4; Exodus 32:13). So it is in the Book of Isaiah: “Lift your eyes heavenward and see: Who formed these? He who brings forth their hosts by number, calling each one by name. Because he is almighty and all powerful, not one is unaccounted for” (Isaiah 40:26). The king of Babylon, on the other hand, is a fallen star who aspires to rival the Most High God: “You said in your heart, ‘I will rise in the heavens and set up my throne above the stars of God’” (Isaiah 14:13; compare v 14).

That dark side of celestial bodies appears in God’s Day of Judgment upon the wicked of the world, when God judges them also: “The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, sway back and forth like a shanty; its transgressions weigh it down, and when it collapses it shall rise no more. In that day will Jehovah deal on high with the hosts on high and on earth with the rulers of the earth. They shall be herded together like prisoners to a dungeon and shut in confinement many days, as punishment” (Isaiah 24:20–22). The “hosts on high” who meet the same fate as the world’s reprobate rulers are evidently not identical with those whom Jehovah of Hosts exalts.

## 7. COVENANT THEOLOGY

### **Covenants—God’s Parameters of Operation**

We may sometimes wonder why God acts in certain ways, or why he doesn’t act. The answer isn’t as veiled in mystery as we may think. The truth is God always acts within the context of covenants he makes with his people or with individuals. Even when he intervenes dramatically in a situation, it is

according to existing covenantal agreements. Understanding the workings of these covenants, therefore, gives us power with God to bring about change for good. God's saving influence under every kind of circumstance—from daily spiritual guidance to miraculous deliverance from death—can be traced to a covenant God made somewhere with someone.

Earthly models of God's covenants are primarily three: (1) with Israel—the Sinai Covenant; (2) with King David—the Davidic Covenant; and (3) with Abraham—the Abrahamic Covenant. Extending backwards and forward in time, almost all of God's covenants follow these models. As no covenant God makes is temporary in nature, all endure to this day. The first creates a unique relationship with a people; the second, with a king to ensure his people's protection; and the third, with a patriarch concerning an eternal posterity. As the terms of these covenants involve increasing one's personal commitment and sacrifice, so their blessings increase exponentially.

### **The Sinai Covenant Operates in the End-Time**

The Sinai Covenant—God's covenant with his people Israel *as a nation*—although a conditional covenant (whose blessings and privileges depend on whether his people keep the terms of the covenant), was never done away, even when Israel transgressed and ultimately apostatized. Today, the Sinai Covenant still forms the basis on which a nation may become God's covenant people. The Sinai Covenant, moreover, constitutes a stepping stone toward attaining the spiritual heights attained by Israel's ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and toward God's people's enjoyment—*as a nation*—of the supernal blessings and privileges they enjoyed.

Although, to our current knowledge, no descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have yet attained the spiritual heights of their ancestors *as a nation*—walking and talking with God, playing host to heavenly companions, and so forth—Isaiah predicts that such will indeed occur. As a result of the

mission of God's end-time servant, a nation of God's people "born in a day"—God's Day of Judgment (Isaiah 66:7–9)—responds to the servant's summons to return from dispersion (Isaiah 43:5–8; 49:5–22; 55:4–5), gather in an exodus to Zion (Isaiah 11:10–16; 51:9–11), and prepare for the coming of Jehovah to reign on the earth (Isaiah 52:8–12; 59:18–20).

### **The Blessings and the Curses of the Covenant**

Whenever God spells out the blessings and privileges that stem from his covenants with his people or with individuals, he is under obligation to also spell out the curses—misfortunes that result from breaking his covenants. When God covenants with Israel as a nation, for example, he sets before them both blessings and curses (Deuteronomy 28). When God covenants with Abraham to give him the Land of Canaan, the cloven sacrifices Abraham offers signify the curses of the covenant in the event Abraham should prove unfaithful (Genesis 15). To emphasize the blessings without due regard for the curses is to misrepresent the nature of God's covenants.

Twenty-one "woes" or curses on the wicked in the Book of Isaiah show the consequences of God's people breaking the covenant: "Woe to the wicked when calamity [overtakes them]; they shall be paid back for the deeds they have done!" (Isaiah 3:11); "Woe to those who enact unjust laws, who draft oppressive legislation, denying justice to the needy, depriving the poor of my people of their right! . . . What will you do in the day of reckoning when the holocaust overtakes you from afar?" (Isaiah 10:1–3). By the same token, the righteous experience God's blessings: "I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, my blessing on your posterity" (Isaiah 44:3).

### **The Covenant Blessings of Posterity and Land**

Fundamental to all covenant blessings are God's promise of an enduring posterity and a land in which they may live. God affirms these two blessings when he covenants with Abraham

(Genesis 15:18; 22:17), with Israel as a nation (Deuteronomy 8:1; 28:4, 8), and with King David (Psalms 89:3–4, 35–36; 132:11–18). While God's collective covenant with Israel—the Sinai Covenant—is a *conditional* covenant—whose blessings depend on whether his people keep the covenant's terms—his individual covenants with Abraham and David are *unconditional*. After they prove faithful under all conditions, the blessings of offspring and land become theirs forever.

Even Israel's Savior has literal offspring (Isaiah 53:10); if not, he would be under a covenant curse. The King of Babylon, for example—who is juxtaposed with the King of Zion in twenty-one antithetical verses in Isaiah 14 and 52–53—ends up with neither offspring nor land because he violates covenants (Isaiah 14:20c–21). Those whom God's servant vindicates inherit lands and offspring (Isaiah 53:11–12; 54:12–13), while those who belong to Babylon see their lands turn into wastelands and their offspring perish when God sweeps Babylon with the “broom of destruction” (Isaiah 14:22–23). Ultimately, everyone follows one of these two archetypes.

### **From Conditional to Unconditional Covenant**

In the pattern of ancient Near Eastern covenants between emperors and their vassal kings, covenants become unconditional when a vassal proves exceedingly loyal to an emperor. At that point, their “lord–servant” relationship turns into a “father–son” relationship, although the vassal may be no blood relative of the emperor. The emperor's legal adoption of the vassal as his “son” guarantees him the right to a city–state—a Promised Land—over which he and his descendants may rule him in perpetuity or “forever.” God makes such an unconditional covenant with King David and his heirs (Jeremiah 33:19–26), and it becomes the model for all future kings.

God's calling David his “servant,” “son,” and “firstborn,” and God's acting as David's “lord” and “father” (Psalms 2:6–7; 89:3, 20, 26–27, 49), express the unconditional nature of God's

covenant after David proves loyal. David proves his loyalty to God by trusting implicitly in him to give him the victory when the Philistines challenge Israel (1 Samuel 17:26–47; 23:1–5); by not speaking a word against God’s “anointed” (King Saul), even when Saul seeks his life and God gives David power over him (1 Samuel 24:1–22; 26:1–25); and by valiantly defending God’s people Israel against the Philistines and against all their enemies (2 Samuel 3:18).

**Priests and Teachers—The Levitical Covenant**

When the Israelites make a golden calf at Mount Sinai and worship it, the tribe of Levi rallies to God’s side and avenges him of the evildoers (Exodus 32:19–28). Later, when the Israelites fornicate with the daughters of Midian, Aaron’s grandson Phinehas avenges God of the evil (Numbers 25:1–18). Because of their righteous zeal God chooses the tribe of Levi to be his priests and teachers to the rest of Israel’s tribes. The Levites are consecrated to God’s service to minister in the Tabernacle during Israel’s wandering in the wilderness, and later in Solomon’s temple at Jerusalem (Numbers 1:50–53; 8:6–26; Deuteronomy 18:1–7; 1 Chronicles 9:14–34).

The special relationship the Levites have with Israel’s God crystallizes into a covenant of life and peace: “‘You know I sent this commandment to you that my covenant might be with Levi,’ says Jehovah of Hosts. ‘My covenant with him was of life and peace, and these I gave him on account of the fear with which he feared me and his fear of my presence. The law of truth was in his mouth and iniquity wasn’t found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and equity and turned many away from transgression. For the priest’s lips should harbor knowledge that they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of Jehovah of Hosts’” (Malachi 2:4–7).

### **The Abrahamic Covenant—Endless Posterity**

God's promise to Abraham of descendants as many as the sands of the seashore and stars in the heavens (Genesis 15:5; 22:17) isn't unique to him but is repeated to Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 26:4; Exodus 32:13). This shows that God is willing to do for others as he does for Abraham—in effect, for all who “do the works of Abraham” (John 8:39). The question is, what are the “works” that qualify Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to merit such exalted blessings? The answer lies in God's unconditional or “everlasting” covenant that he makes with them (Genesis 17:7, 19). As they prove faithful to him and fulfill its conditions, so, likewise, may others of God's children.

Because God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and is no respecter of persons (2 Samuel 14:14; Hebrews 13:8), he treats all equally and does for one as does for another. The higher law of God's covenant that Abraham keeps brings with it the corresponding privilege of seeing and conversing with Jehovah (Genesis 17:1; 18:1–2, 8, 22, 33). Abraham's offering his only son Isaac by Sarah is but one requirement God makes of him that merits the blessing of a posterity as many as the sands of the sea and the stars in the heavens (Genesis 22:1–17). As such an innumerable posterity resembles God's own, moreover, it constitutes a promise of godhood.

### **Proxy Salvation under the Davidic Covenant**

When Israel transgresses and God's protection of his people breaks down under the terms of the Sinai Covenant, God institutes the Davidic Covenant as a second means whereby they may obtain his protection. Under the Sinai Covenant, which is a national or collective covenant, Israel needs to maintain loyalty to its God *as a nation* in order to obtain his protection against mortal enemies. Such divine protection happens under Moses and Joshua, when Israel consistently gains the victory over its enemies. Later, when Israel's loyalty to God lapses, so does his protection, and by the time of the

prophet Samuel the Philistines are about to wipe Israel off the map.

While the Davidic Covenant is a lesser covenant for Israel than the Sinai Covenant, for King David and his heirs it is a higher covenant. To obtain God's protection, all that is now required of the people is to be loyal to their king by keeping the king's law. The king, on the other hand, needs to keep God's law. Doing so, however, includes answering to God for his people's loyalties or disloyalties, as does a vassal king to an emperor. Thus is instituted the principle of proxy salvation, in which a king at times suffers severely in order to obtain God's protection. At Assyria's siege of Jerusalem, King Hezekiah becomes its type (Isaiah 38:1–6, 9–20).

### **“Male and Female”—The Marriage Covenant**

The marriage covenant constitutes an integral part of God's covenant with righteous individuals in the Book of Isaiah. On the model of God's individual covenant with King David, certain kings and queens of the Gentiles perform ministering functions to a remnant of God's covenant people that facilitate their end-time exodus to Zion (Isaiah 49:22–23; 60:3–14). Under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, King David and his heirs—notably Hezekiah—fulfill the spiritual roles of proxy saviors to their peoples by interceding with God on their behalf when their peoples are threatened with destruction by a hostile world power (Isaiah 37:14–20, 33–35; 38:1–6).

Following this pattern, the proxy roles of end-time kings and queens cause God to deliver his people “for the sake of my servants” (Isaiah 65:8–9). Their answering for the loyalties of God's people secures their protection at the new exodus: “When you cross the waters, I will be with you; when you traverse the rivers, you shall not be overwhelmed. Though you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned” (Isaiah 43:2). Their saving roles, moreover, beget their divine empowerment: “He clothes me in garments of salvation, arrays me in a



robe of righteousness, like a bridegroom dressed in priestly attire or a bride adorned with her jewels" (Isaiah 61:10).

### **Jehovah, King of Zion—Israel's Proxy Savior**

On Isaiah's spiritual ladder, persons on the three highest of its seven levels act as proxy saviors of their peoples. Taken together, they illustrate a *pattern* of proxy salvation: what happens on lower levels typifies what happens on higher ones, while all levels emulate the highest. King David and his heirs establish the pattern of a king's role as proxy protector of his people according to the terms of the Davidic covenant: when David keeps God's law and the people keep David's law, God protects both king and people from a mortal threat for the king's sake. Such temporal salvation extends to divine intervention on the next highest level—that of seraphs.

Israel's God acts as a spiritual proxy savior on the highest level. We observe this in Isaiah 53:1–10, which combines the proxy role of a Davidic king with the proxy role of a sacrificial lamb. Answering for the transgressions or disloyalties of his people, he pays "the price of our peace" or salvation. Going "like a lamb to the slaughter," he "makes his life an offering for guilt." We know that Jehovah is the subject of this passage from a literary structure in Isaiah 14 and 52–53, which contrasts—verse by verse—the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14 with the King of Zion in Isaiah 52–53, thereby identifying the subject of Isaiah 53:1–10 as Jehovah, King of Zion.

### **Two Wives—The Deserted and the Espoused**

Isaiah compares God's collective covenant relationship with Israel to a marriage in which Israel is the wife and Jehovah her husband. When Israel keeps the terms of the covenant, she appears as a faithful wife. But when she breaks the covenant's terms she is an adulterous wife. Finally, when Israel's unfaithfulness turns irrevocable, God divorces her and casts her off. Or, rather, she and her children cast themselves off by

alienating themselves: “Where is your mother’s bill of divorce with which I cast her out? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you? Surely, by sinning you sold yourselves; because of your crimes was your mother an outcast” (Isaiah 50:1).

In the end-time, when the unfaithful wife is cast off, Jehovah remarries a once-deserted wife who has repented of her adultery: “Sing, O barren woman who did not give birth; break into jubilant song, you who were not in labor: the children of the deserted wife shall outnumber those of the espoused,’ says Jehovah. . . . ‘Jehovah calls you back as a spouse forsaken and forlorn, a wife married in youth only to be rejected,’ says your God. ‘I forsook you indeed momentarily, but with loving compassion I will gather you up. In a fleeting surge of anger I hid my face from you, but with everlasting charity I will have compassion on you” (Isaiah 54:1, 6–8).

### **A Covenant of Life and Covenant with Death**

Part VI of Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 28–31; 55–59) juxtaposes a Covenant of Life with a Covenant with Death. The themes of loyalty and disloyalty that pervade these chapters determine who among God’s people subscribes to one covenant and who to the other. Those who deceive themselves, who rely on human counsel and schemes, comprise God’s people who “covenant with death” (Isaiah 28:14–15; 29:10–15; 30:1–2, 8–14; 31:1). Scoffing at God’s word, they put aside his counsel in favor of their own, only to suffer the “utter destruction” God has “decreed upon the whole earth” (Isaiah 28:14, 17–22; 29:5–6; 30:15–17, 27–28; 31:2–4).

Those who heed God’s *voice*, who inquire at his *mouth*, on the other hand (Isaiah 28:23; 30:2; emphasis added), don’t act irresponsibly when God “lays in Zion a *stone*, a keystone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation” (Isaiah 28:16; emphasis added). With them, he makes a Covenant of Life: “Give ear and come unto me; pay heed that your souls may live! And I will make with you an everlasting covenant: [my] loving fidelity

toward David. See, I have appointed him as a witness to the nations, a prince and lawgiver of the peoples" (Isaiah 55:3–4). God's end-time servant, who personifies God's *covenant* to his people (Isaiah 42:6; 49:8), fulfills that role.

### **Prerequisites for God's End-Time Intervention**

The terms of God's covenants ensure that God's people and individuals in any age of the world may obtain his protection—spiritual and physical—against a mortal threat. Aside from the terms of God's covenants, on the other hand, no basis exists for obtaining his divine protection. A person may nevertheless suffer death or afflictions voluntarily on behalf of others when acting as their proxy savior under the terms of the Davidic covenant. So does King Hezekiah when an Assyrian army of 185,000 men besieges Jerusalem and—in the midst of his suffering nigh unto death—God assures him he will deliver his people from the Assyrians (Isaiah 38:1–6).

Hezekiah's case, however, goes beyond God's simply granting his physical protection—as when a person defends himself against an enemy and God's strengthens him. When Hezekiah intercedes with God on behalf of his people, an angel slays the Assyrian horde and in one night all die (Isaiah 37:18–20, 33–36). That constitutes divine *intervention*, alleviating the need for Hezekiah and his people to defend themselves against the Assyrians. It implies that someone on a higher spiritual level than Hezekiah—one who has more power with God—is additionally interceding with God. That person is Isaiah, to whom Hezekiah appeals for help (Isaiah 37:1–5).

### **God's New Covenant—A Composite Covenant**

All covenants God made in the past—his covenant with Noah after the Flood, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Sinai Covenant, the Levitical Covenant, and the Davidic Covenant—combine into a single covenant God makes with an elect remnant of his people at the beginning of the earth's millennial

age of peace. Typifying this new covenant are the positive features of all previous covenants, the new forming a *composite* of the old. Provisional aspects of God's former covenants—such as the Sinai Covenant's conditional nature and the conditional protection clause of the Davidic Covenant—disappear as all become unconditional for those who prove loyal.

As in the Sinai Covenant, God makes the new covenant with his elect people *as a nation*. He grants them permanent lands of inheritance, as in his covenant with Israel's ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He perpetuates his people's posterity through all generations of time and throughout all eternity, as he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He protects his people against their enemies, as under the terms of the Davidic Covenant. He endows his people with his holy Spirit, as he covenanted with the Levites, the priests. And he makes the new covenant after a worldwide destruction of the wicked, as he did with Noah after the Flood (Isaiah 54–56)

## 8. THEOLOGY OF SALVATION

### Isaiah's "Good News"—The Hebrew Gospel

It is all too easy to put our own interpretation on the prophecies of Isaiah. But that would be doing us and the prophet a grave disservice. Unless we apply *Isaiah's* definitions of his words and ideas we are "wresting the scripture to our own destruction" (compare 2 Peter 3:16). So it is, too, with Isaiah's "good news" (*běšōrâ*, also "good tidings" or "gospel," Isaiah 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 61:1). It turns out that Isaiah's gospel isn't a lesser law based on the teachings of Moses. In fact, it is the same gospel we find in the New Testament. Only, Isaiah's Hebrew version is richer and more comprehensive in scope, so that even the New Testament is best understood in its light.

What Bible scholars call a "systematic theology," for example, is wonderfully developed in the seven spiritual levels or categories of people that appear in the Book of Isaiah. But like

all else in its pages, its treasures are concealed within literary patterns that disclose their secrets only on diligent searching. Ascent from the Jacob/Israel level to the Zion/Jerusalem level ensures one's salvation. But ascent to levels higher ensures one's glory or exaltation. All hinges on keeping the laws of God's covenants as they pertain to each level of ascent. Descent from the Jacob/Israel to the Babylon level, or even to Perdition, on the other hand, ensures one's damnation.

### **Mortality—Optimum Environment for Growth**

The fact that Isaiah's writings evidence seven identifiable spiritual levels tells us something important, especially as they reveal the ascent of God's people from one level to the next. God calls the people of King Hezekiah by the names Zion and Jerusalem, for example, *after* they pass a test of their loyalty at Assyria's siege of Jerusalem (Isaiah 37:22). Before that—like the majority of God's people in the Book of Isaiah—they are known as Jacob or Israel. Similarly, when Isaiah heals Hezekiah and declares God's people clean, he is performing the roles the seraph performed who once declared Isaiah clean and who healed him (Isaiah 6:1–8; 38:21; 40:1–2).

The wicked, on the other hand, descend this ladder. By making poor choices, those who start off on the Jacob or Israel level may descend a level and become identified with Isaiah's Babylon category and thus meet the same fate. In short, each time a person ascends he or she is reborn or re-created "a new creature." But the reverse happens when people descend: they are de-created and are no longer the same persons they used to be. Because God is a loving and benevolent Parent, we may trust that as we assimilate his loving and benevolent attributes this mortal environment will indeed prove to be the optimum one for furthering our spiritual growth.

### **Rebirth as Re-creation, Ruin as De-creation**

Isaiah characterizes the cyclical rebirth of persons who ascend to higher spiritual levels as God’s “creating” or “forming” them each time they ascend. His definition of God’s creation, in other words, is that of re-creation. Even God’s creation of the heavens and the earth are a re-ordering of existing materials: “Who measured out the waters with the hollow of his hand and gauged the heavens by the span of his fingers? Who compiled the earth’s dust by measure, weighing mountains in scales, hills in a balance?” (Isaiah 40:12). People who descend, on the other hand, like those in Isaiah’s Babylon and Perdition categories, are de-created and suffer ruin.

We observe Isaiah’s ascending order of spiritual levels when God “creates” and “forms” Jacob/Israel “to be my servant” (Isaiah 43:21; 44:21); Zion/Jerusalem “to be a delight and its people a joy” (Isaiah 65:18); God’s sons and daughters—“all who are called by my name, whom I have created, molded, and wrought for my own glory” (Isaiah 43:7); the hosts of heaven, a celestial category of persons whom he calls forth, each one by name (Isaiah 40:26); and God’s end-time servant, whom he “creates” as a “light to the nations, a “covenant of the people,” to “free the captives,” to “restore the Land,” and to “reapportion the desolate estates” (Isaiah 42:6–7; 49:8).

### **A Difference between Religious and Spiritual**

Many people down the ages have led religious lives that couldn’t necessarily be called spiritual, though they may have mistaken one for the other. When spirituality becomes hypocrisy, God springs a surprise that separates the true from the false: “My Lord says, ‘Because these people approach me with the mouth and pay me homage with their lips, while their heart remains far from me—their piety toward me consisting of commandments of men learned by rote—therefore it is that I shall again astound these people with wonder upon wonder,

rendering void the knowledge of their sages and the intelligence of their wise men insignificant” Isaiah 29:13–14).

When the materialistic lifestyle of God's people turns their religion into a superficial version of what it once was, they may not even be aware of it: “O you deaf, listen; O you blind, look and see! Who is blind but my own servant, or so deaf as the messenger I have sent? Who is blind like those I have commissioned, as uncomprehending as the servant of Jehovah—seeing much but not giving heed, with open ears hearing nothing?” (Isaiah 42:18–20). God's response is to restore his truth to them—in part through the Book of Isaiah: “In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book and the eyes of the blind see out of gross darkness” (Isaiah 29:18; 30:8–9).

### **Expiation of Iniquity—A Concept of Healing**

When God says to Isaiah, “Comfort and give solace to my people,’ says your God; ‘Speak kindly to Jerusalem. Announce to her that she has served her term, that her guilt has been expiated. She has received from Jehovah's hand double for all her sins” (Isaiah 40:1), what is he to understand? Especially as God also says, “I have removed your offenses like a thick fog, your sins like a cloud of mist” (Isaiah 44:22). Doesn't God forgive his people when they repent? One answer is that the first statement follows *after* God's people had suffered Assyria's invasion of the Promised Land—a covenant curse inherited from the previous generation (Isaiah 8:5–8).

In other words, there are generational consequences of transgressing God's covenant—the curses of the covenant that follow. God may forgive his people their sins when they repent, but the after-effects of past misdeeds may persist until they are “expiated”: “Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation” (Exodus 34:7). Lasting healing—an entire reversal of covenant curses—comes only after his people or individuals take ownership of the consequences of transgression and

complete the repentance process by suffering their own and their inherited covenant curses (Isaiah 6:10).

### **Parallel Life Cycles—Man, Israel, the Earth**

Parallels between the life cycles of (1) individuals, (2) God's covenant people, and (3) the earth reveal a single model: all are works in progress leading toward an ultimate, exalted goal. Or, conversely, toward a final humiliating end. Literally or figuratively, each is created "from the dust." Each goes through phases of rebirth or re-creation. Or, conversely, through phases of ruin or de-creation. While Israel is born as a nation in the Sinai wilderness when it comes out of bondage in Egypt (Exodus 6:7; Deuteronomy 4:34), it dies as God's people at its apostasy and exile (Jeremiah 9:16; Ezekiel 5:10; Hosea 1:9), then finally rises again "from the dust" (Isaiah 52:1–2).

God likewise creates the earth "from the dust": "Who compiled the earth's dust by measure, weighing mountains in scales, hills in a balance" (Isaiah 40:12). In his Day of Judgment the earth too dies: "When the earth is sacked, it shall be utterly ravaged. Jehovah has given word concerning it. The earth shall pine away, the world miserably perish" (Isaiah 24:3–4). Yet, in the end, the earth and God's people are re-created: "See, I create new heavens and a new earth; former events shall not be remembered or recalled to mind. Rejoice, then, and be glad forever in what I create. See, I create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy" (Isaiah 65:17–18).

### **Spiritual Growth from Infancy to Manhood**

Just as there are different stages of physical growth, so there exist distinct stages of spiritual growth. Each nurturing phase is essential to forming the whole person. One can't simply skip a phase. In fact, Isaiah uses the physical to symbolize the spiritual, tracing the process from birth to lactation to infancy to childhood: "As soon as she was in labor, Zion gave birth to her children. . . . From now on nurse contentedly at



her consoling breasts; draw at your pleasure from the abundance of her bosom. . . . Then shall you nurse and be carried upon the hip and dandled on the knees. As one who is comforted by his mother I will comfort you” (Isaiah 66:8, 11–13).

Marriage is an integral part of spiritual growth: “He clothes me in garments of salvation, he arrays me in a robe of righteousness, like a bridegroom dressed in priestly attire, or a bride adorned with her jewels” (Isaiah 61:10). A “man” attains his full stature when acting as a king and a protector—as a proxy savior under the terms of the Davidic Covenant—as appears in the following parallel lines: “A *king* shall reign in righteousness and rulers rule with justice. And a *man* shall become as a shelter from the wind or refuge from the storm, like brooks of water in a desert place, or the shade of a large rock in arid country” (Isaiah 32:1–2; emphasis added).

### **Rites of Passage from Being Saved to Saving**

Ordinances pertaining to God’s law and word—the terms of his covenants—teach and empower one to live a life of righteousness: “The path of the righteous is straight; you pave an undeviating course for the upright. In the very passage of your ordinances we anticipate you, O Jehovah; the soul’s desire is to contemplate your name. My soul yearns for you in the night; at daybreak my spirit within me seeks after you. For when your ordinances are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:7–9). But when God’s ordinances are changed or corrupted they become solemn mockery and bring condemnation (Isaiah 24:5–6).

Passing through successive spiritual phases, one’s concerns change from a need to be saved from the effects of transgressing God’s law and word to a desire to save others. God’s “servants”—for whose sake God delivers his people (Isaiah 63:17; 65:8–9)—don’t start off as such. Some rise to that level from the lowest rung of society: “The foreigners who adhere to Jehovah to serve him, who love the name of Jehovah, that they

may be his servants—all who keep the Sabbath without profaning it, holding fast to my covenant . . . to them I will give a handclasp and a name within the walls of my house that is better than sons and daughters” (Isaiah 56:5–6).

### **Descent before Ascent, Ascent before Descent**

According to Isaiah’s theology—which he develops systematically in his seven-part literary structure—every ascent to a higher spiritual level is preceded by a temporary descent. That descent phase consists of God’s trial of a person’s faith equal to the level of that person’s ascent. In other words, the higher one ascends, the greater the temporary descent that precedes it. Ruin may occur cyclically before rebirth to a higher spiritual level, as may suffering before salvation, humiliation before exaltation, and so forth—intensifying each time a person ascends. Even Messiah descends below all before he is exalted above all to sit on his Father’s throne.

Trials of faith escalate as one ascends because the terms of God’s covenants on ascending levels grow more exacting, each representing a higher law than the one before. The terms of the covenant Messiah keeps, for example, are to atone for humanity’s transgressions. Still, on their level, God’s servants, too, fulfill saving roles when keeping the terms of God’s covenant. In effect, the lower the spiritual level, the less demanding are its covenant’s terms. The very lowest levels, on the other hand, keep no divinely ordained covenant’s terms. Instead, they seek to ascend by oppressing and lording it over others, causing them to descend even more than before.

### **Spiritual Ascent with Its Divine Commission**

In Isaiah’s theology, ascent to a higher spiritual level qualifies a person for a divine commission to minister to persons lower. When King Hezekiah’s people pass God’s test of their loyalty at Assyria’s siege of Jerusalem, God no longer refers to them as “Jacob” or “Israel” but as “Zion” and “Jerusalem”

(Isaiah 37:22). He also commissions them to do for others as has been done for them, so that they too may ascend to their level: "Scale the mountain heights, O Zion, herald of good tidings. Raise your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, messenger of good news. Make yourself heard, be not afraid; proclaim to the cities of Judah: 'Behold your God!'" (Isaiah 40:9).

God's end-time servant passes his test of loyalty when he is "marred beyond human likeness" by his opponents while attempting to deliver God's people (Isaiah 52:14). God then commissions and empowers him to "raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore those preserved of Israel" to prepare them for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 49:6). Although he is "despised as a person" and "abhorred by his people," God appoints him "to restore the land and reapportion the desolate estates, to say to the captives, 'Come forth!' and to those in darkness, 'Show yourselves!'" (Isaiah 49:8–9). His mission results in their exodus to Zion (Isaiah 49:9–26).

### **Descent into the Dust, Ascent from the Dust**

Isaiah's end-time scene depicts Babylon descending from her throne into the dust while Zion rises from the dust to sit on her throne: "Get down and sit in the dust, O Virgin Daughter of Babylon; squat on the ground, dethroned, O Daughter of the Chaldeans. You shall no more be spoken of as delicate and refined" (Isaiah 47:1); "Awake, arise; clothe yourself with power, O Zion! Put on your robes of glory, O Jerusalem, holy city. No more shall the uncircumcised and defiled enter into you. Shake yourself free, rise from the dust; sit enthroned, O Jerusalem. Loose yourself from the bands around your neck, O captive Daughter of Zion" (Isaiah 52:1–2).

"Dust"—a chaos motif—signifies that Babylon is reduced to nothing—to a nonentity—while Zion, having been a nonentity prior to rising from the dust, comes into her own. Literary patterns show that this reversal of circumstances occurs in God's Day of Judgment. All entities affiliated with Babylon

are likewise reduced to dust (Isaiah 25:12; 26:5; 29:5; 41:2, 15). While being reduced to dust signifies de-creation, rising from the dust denotes re-creation. That occurs when the wicked descend to a lower spiritual level and the righteous ascend to a higher one. Its synchronized occurrence infers that Babylon fails the same test of loyalty that Zion passes.

### **Collective Damnation but Personal Salvation**

Even when God's people as a whole transgress and accumulate collective guilt, all isn't lost for righteous individuals. God may bring his judgments upon a nation, but he provides a way of escape for those who love him. In the midst of pronouncing "woes" or covenant curses upon the wicked of his people—portraying their utter destitution in his Day of Judgment—God says, "Tell the righteous it shall be well with them; they shall eat the fruits of their own labors" (Isaiah 3:10; compare vv 6–11). When the Assyrians invade his people's land like a new Flood (Isaiah 8:7–8)—a collective covenant curse—God is a "sanctuary" to his holy ones (Isaiah 8:13–14).

In the end, only righteous *individuals* survive God's destruction of the wicked: "Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples. I will wait for Jehovah, who hides his face from the house of Jacob, and expect him" (Isaiah 8:16–17); "In that day Jehovah will thresh out [his harvest] from the torrent of the River to the streams of Egypt. But you shall be gleaned one by one, O people of Israel" (Isaiah 27:12). As a type and precedent of his righteous descendants, Abraham left his land and separated from his kindred but ultimately became a father of nations: "He was but one when I called him, but I blessed him by making him many" (Isaiah 51:2).

### **Perdition—Descent to a Place of No Return**

Although Isaiah doesn't use the word "Perdition," he nevertheless identifies a Perdition category. Very likely, Isaiah's prophecy of the composite figure of a tyrannical "king of

Assyria” and “king of Babylon” informs Paul’s depiction of a “Son of Perdition who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called divine or that is worshipped, so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself to be God” (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4); or Daniel’s “little horn,” having “eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Daniel 7:8); or John’s “beast” that makes war against the saints and commands men’s worship (Revelation 13:1–18).

After conquering the world, this Antichrist seeks to make himself the God of this world: “You said in your heart, ‘I will rise in the heavens and set up my throne above the stars of God; I will seat myself in the mount of assembly [of the gods], in the utmost heights or Zaphon. I will ascend above the altitude of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High!’” (Isaiah 14:13–14). Instead, he is cast “to the utmost depths of the Pit” (Isaiah 14:15)—the “Pit of Dissolution”—a place of no return (Isaiah 38:17–18). His is a category of “spirits who will not resurrect,” whom God “appoints to destruction, wiping out all recollection of them” (Isaiah 26:14).

### **Hellfire and Outer Darkness—A Correction**

Medieval ideas about Hell and God’s punishment persist to this day. Hence the importance of being guided by what the scriptures actually say, not by what we assume they say. Speaking of the millennial age, for example, Isaiah says “New Moon after New Moon, Sabbath after Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me,” says Jehovah. ‘And they shall go out and look upon the corpses of the people who transgressed against me, whose worms do not die and whose fire shall not be extinguished. They shall be a horror to all flesh’” (Isaiah 66:23–24). Note that Isaiah doesn’t say that the wicked will burn in hellfire forever but that the *fire* never dies.

The idea of “outer darkness,” too, is thought to apply only after death. Isaiah, however, applies it to this life: “They will look to the land, but there shall be a depressing scene of

anguish and gloom; and thus are they banished into outer darkness” (Isaiah 8:22); “Should one look to the land, there [too] shall be a distressing gloom, for the daylight shall be darkened by an overhanging mist” (Isaiah 5:30); “Redress remains far from us and righteousness is unable to reach us. We look for light, but there prevails darkness; for a glimmer, but we walk amid gloom. . . . We stumble at noon as in the dark of night; in the prime of life we resemble the dead” (Isaiah 59:9–10).

## 9. THE ROLE OF SAVIORS

### **Birthpangs of the Messiah Mean Deliverance**

The “Birthpangs of the Messiah” concept envisages an end-time event resembling Moses’ deliverance of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. In God’s Day of Judgment, the entire earth goes into labor: “Lament, for the Day of Jehovah is near; it shall come as a violent blow from the Almighty. Then shall every hand grow weak and the hearts of all men melt. They shall be terrified, in throes of agony, seized with trembling like a woman in labor” (Isaiah 13:6–8). Even Israel’s God goes into labor: “For a long time I have been silent, keeping still and restraining myself. But now I will scream like a woman in labor, and breathe hard and fast all at once” (Isaiah 42:14).

God’s people lament over not having saved humanity: “As a woman about to give birth cries out from her pangs during labor, so were we at your presence, O Jehovah. We were with child; we have been in labor, but have brought forth only wind. We have not wrought salvation in the earth that the inhabitants of the world might not abort” (Isaiah 26:17–18). Only Zion gives birth to a deliverer and to a “nation” of children: “Before she is in labor, she gives birth; before her ordeal overtakes her, she delivers a son! . . . Can the earth labor but a day and a nation be born at once? For as soon as she was in labor, Zion gave birth to her children” (Isaiah 66:7–8).

### **The Twofold Nature of Messianic Prophecies**

People commonly think of all messianic prophecies as referring to one Messiah. Christians identify that person exclusively with Jesus, while Jews identify him just as exclusively with an end-time David. Neither group appears to allow room for the other's point of view. While there may indeed be only one Messiah, we nevertheless find that all messianic prophecies aren't equal. When we examine them for what they actually say—not for what we assume they say (or for what manuals and chapter headings say)—we begin to see the need for a complete reevaluation of this subject. If we believe the scriptures, we must give them precedence over people's opinions.

We then indeed discover that each theological position has distinct merit and that neither possesses the whole truth. While an actual messianic mission of an end-time David consists of a preparatory work that precedes the coming of Jehovah to reign on the earth, the mission of redeeming his people from their sins is the work of Jehovah himself. Characterizing the mission of Jehovah's end-time servant is the temporal work of gathering Israel's tribes, rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, and reestablishing the political kingdom of God on the earth. When a people of God are thus prepared to receive him, Jehovah comes and his millennial reign of peace begins.

### **The Jewish Messiah, the Christian Messiah**

Prophecies by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and others about a messianic figure who assists in restoring the house of Israel in preparation for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth agree with Jewish expectations of a "Messiah" or "anointed one" (*māšīah*). A biblical precedent or type of this figure is King David: "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren, and the Spirit of Jehovah came upon David from that day forward" (1 Samuel 16:13). Isaiah predicts

that this figure will release Israel's captives, lead them in an exodus to Zion, appoint their inheritances, and rebuild their ancient ruins (Isaiah 49:8–12; 61:4).

Fulfilling Christian messianic expectations is Jehovah God of Israel. The key prophecy of Isaiah 53:1–10—of one who takes his people's transgressions on himself in order to obtain their "peace" and "healing"—Jehovah himself fulfills. We know this from Isaiah's structure that juxtaposes the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14 with Jehovah, the King of Zion, in Isaiah 52–53 in twenty-one parallel verses that characterize the King of Babylon as the opposite of the King of Zion. As "peace" and "healing" are synonyms of salvation (Isaiah 6:10; 52:7), Jesus' fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53:1–10 identifies him not only as Jehovah God of Israel but as its Messiah.

### **Jehovah's Coming—A Succession of Events**

Many people seem to imagine Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth (or Jesus' Second Coming in New Testament prophecy) as a single earth-shaking event. In reality, however—as Isaiah and the prophets predict—Jehovah's coming consists of an entire series of earth-shaking events that prepare the world in general, and God's people in particular, to receive him. In that end-time scenario, God's servant functions as a forerunner to restore God's covenant people and prepare them to meet God. Isaiah calls the remnant of God's people whom the servant restores Zion or Jerusalem, denoting a higher spiritual category than the one called Jacob or Israel.

God's servant further acts as antidote to an end-time king of Assyria/Babylon—an Antichrist who commits mass genocide of the earth's population. That tyrant's destruction, too, forms an integral part of Jehovah's coming as he is God's instrument to cleanse the earth of its unrepentant inhabitants. Those portentous events will test the loyalties of all peoples, producing the effect of turning some into angels and others into devils. The times will be such that all middle



ground vanishes and people must choose one side or the other. Jehovah's coming "to avenge and to reward" (Isaiah 35:4; 62:11) thus consists not of one event but of a succession of events.

### **The Terms "Servant" and "Son" Mean Vassal**

Much of our understanding of covenant relationships with God comes from ancient Near Eastern parallels of covenants between emperors and their vassal kings. Under the terms of those covenants, a "servant" or "son" identifies a "vassal" to an emperor. As the prophets use that model to define God's covenants with Israel and with Israel's kings, we learn much about how God's covenants work by comparing them with their ancient Near Eastern counterparts. When the disloyal King Ahaz, for example, seeks to establish a covenant relationship with the Assyrian emperor Tiglath Pileser, he calls himself the emperor's "servant" and "son" (2 Kings 16:7).

Although the terms "servant" and "son" both imply "vassal" status, an emphasis on the term "son" suggests that a vassal's covenant relationship has become unconditional. In other words, after a vassal proves exceedingly loyal to an emperor, the emperor legally adopts him as his own "son." The vassal's privileges under the covenant then become "forever." In that light, the goal of covenant keeping with God is to prove loyal under all conditions in which he may test his "servant." Only then does the covenant—whether with his people as a nation or with individuals—become unconditional. Only then do its blessings and privileges become "forever."

### **Jehovah's Servant and Son—His Forerunner**

Part III of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 9–12; 41–46), depicts the mission of God's end-time "servant" and "son," who prepares God's people for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth. The context of each group of chapters is the same—Israel's end-time restoration. That consists of God's people's physical release from bondage, new exodus, new wandering

in the wilderness, return from exile, and reconquest of the Promised Land. These and similar literary interconnections between the two groups of chapters show that Jehovah's "servant" who appears in Isaiah 41–46 is the same person as the Davidic "son" who appears in Isaiah 9–12.

While Isaiah 41–46 highlights the *conditional* phase of the servant's mission to restore God's people, Isaiah 9–12 highlights its *unconditional* phase—that is, the period that sees the restoration of God's people accomplished. Spiritual and political enemies the servant deals with include his own people's idolaters and the king of Assyria. The restorative events of release from bondage, new exodus, new wandering in the wilderness, return from exile, and reconquest of the land conclude with Jehovah's presence with his people in Zion (Isaiah 12:1–6; 46:13). The servant's role thus resembles that of Moses, who attempted to prepare his people to meet God.

### **“My Servant Eliakim”—A Nail in a Sure Place**

Synchronous holistic structures in the Book of Isaiah allow us to read Isaiah's writings in their entirety as foreshadowing an end-time scenario. In that case, the events that occurred in Isaiah's day act as an allegory of the end-time. So it is with "my servant Eliakim," who displaces Shebna, another servant who entertains ideas of grandeur. God invests Eliakim with the "keys of the house of David: when he opens none shall shut, when he shuts none shall open." This sealing power enables Eliakim to act as a "father" or savior to God's people. God "fastens him as a nail in a sure place, and he will be a throne of glory to the house of his Father" (Isaiah 22:20–24).

Upon that *nail*, moreover, hang "vessels" large and small—"his descendants and posterity"—who depend on him for safety (Isaiah 22:24). God spares these and other "vessels" from destruction when the Assyrian archtyrant commences his work of world genocide (Isaiah 52:11). Meanwhile, the first *nail* in a sure place—the servant's vainglorious contemporary—is

released from office, and those who depend on him are “cut off” (Isaiah 22:19, 25). That scenario has a type in David’s replacing Saul and is identical with one Jesus predicts, in which a “faithful and wise servant” replaces an “evil servant” before Jesus’ second coming (Matthew 24:44–51).

### **Jehovah/Savior—Source of the Waters of Life**

When God says, “Attention, all who thirst; come for water! You who have no money, come and buy food, that you may eat” (Isaiah 55:1), he is responding to preachers of his word who “leave the hungry soul empty” and “deprive the thirsty [soul] of drink” (Isaiah 32:6). By pointing his people to his covenant, he leads them to a restoration of its blessings (Isaiah 55:3). In that end-time context, God’s covenant subsists in his servant, whom God appoints as “a witness to the nations, a prince and lawgiver of the peoples” (Isaiah 55:3–4; compare 42:6; 49:8). As mediator of God’s covenant, the servant guides people to “food” and “water” during a dearth.

As forerunner of Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth, the servant summons God’s people who repent to return from dispersion in an exodus to Zion (Isaiah 55:5–13). Just as Israel sang a Song of Salvation following its exodus out of Egypt (Exodus 15:1–21), so do God’s people following the new exodus: “In the God of my salvation I will trust without fear; for Jehovah was my strength and my song when he became my salvation. Then shall you rejoice in drawing water from the fountains of salvation” (Isaiah 12:2–3; compare 11:10–16). Symbolizing the Waters of Life, water typifies God’s covenant blessing (Isaiah 35:6–7; 41:17–18; 44:3–4; 49:8–10).

### **“Waiting for Jehovah”—Key to Deliverance**

To those who prove loyal to Israel’s God, the time of waiting for his coming to reign on the earth may seem interminable as all human support systems collapse around them. And yet, waiting for and hoping in Jehovah divides the righteous from

the wicked—those blessed of God from those cursed: “Then will Jehovah delay [his coming] that he may favor you; out of mercy toward you he will remain aloof. For Jehovah is the God of justice; blessed are all who wait for him. . . . Though my Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall your Teacher remain hidden no longer, but your eyes shall see the Master” (Isaiah 30:18, 20).

Songs of Salvation end the waiting: “In that day you will say, ‘This is our God, whom we expected would save us. This is Jehovah for whom we have waited; let us joyfully celebrate his salvation!’” (Isaiah 25:9); “Our city is strong; salvation he has set up as walls and barricades! Open the gates to let in the nation righteous because it keeps faith. Those whose minds are steadfast, [O Jehovah,] you preserve in perfect peace, for in you they are secure” (Isaiah 26:1–3). God rewards the waiters: “Your faithfulness in time [of trial] shall prove to be a strength, your wisdom and knowledge your salvation; your fear of Jehovah shall be your riches” (Isaiah 33:6).

### **Jehovah’s Coming in Glory to His Bride Zion**

The marriage covenant has long functioned as a model of God’s covenant with Israel in the writings of the prophets, although most often they depict Israel playing the harlot to Jehovah, her husband (Isaiah 1:21; 57:7–13; Jeremiah 3:1–20; 31:1–32; Ezekiel 16:1–63; 23:1–49; Hosea 4:15). As a result of her unfaithfulness, Israel loses her husband: “Thus says Jehovah: ‘Where is your mother’s bill of divorce with which I cast her out? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you? Surely, by sinning you sold yourselves; because of your crimes was your mother an outcast’” (Isaiah 50:1). At his coming, however, Jehovah renews the covenant with his people Zion:

“Tell the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your Salvation comes, his reward with him’” (Isaiah 62:11); “Be not fearful for you shall not be confounded; be not ashamed for you shall not be disgraced. You shall forget the shame of your youth and

remember no more the reproach of your widowhood. He who espouses you is your Maker, whose name is Jehovah of Hosts; he who redeems you is the Holy One of Israel, who is called the God of all the earth. Jehovah calls you back as a spouse forsaken and forlorn, a wife married in youth only to be rejected . . . . I forsook you indeed momentarily, but with loving compassion I will gather you up" (Isaiah 54:4-7).

### **The Prophetic Idea of the One and the Many**

A key scriptural concept parallels the spiritual and physical experiences of a patriarch, king, or leader with those of his people: what happens to the one, happens to the many; what he does, they do. And so forth. As Israel's Messiah unjustly suffers pain and humiliation before he is exalted as King of Zion, for example (Isaiah 52:7-10; 53:2-10), and as God's end-time servant is "marred" before God heals and exalts him (Isaiah 52:13-15; 57:18-19), so God's people suffer pain and humiliation before God heals and exalts them (Isaiah 51:7, 17-23; 52:1-3; 54:4-14; 61:7). Those unwilling to follow that pattern can't attain the same exaltation as those who do.

Isaiah cites many such parallels. Most are between God's servant and God's repentant people: as the servant calls upon God, so do they (Isaiah 41:25; 55:6; 58:9); as God heals him, so he heals them (Isaiah 30:26; 57:19); as God anoints him and fills him with his Spirit, so he does them (Isaiah 42:1; 44:3; 48:16; 59:21; 61:1, 3); as he declares good tidings, so do they (Isaiah 40:9; 41:27; 52:7); as God calls him from afar, so he calls them (Isaiah 41:2, 9, 25; 43:5-6; 46:11; 49:12; 60:4, 9); as he experiences God's salvation, so do they (Isaiah 12:2-3; 25:9; 49:8; 61:10); as he restores ruins and rebuilds God's temple, so do they (Isaiah 44:26, 28; 58:12; 61:4; 66:1).

### **Eunuchs, Aliens—God's End-Time Servants**

The major end-time role certain "servants" of God fulfill in preparing a people for the coming of Jehovah to reign on the

earth begs the question, Who are these servants and where do they come from? Because they first appear in the Book of Isaiah (Isaiah 54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65:8–9, 13–15; 66:14) *after* God commissions his end-time servant (Isaiah 41:27; 42:1; 44:26; 49:3–6; 50:10; 52:13; 53:11), the servant’s connection with them seems self-evident. Parallel roles of God’s servant and these additional servants confirm this—what he does, they do: as he serves as a proxy savior to God’s people (Isaiah 42:6; 49:3–13), so do they (Isaiah 63:17; 65:8).

Terms designating God’s servants also appear *after* God’s servant begins his mission. These include God’s “watchmen” who herald Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth (Isaiah 52:7–8); God’s “priests” and “ministers” who mourn in Zion and endure persecution (Isaiah 61:3–7); and (spiritual) “kings” and “queens” of the Gentiles who gather God’s sons and daughters from exile in a great end-time exodus to Zion (Isaiah 49:10–12, 17–23; 60:3–4, 9–11, 16). Most telling are certain “eunuchs” and “aliens” who “hold fast to my covenant,” who “choose to do what I will” so “that they may be his *servants*” (Isaiah 56:3–6; emphasis added; compare Matthew 19:12).

### **Kings and Queens of the Gentiles—Saviors**

Olive tree allegories representing God’s people Israel in the writings of the prophets set in relief the relationship between Israel and the Gentiles. The Gentiles are given the chance to become God’s covenant people. In the end, however, most renege on their commitment and are “cut off” (compare Romans 11). A redeeming thing about the Gentiles’ being grafted into the tree, however, is that those who remain with the tree do so because they nurture God’s people Israel. When the Jews rejected Jesus, his disciples took the gospel to the Gentiles. In the end-time, that situation is reversed, as those Gentiles who remain faithful restore it to the house of Israel.

Still, the kings and queens of the Gentiles who act as Israel’s “foster fathers” and “nursing mothers” (Isaiah 49:23;

60:3–16) are undoubtedly not pure Gentiles either. Because many descendants of Israel assimilated into the Gentiles through the centuries, those end-time saviors of God's people in all likelihood fall into the category of assimilated Israelites. Nor is Isaiah speaking of political kings and queens. Isaiah's role model of a savior-king is Hezekiah, who ministers to his people and intercedes with God on their behalf when Assyria conquers the world and invades the Promised Land. Like Hezekiah's, theirs is a spiritual role, not a political one.

### **Rising to the Occasion—The Model of Moses**

When the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob multiply into a numerous people in Egypt, a new Pharaoh arises who fears them, so he subjects them to hard bondage. After that bondage serves its purpose of humbling them, however, "God heard their groanings, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And God looked upon the people of Israel, and God had respect to them" (Exodus 2:24–25). God's covenant with their ancestors to preserve their descendants requires him to deliver the people of Israel for their ancestors' sake. Just how God delivers them establishes a pattern that repeats itself at the end of the world.

Throughout his interventions in human history, God tests the loyalties of his children, not only toward himself but also toward each other. While some, like Egypt's Pharaoh, betray and cruelly oppress people, others such as Moses demonstrate extraordinary loyalty toward God and toward their peoples. Isaiah's end-time scenario provides just such a setting for God to test his children's loyalties. As God works through human agents to bring about the end-time restoration of his covenant people, some rise to the occasion on the model of Moses while others follow Pharaoh's pattern of laboring—just as intensely—in their attempts to thwart and defeat God's plan.

## 10. THE MILLENNIAL AGE

**A Return to Chaos and God's New Creation**

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). But he didn't create them out of nothing—*ex nihilo*—as some contend. Before his creation, chaos ruled, consisting of the physical elements of "earth" and "waters" in a disorganized state—"formless and unorganized"—both "above the firmament" and "under the firmament" (Genesis 1:2, 6). God's Spirit's "moving" upon these elements brought about their organization or re-creation: God "measured out the waters," "gauged the heavens," and "compiled the earth's dust by measure" (Isaiah 40:12). Isaiah duplicates that pattern in a plethora of chaos/creation cycles in his book.

God's new creation of the heavens and the earth (Isaiah 65:17), too, follows a return to chaos. Chaos takes the form of cosmic cataclysm and the reduction of nations and cities to "dust" and "flying chaff" in a fiery conflagration (Isaiah 5:24; 13:13; 17:12–14; 24:19–20; 26:5; 29:5–6; 33:11–12). The new creation again consists of God's Spirit and creative word acting upon the elements and on all flesh (Isaiah 40:6–8, 12–13)—God is he "who frames and suspends the heavens, who gives form to the earth and its creatures, the breath of life to the people upon it, spirit to those who walk on it" (Isaiah 42:5); his Spirit regenerates all things (Isaiah 32:15; 44:3–4; 57:15).

**God's Deliverance of a Righteous Remnant**

To many, the idea of a "remnant" of God's people surviving God's Day of Judgment—after which "little of mankind remains" (Isaiah 24:6)—hasn't seemed too threatening as they simply imagine themselves to be a part of that remnant. But when taking a second look at who constitutes the remnant of God's people that lives into a millennial age of peace, it appears that those who *assume* they will be so privileged will not be among them. For one thing, those comprising the remnant are



God's "poor" and "lowly" (Isaiah 11:4; 14:30; 25:4; 26:6; 29:19; 41:17). For another, they are people who exercise strict personal integrity (Isaiah 33:14–15).

God's remnant "eat[s] cream and honey"—a food of nomads—with the son Immanuel when Assyria, a world power from the North, invades all lands (Isaiah 7:14–22; 8:6–10; 37:18, 30–32). God's remnant consists of those who return in an exodus from the four directions of the earth and of those who bring them (Isaiah 11:10–12, 15–16; 49:22–23; 60:4–11). God's remnant is small: "Though your people, O Israel, be as the sands of the sea, only a remnant will return; although annihilation is decreed, it shall overflow with righteousness. For my Lord, Jehovah of Hosts, will carry out the utter destruction decreed upon the whole earth" (Isaiah 10:22–23).

### **Building the Temple before Jehovah Comes**

Building the temple from which Jehovah reigns is an event that commences with the restorative mission of God's end-time servant. Of course, when Jehovah comes he won't reside in the temple day and night but appear there from time to time to direct the affairs of his kingdom on the earth: "Thus says Jehovah: 'The heavens are my throne and the earth is my footstool. What house would you build me? What would serve me as a place of rest? These are all things my hand has made, and thus all came into being,' says Jehovah. 'And yet I have regard for those who are of a humble and contrite spirit and who are vigilant for my word'" (Isaiah 66:1–2).

With such souls, God resides: "I dwell on high in the holy place and with him who is humble and lowly in spirit" (Isaiah 57:15). God's servant—who follows the types of Moses, Cyrus, and others—is the one who builds the temple: ". . . who fulfills the word of his servant, achieves the aims of his messengers, who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be reinhabited,' and of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be rebuilt, their ruins I will restore,' who says to the deep, 'Become dry; I am drying up your currents,'

who says of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd; he will do whatever I will.’ He will say of Jerusalem that it must be rebuilt, its temple foundations relaid” (Isaiah 44:26–28).

### **Resurrection Morning and Non-Resurrection**

Isaiah’s end-time scenario includes the resurrection of God’s elect who have passed away: “Your dead shall live when their bodies arise. [You will say to them,] ‘Awake, and sing for joy, you who abide in the dust: your dew is the dew of sunrise!’ For the earth shall cast up its dead” (Isaiah 26:19). Zion/Jerusalem’s “rising from the dust” similarly includes the idea of resurrection (Isaiah 52:2). Word links between the two passages—“rising” (*qwm*) from the “dust” (*āpār*)—establish the context in which resurrection occurs: at the end-time reversal of circumstances between Zion and Babylon. As the earth regenerates, so do God’s elect (Isaiah 65:17–25).

Death passes from the earth when the wicked are gone and people no longer transgress: “He will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the shroud that shrouds all nations, by abolishing death forever. My Lord Jehovah will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the reproach of his people from throughout the earth” (Isaiah 25:7–8). Isaiah’s Perdition category, on the other hand, sees the opposite: “O Jehovah, our God, lords other than you have ruled over us, but you alone we recall by name. They are dead, to live no more, spirits who will not resurrect; you have appointed them to destruction, wiping out all recollection of them” (Isaiah 26:13–14).

### **“The Whole Earth Is at Rest and at Peace!”**

Millennia of strife on the earth come to a close when the forces of evil are finally put down and tyranny ends: “Now the whole earth is at rest and at peace; there is jubilant celebration!” (Isaiah 14:7). That day will nonetheless have seen evil and tyranny reach their zenith. Never was there a time before it nor would be after it when such wickedness prevailed. On

a parallel with it, on the other hand, comes a corresponding good—when righteousness reaches such a degree as to overpower the evil, preparing the way for Jehovah to come. His people's fulfilling the terms of his covenants in that day causes Jehovah to intervene wondrously to deliver them.

A main focus of evil before Jehovah comes is the king of Assyria/Babylon, the archtyrant who causes worldwide devastation in the course of conquering the world. Jehovah's coming as King of Zion directly counters this Antichrist's fall. The archtyrant's departure brings to an end a war to end all wars: "They will beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks: nation will not lift the sword against nation, nor will they learn warfare any more" (Isaiah 2:4); "Tyranny will no more be heard of in your land, nor dispossession or disaster within your borders; you will regard salvation as your walls and homage as your gates" (Isaiah 60:18).

### **Jehovah's Millennial Reign—A New Paradise**

Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth will see an entire transformation of the earth and its inhabitants. Those who survive the destruction of the wicked that marks the end of the world will live in conditions perhaps similar to ones seen in near-death experiences of heaven, although admittedly it is heaven's lower levels that are most often seen. The millennial age will be joyous: "Jehovah is comforting Zion, bringing solace to all her ruins; he is making her wilderness like Eden, her desert as the garden of Jehovah. Joyful rejoicing takes place there, thanksgiving with the voice of song" (Isaiah 51:3). Harmony will prevail among men and beasts (Isaiah 11:6–9).

Jehovah's coming, however, won't happen by chance or because God is bound by a timetable. What occasions that event—and what qualifies people to inherit Paradise—is their ascent to the spiritual levels of Zion/Jerusalem and beyond and their physical preparation in gathering from exile to receive their God. Until his people attain Paradise as a covenant

blessing—a blessing stemming from their keeping the law of his covenant—Jehovah cannot come. While those who imagine otherwise will be disappointed, those who use the trials that precede Jehovah’s coming as a means of purifying and sanctifying their lives may qualify for that glorious age.

### **The Righteous Dwell in Jehovah’s Presence**

In the pattern of patriarchs and prophets of old—with whom God walked and talked—only persons who qualify on account of their exceeding righteousness “dwell in the presence of Jehovah” (Isaiah 23:18). For those who prove loyal to him through the vicissitudes that overtake the world in its most evil hour, his glorious coming will prove an immense relief: “Your sun shall set no more, nor your moon wane. To you Jehovah will be an endless light when your days of mourning are fulfilled” (Isaiah 60:20). Arid lands will change to a paradisiacal state, so much that “the glory of Jehovah and the splendor of our God they shall see [there]” (Isaiah 35:1–2).

The earth will transform at his presence: “The splendor of Lebanon shall become yours—cypresses, pines, and firs together—to beautify the site of my sanctuary, to make glorious the place of my feet” (Isaiah 60:13). Peoples will come from afar to pay him homage: “My house shall be known as a house of prayer for all nations” (Isaiah 56:7). Those who serve him at all costs, he blesses accordingly: “‘As the new heavens and the new earth which I make shall endure before me,’ says Jehovah, ‘so shall your offspring and name endure. And New Moon after New Moon, Sabbath after Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me’” (Isaiah 66:22–23).

### **The Joy of the Saints—The Past Is Forgotten**

The ushering in of the millennial age will be a time of great joy for the Zion/Jerusalem category of God’s people and categories higher—for those who prove loyal until Jehovah comes on earth to reign: “In that day you will say, ‘I praise you, O

Jehovah. Although you have been angry with me, your anger is turned away and you have consoled me. In the God of my salvation I will trust without fear; for Jehovah was my strength and my song when he became my salvation. Then shall you rejoice in drawing water from the fountains of salvation.' . . . Shout and sing for joy, O inhabitants of Zion, for renowned among you is the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 12:1-3, 6).

The joy of God's servants will distinguish them from enemies: "My servants shall rejoice indeed, while you shall be dismayed. My servants shall shout indeed, for gladness of heart, while you shall cry out with heartbreak" (Isaiah 65:13-14); "The troubles of the past shall be forgotten and hidden from my eyes. See, I create new heavens and a new earth; former events shall not be remembered or recalled to mind. Rejoice, then, and be glad forever in what I create. See, I create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will delight in Jerusalem, rejoice in my people; no more shall be heard there the sound of weeping or the cry of distress." (Isaiah 65:16-19).

### **Physical Regeneration in the Millennial Age**

Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth brings with it a complete metamorphosis of all that lives. Existence as we know it entirely disappears as all life becomes new. Living things regenerate and sickness passes away: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame leap like deer, and the tongue of the dumb shout for joy. Water shall break forth in the wilderness and streams [flow] in the desert. The land of mirages shall become one of lakes, the thirsty place springs of water; in the haunt of howling creatures [shall marshes break out], in the reserves shall come rushes and reeds" (Isaiah 35:5-7).

Jehovah's coming touches people collectively and individually: "I dwell on high in the holy place and with him who is humble and lowly in spirit, refreshing the spirits of the lowly, reviving the hearts of the humble" (Isaiah 57:15); "Your heart

shall rejoice to see it, your limbs flourish like sprouting grass” (Isaiah 66:14); “I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, my blessing upon your posterity. They shall shoot up like grass among streams of water, like willows by running brooks” (Isaiah 44:3–4). Life lengthens: “The lifetime of my people shall be as the lifetime of a tree; my chosen ones shall outlast the work of their hands” (Isaiah 65:22).

### **Jehovah’s Government of the Millennial Age**

Types of God’s government that existed anciently combine to provide an idea of God’s government in the millennial age. One example is that of Moses and Israel’s judges: “I will restore my *hand* over you and smelt away your dross as in a crucible, and remove all your alloy. I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as in the beginning. After this you shall be called the City of *Righteousness*, a faithful city” (Isaiah 1:25–26; emphasis added). The parallel verbs “I will restore” (*ibid.*) show God’s simultaneous appointment of his end-time servant—God’s *hand* and *Righteousness*—and of additional righteous “judges” who rule as one.

Similar models appear elsewhere: “A king shall reign in righteousness and rulers rule with justice” (Isaiah 32:1); “The moon will blush and the sun be put to shame, when Jehovah of Hosts manifests his reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory in the presence of his elders” (Isaiah 24:23). Although Jehovah rules as King in the millennial age (*ibid.*, Isaiah 33:17, 22; 43:15; 44:6; 52:7), he doesn’t rule alone. God’s end-time servant and other servants—all who follow King Hezekiah’s pattern of serving as proxy saviors of their peoples—rule with him as Zion’s kings and queens (Isaiah 9:6–7; 11:1–5; 16:6; 37:15–20; 51:5; 60:3, 10–11, 16–17; 62:2).

### **Lands of Inheritance in the Millennial Age**

In this modern, entrepreneurial age of financial investments and rabid speculation, the biblical idea of permanent

lands of inheritance has virtually been lost sight of. When Israel conquers the Promised Land anciently under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, God allocates lands to the twelve tribes of Israel, each with its clans and families, as permanent inheritances (Joshua 10–21). Even when houses and lands are sold because of hardship, they revert back to their rightful inheritors every fiftieth year—the year of the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:23–41). Only later, when Israel breaks the terms of God's covenant, are properties sold and never reclaimed.

In the earth's millennial age, God's people again receive permanent lands of inheritance: "They who seek refuge in me shall possess the earth and receive an inheritance in my holy mountain" (Isaiah 57:13); "Your entire people shall be righteous; they shall inherit the earth forever—they are the branch I have planted, the work of my hands, in which I am glorified" (Isaiah 60:21); "You shall spread abroad to the right and to the left; your offspring shall dispossess the nations and resettle the desolate cities" (Isaiah 54:3). Just as he appointed Joshua, so God appoints his end-time servant to "restore the Land and re-portion the desolate estates" (Isaiah 49:8).

### **Paradise—Becoming New Adams and Eves**

A key restorative feature of the earth's millennial age is a new Paradise: "A Spirit from on high shall be poured out on us; the desert shall become productive land and lands now productive be reckoned as brushwood" (Isaiah 32:15). "I will open up streams in barren hill country, springs in the midst of the plains; I will turn the desert into lakes, parched lands into fountains of water. I will bring cedars and acacias, myrtles and oleasters in the wilderness; I will place cypresses, elms and box trees in the steppes" (Isaiah 41:18–19); "The wolf and the lamb will graze alike, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; as for the serpent, dust shall be its food" (Isaiah 65:25).

The fact that God's elect inherit a new Paradise in the millennial age tells us a lot about Adam and Eve's inheriting

Paradise. As God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and is no respecter of persons, what he did for his children in the past he will also do for them in the future. Or, conversely, what he will do for his children in the future is what he did for them in the past. Indeed, Adam and Eve's creation before God put them in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:7–8) resembles something very similar to what his elect experience when God commands them to “awake” and “arise” from the dead (Isaiah 26:19) and they likewise qualify to live in Paradise.

### **Translation of Persons in the Millennial Age**

Although Isaiah doesn't explicitly predict the transformation of God's elect people to a translated state, he does so implicitly. Biblical examples of translated persons include Enoch, Elijah, and John. Isaiah identifies that category of persons with the seraphs who accompany Jehovah, whom he sees in the temple (Isaiah 6:1–7). Part II of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure (Isaiah 6–8; 36–40), moreover, shows Isaiah's attaining seraph status as a model of spiritual ascent. Lastly, Isaiah identifies God's *arm*—his end-time servant—as the “angel of his presence” (Isaiah 51:9–10; 63:9) and describes him in messianic terms as a “fiery flying seraph” (Isaiah 14:29).

Apart from these depictions of a seraph category, other clues allude to God's elect attaining a translated state. Those who keep God's law and word, who participate in an end-time exodus to Zion, for example (Isaiah 58:6–13), inherit more than an earthbound state: “Then shall you delight in Jehovah, and I will make you traverse the heights of the earth and nourish you with the heritage of Jacob your father” (Isaiah 58:14). In the pattern of Isaiah, who sees God “enthroned above the earth's sphere” (Isaiah 40:22), their view is no longer from below but from above: “Your eyes shall behold the King in his glory and view the expanse of the earth” (Isaiah 33:17).



### **The Enduring New Heavens and New Earth**

The new heavens and new earth Israel's God creates—which are the norm of life in the earth's millennial age (Isaiah 65:17–25; 66:22–23)—fulfill the hopes and prayers of numberless righteous souls who have inhabited it, who, through their blood, sweat, and tears, have helped to redeem it from its corrupt and fallen state. Their cumulative merits finally cause God to “reward” them with a more glorious existence than the one humanity has known thus far (Isaiah 35:3–10; 40:10; 61:7–11; 62:8–12). God never intended the earth he made to remain in its current degraded condition. From the beginning, God destined it, too, to ascend to higher states of blessedness.

He who “suspends the heavens, who gives form to the earth” (Isaiah 44:24)—who “suspends the heavens like a canopy, stretching them out as a tent to dwell in” (Isaiah 40:22), who “frames and suspends the heavens, who gives form to the earth and its creatures, the breath of life to the people upon it, spirit to those who walk on it” (Isaiah 42:5), who “formed the earth, who made it secure and organized it, not to remain a chaotic waste, but designed it to be inhabited” (Isaiah 45:18)—he destined it as the inheritance of his elect (Isaiah 60:19–21; 61:9; 65:9). What is of man passes away, but what is of God “endures forever” (Isaiah 40:8; 51:8; 55:13; 66:22).



## PART SEVEN

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO ISAIAH

**F**amiliarity with the names of nations and persons who appear in the Book of Isaiah, with the book's underlying prophetic and theological concepts, and with the terminology associated with analyzing its contents greatly helps in broadening our understanding of Isaiah's message.

**Abraham**—The son of Terah of Ur, in southern Mesopotamia, whom God gave the Land of Canaan for his and his descendants' inheritance.

**Abrahamic Covenant**—God's unconditional covenant with Abraham, Israel's righteous progenitor, whom God promised an innumerable posterity.

**Adam and Eve**—Humanity's first parents, who inherited Paradise as a covenant blessing and whom God commanded to multiply in the earth.

**Adultery**—A person's unfaithfulness to his or her spouse through sexual intercourse, which symbolizes unfaithfulness by God's people to their God.

**Ahaz**—A Davidic king who ruled Judah in the time of Isaiah (742–727 B.C.), who made himself a vassal of Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria.

**Allegory**—A figurative representation of an event or truth in which one thing is revealed under the likeness or similitude of another.

**Analytical Commentary**—Of the Book of Isaiah, a commentary that analyzes its literary features rather than relying on current doctrinal opinion.

**Ancient Near East**—The ancient world that provides the historical setting for events recorded in the Bible as they impacted Israel's history.

**Ancient Near Eastern Literature**—A body of texts from early Egypt to Mesopotamia that sheds light on the ancient world's history and culture.

**Ancient Precedents as Types**—First-time events in ancient history that provide models of future events, particularly ones occurring in the end-time.

**Angel from the East**—The angel appointed over the sealing of 144,000 end-time servants of God with the Father's name on their foreheads.

**Angels**—Messengers from God and other holy beings who form a hierarchy of souls who minister to persons in heaven and on earth.

**Anger and Wrath**—Metaphorical pseudonyms or aliases of the king of Assyria/Babylon, who personifies these attributes when fulfilling his end-time role.

**Animal Sacrifice**—A priest's ritual slaughter of a lamb or clean animal, symbolic of Messiah's sacrifice that atones for his people's sins.

**Anointing of a King**—A prophet's pouring of consecrated oil upon the head of one chosen of God for the purpose of ordaining him king.

**Antichrist**—A doctrine that seeks to supplant God and what is of God as personified by an end-time archtyrant who attempts to destroy God's people.

**Antithetical Parallel**—A Hebrew poetic form in which two parallel statements or components of a verse express opposite or antithetical ideas.

**Apocalyptic Prophecy**—Predictions of end-time events, often written in code, as in the books of Isaiah, Daniel, 4 Ezra, and Revelation.

**Apocalyptic Prophets**—Prophets such as Isaiah, Daniel, and John, whom God showed the end of world and the coming millennial age of peace.

**Apostasy of God's People**—The end-time alienation of God's covenant people from the pure knowledge of God and from keeping his commandments.

**Archetypes**—Ancient or prototypical models that assist in defining end-time ones, such as Zion and Babylon functioning as archetypes of good and evil.

**Archtyrant**—An end-time king of Assyria/Babylon who conquers the world and puts survivors in bondage as did his ancient counterparts.

**Arm of Flesh**—A metaphor signifying reliance on political, ecclesiastical, or other human support systems and counsel instead of on God.

**Arms of God**—Two persons, Jehovah and his servant, through whom God intervenes to redeem his end-time people spiritually and temporally.

**Ascending Spiritual Levels**—Five of seven levels Isaiah identifies through which people may ascend, the other two being descending levels.

**Ascension of Isaiah**—An ancient text attributed to Isaiah that describes his spirit's ascent to the seventh heaven, where he sees God.

**Ascent Phase**—A stage of spiritual ascent or rebirth that follows a descent phase in which God tries the loyalties of those who covenant with him.

**Assimilated Lineages of Israel**—Descendants of Israel who intermingled with Gentile nations and lost their identity as Israelites.

**Assyria**—The dominant militaristic world power of Isaiah's day, which Isaiah uses a type of a tyrannical end-time militaristic world power.

**Assyrian Empire**—The ancient Near Eastern empire that dominated the known world in Isaiah's day and that preceded the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

**Atonement for Transgression**—Amends made for breaking God's law and word, anciently by a proxy sacrifice as the type of a proxy savior.

**Authorship of the Book of Isaiah**—One author as attested by multiple layered literary structures and a network of rhetorical and typological links.

**Baal Myth**—The Ugaritic story of the storm god Baal who defeats the gods *Yamm/Nabar* and *Mot* and inherits the throne of his father god *'El*.

**Babylon**—In the Book of Isaiah, an entity structurally juxtaposed with Zion, representing all that is not Zion, which God condemns to destruction.

**Babylon/Chaldea**—In the Book of Isaiah, a spiritual category of idolaters, oppressors, and tyrants to which people descend by choosing evil.

**Babylon the Great**—John the Beloved's version of Isaiah's Greater Babylon, the whore who represents wickedness and worldly institutions.

**Babylon Ideology**—The self-exaltation and exercise of supremacy or unrighteous dominion, which God makes an end of in his Day of Judgment.

**Babylonian Captivity**—The Jewish exile and bondage in Babylon (597–537 B.C.) implemented by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and ended by Cyrus.

**Babylonian Empire**—(1) The old Babylonian empire of Hammurabi (1792–1750 B.C.); (2) the Neo-Babylonian empire of Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 B.C.)

**Benediction**—The prevalence and enjoyment of covenant blessings that result from keeping God's law and word or the terms of his covenant.

**Bible**—A corpus of sixty-six books comprising the Old and New Testaments accepted by a majority of Christians as the revealed word of God.

**Bible as Literature**—An approach to the Bible from a literary or intellectual standpoint, with or without a belief in its divine origins.

**Biblical Prophecy**—Predictions of the future contained in the Bible, whether relevant to a prophet's own day, to the end-time, or to both.

**Biblical Tradition**—Stories, laws, customs, concepts, or teachings from Old and New Testament times that we learn about in the Bible.

**Bifid Structure**—In the Book of Isaiah, the text's division into two parallel halves, each consisting of seven categories of matching subject matter.

**Biographical Material**—Narrative that deals with historical persons and events as distinct from poetic material or explicit prophecies.

**Bird of Prey from the East**—A metaphor of God's end-time servant, an agent of Israel's redemption who reestablishes justice and righteousness.

**Birthpangs of the Messiah**—A time of travail among God's covenant people, especially at the end of the world before God sends a deliverer.

**Birthright**—A privilege inherited by the eldest son, who receives a double portion of his father's estate and assumes his role of family protector.

**Blossoming Wilderness**—An end-time event marked by covenant curse reversals at the time God's elect return from exile in a new exodus to Zion.

**Bondage**—A state of subjection or slavery to an enemy, a covenant curse under which God's end-time people are oppressed as they were in Egypt.

**Bondage in Egypt**—The slavery of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob during Egypt's 19th Dynasty, from which God delivered them.

**Bonds of Love**—Love between parties to a covenant, which, when springing from charity, embraces ever higher covenants and reaches out to all.

**Book of Daniel**—A book composed of six chapters of narrative and six of visions written by the prophet Daniel, a Jewish exile in Babylon.



**Book of Isaiah**—The largest and most complex book of prophecy in the Bible, consisting of oracles and writings by the prophet Isaiah (ca. 742–701 B.C.)

**Book of Revelation**—The vision of the “Day of Jehovah” by John the Beloved, who encoded in his writings the end-time events he saw and heard.

**Brethren**—In the Book of Isaiah, a category of persons holding ecclesiastical authority who ostracize God’s servants who are vigilant for his word.

**Bride and Groom Imagery**—A prophetic representation of God’s relationship with his people resembling a marriage between husband and wife.

**Cataclysmic Destruction**—The world’s end-time desolation in the pattern of ancient events such as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Celestial Accession**—God’s endowment of exceedingly righteousness individuals with divine powers and his assigning them heavenly roles.

**Chaos and Creation**—A cyclical pattern in which wickedness leads to disorder and desolation but from which God brings forth a new creation.

**Chaos Motifs**—The prophetic use of terms such as “dust,” “chaff,” and “mud” to describe people and institutions that are reduced to nothing.

**Chiasm**—A literary pattern consisting of parallel statements or components repeated in reverse order, often revealing a central idea.

**Christian Messiah**—Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, who atoned for humanity’s sins by his sufferings in Gethsemane and death on the cross.

**Chronology**—A sequence of events that follow a timeline from earlier to later, whether they occurred in the past or will do so in the future.

**Classical Prophecy**—Hebrew prophecy of events that took place in ancient Israel and in the neighboring nations of the ancient Near East.

**Classical Prophets**—The Hebrew prophets of the Bible from Isaiah to Malachi, who prophesied before, during, and after Israel's exile.

**Cloud of Glory**—The pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night that led Israel's wilderness wandering and which later rested on the temple.

**Codenames**—Names of ancient nations and persons who function as types of end-time ones, who perform the same or similar roles.

**Collective Covenant**—A binding contract such as the Sinai Covenant, which God makes with a people, whether it is conditional or unconditional.

**Commandments of God**—The terms of God's covenants in the form of laws, precepts, and ordinances that are designed to bless the lives of his people.

**Common Enemy**—A name that designates an enemy or adversary of those with whom God makes covenants, whom God regards as his enemy.

**Composite Figure**—An end-time person or entity that possesses the character traits and fulfills the roles of more than one person or entity anciently.

**Composite of Types**—A combination of several precedents or types from the past that a prophet uses to predict a single end-time counterpart.

**Concept of the One and the Many**—A prophetic pattern in which a people experience collectively what their ancestor or king experiences individually.

**Concordance**—An alphabetized list of words in the order they appear in a text, whose comparison helps determine an author's definition of a word.

**Conditional Covenant**—A binding contract God makes with a person or people, whose promised blessings depend on their keeping the covenant's terms.

**Conquest**—The forceful overthrow and takeover of a land, commonly from its wicked inhabitants, whether by God's people or by enemies.

**Conservative Scholarship**—Scholarship that considers the Bible to be the revealed word of God, that believes in God, angels, and prophets.

**Cosmos**—The heavens in all their variety, revealing a hierarchy of celestial bodies from cosmic debris to moons, planets, suns, and galaxies.

**Cosmic Cataclysm**—Upheaval or disturbance of the cosmic order, particularly as it affects the earth during God's end-time Day of Judgment.

**Cosmic Vision**—A vision of the end from the beginning, generally received by a person on Isaiah's seraph level and often recorded in code.

**Covenant**—In biblical usage, commonly a binding agreement or contract God makes with a person or people, in which the lesser party is the beneficiary.

**Covenant Blessings**—The benefits or benefaction God promises a person or people that accrue when they keep the terms of his covenant.

**Covenant Curses**—The plagues or misfortunes that happen to those who break the terms of God’s covenant or who violate the rights of his people.

**Covenant with Death**—A metaphor of ecclesiastical leaders’ dependence on political collusion instead of on God’s word as vested in his end-time servant.

**Covenant of Grant**—An emperor’s unconditional promise of an enduring dynasty to a vassal who has proven loyal under all conditions.

**Covenant of Life**—God’s unconditional covenant of life and peace with his end-time people who repent and prove loyal under all conditions.

**Covenant Love**—The manifestation of a person’s or people’s love for God as expressed in their keeping his commandments or law of his covenant.

**Covenant People**—A people with whom God contracts or covenants to be their God and they his people as under the terms of the Sinai Covenant.

**Covenant Terminology**—The use of legal terms or special words that define a covenant relationship and delineate the law of the covenant.

**Covenant Theology**—The principles or doctrines that define a covenant relationship with God and outline its spiritual and temporal provisions.

**Covenantal Benediction**—A state of blessedness or benefaction that results when a person or people keep the terms or law of God’s covenant.

**Covenantal Heritage**—The blessed spiritual and temporal legacy that passes down the generations from those with whom God makes covenants.

**Covenantal Malediction**—A cursed state that result from breaking the law of God’s covenant or from violating the rights of his covenant people.

**Creation**—God’s forming the heavens and the earth from chaotic matter and cosmic waters as a place of habitation for his children.

**Creation and Chaos**—The cyclical reversion of created things to a disorganized or de-created state, commonly a consequence of people’s wickedness.

**Creation Motifs**—The prophetic use of terms such as “light” or of imagery such as a regenerating wilderness to signify God’s ongoing creation.

**Creation as Re-creation**—God’s cyclical regeneration of the earth and of those who keep the law of his covenant—often on a parallel with each other.

**Creator**—God as maker of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them for the purpose of housing, teaching, and exalting his children.

**Cumulative Concepts**—Ideas developed through the use of literary devices, which, once they are established, continue to apply thereafter.

**Curse**—A woe or misfortune those who transgress the terms of God’s covenants bring upon themselves, which may be reversed by repenting of transgression.

**Curse Reversals**—God’s turning curses or misfortunes into blessings as his people repent of doing evil and keep the terms of his covenant.

**Cushite Dynasty**—The dynasty of black, Nubian pharaohs (715–663 B.C.) that ruled Egypt in the latter part of Isaiah’s prophetic ministry.

**Cyclical Pattern**—Commonly, a literary pattern in which words, ideas, or motifs appear recurrently in order to convey a prophetic message or truth.

**Cyrus Figure**—An ahistorical composite figure Isaiah creates to predict an end-time servant of God who resembles Cyrus, Moses, and David.

**Cyrus the Persian**—The Persian conqueror of Babylon who permitted Jewish exiles in Babylon to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

**Damnation**—A person's final state of descent to a lower spiritual level for refusing to repent of wickedness, and his inability to ascend beyond it.

**Daniel**—A righteous Jewish exile to Babylon whom King Nebuchadnezzar appointed to high office after he interpreted the king's dream.

**Daughter of Babylon**—The figurative name of a category of people who choose evil as characterized by their idolatry, injustices, and oppression.

**Daughter of Zion**—The figurative name of God's end-time covenant people who ascend to the spiritual level of Zion/Jerusalem and levels higher.

**David**—A son of Jesse, whom Samuel anointed king in place of Saul, who wrote many psalms and instituted Israel's Golden Age.

**Davidic Covenant**—God's covenant with King David and his heirs, in which the king acts as a proxy savior of his people, vouchsafing their protection.

**Davidic King**—A king of the lineage of David, in particular an end-time descendant by the name of David who restores God's people Israel.

**Davidic Servant**—An end-time descendant of David who restores Israel and acts as forerunner of Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth.

**Day of Jehovah**—God's Day of Judgment upon all nations, in which the wicked are destroyed and the righteous delivered in accordance with God's covenants.

**Day of Judgment**—In the Book of Isaiah, three years of retribution on a wicked world preceded by three years of warning, with provision for all who repent.

**Day of Vengeance**—The time of worldwide calamities, when God turns the tables on his people's oppressors and reverses his people's adverse circumstances.

**Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah**—The complete Qumran Isaiah scroll, 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, of St Mark's Monastery, dating to an earlier manuscript from about 200 B.C.

**Death**—The curse of mortality of the body that came into the world through Adam's and Eve's transgression in the Garden of Eden.

**De-creation**—Spiritual, and often physical degeneration that accompanies a person's descent to a lower spiritual level and their refusal to repent.

**Deliverance of the Righteous**—In the Book of Isaiah, God's saving his people who repent from a worldwide destruction in his Day of Judgment.

**Descending Spiritual Levels**—The two lowest of seven spiritual levels that Isaiah identifies, to which people descend by choosing evil.

**Descent of God on the Mount**—Jehovah's end-time descent on Mount Zion to vanquish his enemies, resembling his former descent on Mount Sinai.

**Descent Phase**—A period of trials and tests of loyalty that God orchestrates, which facilitate a person's ascent to a higher spiritual level.

**Destruction by Fire and by the Sword**—The desolation of the world and its inhabitants by an end-time conqueror, the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Destruction of the Wicked**—In the Book of Isaiah, God's elimination from the earth in his Day of Judgment of all who refuse to repent of doing evil.

**Deutero-Isaiah Theory**—Liberal scholars' untenable assumption that an author other than Isaiah wrote the middle section of the Book of Isaiah.

**Deuteronomy**—The fifth book of the Bible, in which Moses takes his leave after reminding Israel of its covenantal obligations toward its God.

**Divine Commission**—God's appointing a person or people to fulfill a spiritual ministry, commonly after they have ascended a spiritual level.

**Divine Empowerment**—God's endowment of a person or people (1) to fulfill a spiritual ministry; or (2) to thwart their enemies' hostile designs.

**Divine Enthronement**—God's investiture of his elect with divine powers as kings and priests in the similitude of Messiah's enthronement as King of Zion.

**Divine Intervention**—God's interposition in humanity's affairs in times of crisis as when evil threatens to overwhelm his people or the world.

**Divine Protection**—Based on the protection clause in the Sinai and David Covenant, God's defense of his people against a mortal threat.



**Divine Revelation**—Truths, laws, or covenants God reveals through his prophets for the benefit of humanity's wellbeing and everlasting happiness.

**Doctrine of the Two Ways**—A concept common to apocalyptic prophecy that sets forth people's two choices: good or evil, life or death.

**Domino Effect**—The end-time phenomenon of prophesied events, which, once they commence, occur in rapid succession like falling dominos.

**Domino Structure**—A literary pattern in which a prophet predicts the same event several times in different combinations with other events.

**Doomsday**—God's end-time destruction of wicked people from the earth, all who refuse to repent of doing evil after they are warned.

**Dragon**—A metaphorical representation of Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great superpower of the world, anciently and in the end-time.

**Dust**—A chaos motif that signifies being reduced to nothing or a non-entity, the end-time destiny of evildoers and evil institutions.

**Earth**—The place where humanity lives presently that is destined to experience two transformations, the first paradisiacal, the second celestial.

**Edom**—Descendants of Esau who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, typifying God's end-time people who do likewise.

**Egypt**—The great superpower in decline of Isaiah's day that typifies the great end-time superpower of the world as Isaiah characterizes it.

**Elect of God**—Persons who repent who attain the spiritual level of God's sons and daughters, who return from dispersion in an end-time exodus to Zion.

**Eliakim**—A steward whom God gives the keys of the house of David in place of another, and who functions as a type of God's end-time servant.

**Elijah**—The prophet taken up into heaven, who attained the spiritual level of seraph and gained power over the elements to minister between the worlds.

**Emperor–Vassal Covenants**—Treaties ancient Near Eastern emperors made with their vassal kings, whose model parallels biblical covenants.

**End of the World**—The end of the earth's current phase, when its wicked inhabitants perish prior to a new, millennial age of peace.

**End-Time**—The period preceding and including the coming of Jehovah to reign on the earth that is characterized by a fulfillment of many prophecies.

**End-Time Exodus**—The return of God's elect from throughout the earth to Zion, where God protects them from enemies in his Day of Judgment.

**End-Time Prophecy**—Predictions of the end of the world, either (1) directly; or (2) indirectly, as in ancient events acting as an allegory of end-time ones.

**End-Time Scenario**—A series of interrelated events foretold by prophets that occur prior to and at the time of Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth.

**End-Time Servant**—God's servant who prepares the way before Jehovah comes to the earth, who restores Israel's twelve tribes to lands of inheritance.

**End-Time Superpowers**—Opposing world powers and alliances of nations who resemble ancient Egypt and Assyria as Isaiah characterizes them.

**Enoch**—The prophet-patriarch who attained the spiritual level of seraph and a translated state, who functions as a type of end-time seraphs.

**Ensign to the Nations**—By Isaiah's definition, a metaphor and alias of God's end-time servant, who rallies God's elect to return from exile.

**Ephraim**—The younger son of Joseph, whom Jacob blessed, whose tribe inherited Israel's birthright and its end-time savior role.

**Eschatology**—Patterns observed or doctrines taught on the subject of end-time events as predicted by Hebrew prophets and Jewish apostles.

**Ethnic Lineages of Israel**—Descendants of Israel's twelve tribes who have mostly kept their racial integrity throughout centuries of exile.

**Everlasting Covenant**—God's unconditional covenant with those who prove loyal to him under all conditions, principally at the end of the world.

**Ezekiel**—The prophet exiled to Babylon who predicted Israel's end-time restoration by a servant of God named David, a descendant of King David.

**Exaltation**—A glorious everlasting inheritance God promises his elect people, all who prove loyal to him under all conditions.

**Exile of Israel**—The removal (1) of Israel's ten northern tribes to Assyria in 722 B.C.; and (2) of the Jewish tribes to Babylon about 586 B.C.

**Exodus**—(1) The second book of the Bible; (2) Israel's exit from Egypt that functions as a type of Israel's end-time exit out of all nations to Zion.

**Expiation of Iniquity**—Paying off the effects of sins (as distinct from God's forgiveness of sins) by suffering the curses of God's covenant.

**Faith in God**—A person's believing in God as his Creator and Savior from all evil as evidenced by his keeping of God's commandments.

**Faithfulness**—The quality of being trustworthy and true in one's relationships with others as personified and exemplified by Jehovah, God of Israel.

**Fairytales Archetypes**—Patterns in fairytales that repeat themselves in the lives of individuals and among God's end-time people.

**Fairytales Parallels**—Storylines, plots, or characters in fairytales that resemble similar ones in Isaiah's prophecy, particularly in the end-time.

**Father for Ever**—A title deriving from God's blessing of Abraham that applies to God's end-time servant and others who assume the role of seraph.

**Father-Son Relationships**—Covenant bonds between God, proxy saviors, and God's people that parallel ancient Near Eastern emperor-vassal relationships.

**Fiery Flying Serpent**—Metaphorical messianic imagery depicting God's end-time servant and others on the spiritual level of seraphs.

**Fire and Sword**—Twin metaphorical pseudonyms or aliases (1) of God's end-time servant; and (2) of his tyrannical counterpart, the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Flood**—The catastrophic inundation of the ancient world that functions as the type of a worldwide desolation by an end-time Assyrian alliance.

**Forerunner of Jehovah's Coming**—God's end-time servant who prepares the way among God's people for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth.

**Forgiveness of Sins**—God's remission of the transgressions of those who repent of doing evil, with its accompanying disburdenment of guilt.

**Free Agency**—The God-given right or freedom of all humanity to choose good or evil, excluding the freedom to choose the consequences.

**Garden of Eden**—The paradisiacal glory Adam and Eve inherited that they forfeited for a time by transgressing God's commandment.

**Genesis**—The first book of the Bible, which recounts God's creation of the heavens and the earth and describes the lives of Israel's ancestors.

**Gentiles in Prophecy**—Non-Israelites and assimilated Israelites who interact with Israel's ethnic lineages, particularly in the end-time.

**Gideon**—A judge in ancient Israel who led a victory by 300 chosen men over 135,000 Midianites and Amalekites who oppressed God's people.

**Glory**—An exalted state God's children may attain by degrees as they keep the terms of his covenants and ascend to higher spiritual levels.

**God**—The divine being who created the heavens and the earth and all that inhabits them, who seeks the everlasting welfare of his children.

**God of Israel**—Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth who covenanted with Israel as a nation that he would be their God and they his people.

**God's Day of Judgment**—An end-time event known as the “Day of Jehovah,” when God destroys the wicked from the earth and delivers the righteous.

**Good News or Gospel**—The doctrine or teachings of God's plan of salvation from all evil that is grounded in Jehovah's atonement for transgression.

**Greater Babylon**—The idea of a multinational entity Isaiah establishes by literary devices that is the enemy and oppressor of God's people Zion.

**Greek Empire**—The ancient Near Eastern empire (323–27 B.C.) that succeeded the Persian Empire and was succeeded by the Roman Empire.

**Hand and Ensign**—Twin metaphorical pseudonyms or aliases (1) of God's end-time servant; and (2) of his tyrannical counterpart, the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Harlot Babylon**—The Woman figure that represents an evil multinational entity that exalts itself over God and his covenant people Zion.

**Harvest Imagery**—Figurative language Isaiah uses to depict God's end-time Day of Judgment upon the wicked of his people and the nations.

**Healing**—A condition of spiritual and temporal wellbeing or blessedness that is synonymous with salvation and that results from repenting of sins.

**Heaven**—The glorious abode God's children inherit according to the degree of their righteousness as symbolized by the order of celestial bodies.

**Hebrew Poetry**—A literary form used in prophetic and homiletic writing that makes use of parallel statements to reveal an embedded message.

**Hebrew Prophecy**—Prophecy by biblical prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, who prophesied within the Hebrew culture and language.

**Hebrew Prophets**—The prophets from Moses to Malachi who received God's word by revelation according to the circumstances of his people.

**Hebrews**—The descendants of Heber, grandson of Shem or Melchizedek, king of Salem, who include Israel's patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**Hell**—A prison for the spirits of unrighteous persons who die, where they suffer divine judgments according to the degree of their wickedness.

**Hezekiah**—A righteous descendant of King David who served as king of Judah and proxy savior of his people in the days of the prophet Isaiah.

**Higher Law**—The good news or gospel, the law of God's covenant kept by Israel's ancestors, which Israel as a nation rejected at Mount Sinai.

**Hierarchy of Ascending Levels**—An order of spiritual categories pertaining to God's covenants, which covenants empower one to ascend to God.

**Historical Background**—The conditions in biblical and ancient Near Eastern history that show the setting in which scriptural events occurred.

**Historical Narrative**—Accounts and stories of events in biblical and ancient Near Eastern history that inform the reader about those times.

**Historical Types**—Precedents of people and events in biblical and ancient Near Eastern history that function as models of end-time ones.

**History as Allegory**—In Hebrew prophecy, events from biblical and ancient Near Eastern history that function as types or models of end-time ones.

**History of Israel**—An account of God's covenant people from their ancestral origins to their inheritance and eventual loss of the Promised Land.

**Hittite Empire**—An ancient Near Eastern empire in Anatolia (*ca.* 1400–1175 B.C.) whose emperor–vassal treaties parallel God's covenants.

**Holistic Structure**—In the Book of Isaiah, a literary structure spanning the entire text that conveys a prophetic message underlying its surface reading.

**Holy Spirit**—God's Spirit with which he endows his righteous children, particularly upon his appointing them to fulfill a spiritual calling.

**Hosea**—First of the Minor Prophets (745–721 B.C.) and the only currently known writing prophet from the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

**House of Israel**—The twelve-tribed people of God, who divided into Israel's Northern and Southern Kingdoms after the death of King Solomon.

**Human Sacrifice**—The ritual slaying of infants, children, or adults by people whose religion has assumed the worst traits of human depravity.

**Humiliation and Exaltation**—The central themes of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure that typify humanity's two alternative final states.



**Idolatry**—The worship or adulation things other than the true God, which practice diverts people away from fulfilling their divine destiny.

**Immanuel**—The portending son who succeeds King Ahaz when Assyria invades the Promised Land, historically fulfilled in King Hezekiah.

**Individual Covenants**—Covenants such as those modeled on the Davidic Covenant, which God makes with persons individually.

**Inheritance and Disinheritance**—Key themes of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure that show the opposite fates of the righteous and the wicked.

**Inheritance of the Promised Land**—A covenant blessing of those who survive God's Day of Judgment and live into the millennial age of peace.

**Iniquity**—The effects of transgression, such as generational dysfunctional patterns, which may be expiated or reversed by righteous living.

**Intercession by the King**—The spiritual role of a righteous king in seeking his people's physical protection by appealing to God on their behalf.

**Interpretive Motifs**—Recurring terms, patterns, or ideas such as chaos and creation that convey an embedded message or meaning.

**Invasion of the Promised Land**—In the Book of Isaiah, Assyria's invasion of the Promised Land as a type of end-time Assyrian invasion.

**Isaac**—The second of Israel's three patriarchs, the only son of Abraham by Sarah, whom Abraham was willing to sacrifice to his God.

**Isaiah**—The prophet who saw God in the temple, who lived during a pivotal period of Israel's history (*ca.* 742–701 B.C.), and who predicted the end of the world.

**Isaiah as Prophet–Poet**—Isaiah as one whose literary skills enabled him to layer many profound prophecies, patterns, and ideas into his writings.

**Israel**—(1) The new name God gave Jacob; and (2) the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with whom God covenanted to be their God and they his people.

**Israelite History**—The story of God's covenant people Israel from their founding through their division into two kingdoms and ultimate exile.

**Israelites**—The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whom Moses led out of bondage in Egypt and who became God's covenant people.

**Israel's Exile and Restoration**—Israel's deportation from its land, first of the Ten Tribes and second of the Jews, and Israel's prophesied return.

**Israel's Return from Exile**—Israel's end-time return from dispersion, including the reunion and restoration of its twelve tribes to promised lands.

**Jacob**—The third of Israel's three patriarchs, the twin son of Isaac, who purchased his brother Esau's birthright for a mess of pottage.

**Jacob/Israel**—A category of believers in Israel's God, from which one may ascend to Zion/Jerusalem or descend to Babylon/Chaldea.

**Jehovah**—The Creator of heaven and earth and Savior-God of Israel, the meaning of whose name (from the Hebrew verb “to be”) implies self-existence.

**Jeremiah**—A prophet from the priestly town of Anathoth, who predicted Judah's exile to Babylon and was mistreated by king and people.

**Jerusalem**—The city David captured from the Jebusites that became the capital of Judea, which fell to the Babylonians and was rebuilt by Jewish returnees.

**Jerusalem Temple**—The house of God built by King Solomon (953 B.C.), destroyed by the Babylonians (587 B.C.), and later rebuilt (516 B.C.).

**Jesus Christ**—Jesus of Nazareth, whose earthly mission, based on literary patterns in the Book of Isaiah, identifies him as Jehovah, the Savior-God of Israel.

**Jewish Messianic Expectations**—The Jewish hope of a temporal savior as predicted by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and other prophets.

**Jews**—In the main, descendants of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, who constituted the Southern Kingdom of Judah after the northern tribes separated.

**Jews in Prophecy**—In the Book of Isaiah, one of three branches of Israel's ethnic lineages whom God restores and acknowledges as his people.

**John the Beloved**—Jesus' evangelist disciple, who attained the spiritual level of seraph and encoded his end-time vision in the Book of Revelation.

**Joseph**—Jacob's birthright son whom his brothers sold as a slave into Egypt but who was appointed ruler of Egypt and became his brothers' savior.

**Joshua**—An Ephraimite descendant of Jacob who led Israel's conquest of the Land of Canaan and divided the land for Israel's inheritance.

**Joy and Rejoicing**—Motifs common to those whom God saves from an end-time destruction and delivers into a millennial age of peace.

**Judah**—The son of Jacob from whom sprang the royal line of David and whose name was assumed by the Southern Kingdom of Judah, or the Jews.

**Judea**—The land comprising the Southern Kingdom of Judah, including its capital city Jerusalem, which was ruled by heirs of King David.

**Judeo-Christian Religion**—Traditional belief systems and practices allegedly stemming from Moses and Jesus as taught and perpetuated today.

**Judge**—In the Book of Isaiah denoting three who judge: (1) Israel's God Jehovah; (2) God's end-time servant; (3) God's end-time servants.

**Judges**—The seventh book of the Bible, which records the acts of twelve judges who judged Israel from the time of Joshua to that of Samuel.

**Justification (1)**—In biblical theology denoting a person's receiving a remission of sins upon his repenting of transgression and being forgiven of God.

**Justification (2)**—A person's vindication from suffering covenant curses when he repents of doing evil and when a proxy savior pays his debt.

**King David**—Israel's preeminent king and writer of psalms, who overthrew Israel's enemies, expanded its dominions, and instituted Israel's Golden Age.

**King as Exemplar**—A king in his role of serving as an example that his people may follow, particularly in keeping the law of God's covenant.

**King Hezekiah**—A righteous descendant of King David who served as king of Judah and proxy savior of his people in the days of the prophet Isaiah.

**King of Assyria**—In the Book of Isaiah, a composite figure based on several ancient Assyrian types of an end-time arch-tyrant or Antichrist.

**King of Babylon**—In the Book of Isaiah, a composite figure based on Assyrian and Babylonian types of an end-time arch-tyrant or Antichrist.

**King of Zion**—Jehovah, God of Israel, who comes to reign as King of Zion at the time the king of Assyria/Babylon's tyrannical rule ends.

**Kingdom of Israel**—The monarchic state that passed from Saul to David, which divided in two after Solomon, and which ended with Judah's exile.

**Kings and Queens of the Gentiles**—The spiritual kings and queens who minister to end-time Israel's ethnic lineages and restore them from exile.

**King's Role of Protector**—A king's function of proxy savior under the terms of the Davidic Covenant when seeking his people divine protection.

**Ladder to Heaven**—In the Book of Isaiah, seven identifiable spiritual levels governed by covenants through which one may ascend or descend.

**Lamb of God**—The atoning role of Jesus of Nazareth in redeeming humanity from sin and death, of which Israel's Passover Lamb was a type.

**Land as a Covenant Blessing**—A blessing of God's conditional and unconditional covenants in which God bequeaths lands of inheritance.

**Land of Israel**—The land God promised unconditionally to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Israel’s ancestors, and conditionally to Israel.

**Last Days**—A time the prophets call the “end-time” or “end of days” (*‘ăḥărît hāyyamîm*), when God restores Israel and destroys his enemies.

**Latter-day David**—A descendant of David who restores Israel and rebuilds the temple in Jerusalem in preparation for Jehovah’s coming to reign on the earth.

**Law of the Covenant**—The terms of God’s covenants with Israel and with individuals, which promise blessings to those who observe them.

**Law of Justice**—The equitable rules or set of principles by which God governs all humanity and by which law he himself abides at all times.

**Law of Mercy**—Jehovah’s forgiveness of the transgressions of persons who repent based on his personally paying the debt of their transgressions.

**Law of Moses**—The law or terms of the covenant God stipulated through Moses in place of the higher law Israel rejected at Mount Sinai.

**Lebanon**—The mountainous north of the Promised Land known for its cedars, by whose name the prophets figuratively represent elite Israel.

**Levitical Covenant**—The covenant of peace God made with Phinehas, grandson of Aaron, which became identified with Israel’s priests and Levites.

**Levitical Priesthood**—The priesthood pertaining to the descendants of Levi who taught God’s law and administered temple ordinances.

**Leviticus**—The third book of the Bible, which provides regulatory guidelines for priests and Levites to minister to God's people.

**Liberal Scholarship**—Widespread modern scholarship that views the Bible from an academic standpoint rather than as the revealed word of God.

**Life Cycle**—Passage through successive phases of development by the earth, by God's people Israel, and by persons who spiritually ascend.

**Light and Darkness**—In the Book of Isaiah, pseudonyms or aliases of God's end-time servant and the king of Assyria/Babylon, respectively.

**Light to the Gentiles**—In the Book of Isaiah, God's end-time servant whom God appoints as a *light* to the nations or Gentiles (*gôyim*).

**Linear Structures**—Literary structures that follow a timeline as in Isaiah's structure Trouble at Home, Exile Abroad, and Happy Homecoming.

**Literary Analysis**—Close examination of a text or writing that identifies its literary features in order to determine its fuller meaning.

**Literary Criteria**—Commonly, rules or guidelines used for analyzing texts such as the Book of Isaiah that identify literary features, devices, or patterns.

**Literary Devices**—Structural, typological, rhetorical, or other compositional means used to convey a message or meaning embedded in a text.

**Literary Genre**—A category of writings or written texts such as biography or ethical sermons that is identifiable by theme, content, or style.

**Literary Features**—Compositional or literary elements that enrich and distinguish a written text and enhance its message or meaning.

**Literary Message of Isaiah**—Embedded data or divine truths that Isaiah conveys by means of literary structures, typological patterns, and rhetorical links.

**Literary Pattern**—The arrangement of words and ideas in a particular order or formation for the purpose of conveying a message or meaning.

**Literary Structure**—The configuration of a text according to a predetermined plan that conveys a message underlying its surface reading.

**Lord**—In the Bible, Israel's covenant God Jehovah, the translation of whose name as "Lord" (in deference to its sacredness) changes its meaning.

**Lord of Hosts**—The English translation of "Jehovah of Hosts," a title prophets use to identify Israel's God as one who commands celestial armies.

**Lord-Servant Relationship**—In the Book of Isaiah, a covenant bond resembling emperor-vassal relationships in which Jehovah assumes the role of emperor.

**Lost Tribes of Israel**—Israel's ten northern tribes who were taken captive into Assyria in 722 B.C. and who became lost from known history.

**Love of God (1)**—Divine love that God instills in the hearts of his people and of individuals with whom he covenants—all who keep the terms of his covenants.

**Love of God (2)**—In God's covenants with his people and with individuals, love characterized by their keeping his commandments or the terms of his covenant.



**Loyalty and Disloyalty**—Key covenantal themes of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure on which turn his people's salvation or damnation.

**Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz**—Isaiah's son whose name, "Hasten the Plunder, Hurry the Spoil," foreshadows Assyria's desolation of God's people.

**Male and Female**—The conjugal or familial model of happiness and eternal life that constitutes an integral part of God's covenants in any age.

**Malediction**—Covenant curses or plagues that result from transgressing God's covenant or from violating the rights of his covenant people.

**Marriage Covenant**—In the Book of Isaiah, the covenant relationship of a man and woman that characterizes all ascending spiritual levels.

**Marriage Imagery**—The use of images or descriptions dealing with male–female covenant relationships that pertain to higher spiritual levels.

**Matthew**—The evangelist author of the most quoted New Testament gospel, who cites Hebrew prophecies in support of Jesus' life and ministry.

**Melchizedek**—The priest-king of Salem to whom Abraham paid tithes, the order of whose priesthood serves as a model for high priests.

**Melchizedek Priesthood**—The holy priesthood pertaining to the laws and ordinances of the gospel or good news as exemplified by Melchizedek.

**Mesopotamia**—The ancient land between the two rivers of western Asia—the Tigris and Euphrates—which became a cradle of civilization.

**Messiah**—Literally “anointed one” (*māšīah*), a term historically referring to Israel’s king that came to designate Israel’s divine Savior and Redeemer.

**Messianic Expectations**—The hope that grew in Israel, particularly during its exile, of a future deliverer who would restore God’s covenant people.

**Messianic Prophecies**—With the exception of Isaiah 53:1–10, prophecies for the most part of a temporal savior who restores God’s people Israel.

**Messianic Roles**—Jehovah’s role of spiritual Savior and the role of temporal saviors assumed by God’s end-time servant and his associates.

**Metaphor**—A word, phrase, or imagery used to describe a person or object that figuratively likens the person or object to something else.

**Metaphorical Pseudonyms**—In the Book of Isaiah, the use of metaphors as pseudonyms or aliases of the main actors in his end-time scenario.

**Millennial Age**—The long-awaited age of peace on the earth that ensues after evildoers perish and Jehovah comes to reign as King.

**Millennial Covenant**—God’s unconditional covenant with his righteous people in the millennial age that is a composite of all previous covenants.

**Modern Idolatry**—Worldly activities such as the pursuit of material things and pleasure-loving pastimes that divert people away from serving God.

**Mortal Threat**—Danger of being killed by an enemy, from which God delivers his people under the terms of the Sinai and Davidic Covenants.

**Mortality as Descent**—Humanity’s mortal existence as a temporary phase of trials and experiences that may facilitate ascent to higher realms.

**Mosaic Code**—The codified Law God gave Israel through Moses that served an interim purpose in anticipation of Israel’s receiving a higher law.

**Moses**—The prophet of God who delivered the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from slavery in Egypt and who mediated the Sinai Covenant.

**Most High God**—By definition, the God who is over all (*el ʿelyôn*), who is identified in the New Testament as the literal Father of Jesus.

**Mount Perazim**—Reference to an end-time event resembling God’s breaking forth upon the wicked of his people as at Mount Sinai and elsewhere.

**Mount Sinai**—A mountain in the Land of Midian where Jehovah covenanted to be Israel’s God and where he gave his people the Ten Commandments.

**Mount Zion**—In the Book of Isaiah, the place where Jehovah vanquishes his enemies and comes to establish his reign of peace on the earth.

**Nebuchadnezzar**—The king of Babylon who destroyed Jerusalem, who had its temple burned (587 B.C.), and who exiled the Jews to Babylon.

**Neo-Babylonian Empire**—The second Babylonian Empire (626–539 B.C.), which succeeded the Assyrian Empire and was succeeded by the Persian Empire.

**New Conquest**—The end-time capture of promised lands from the hands of enemies as when Israel conquered the Land of Canaan under Joshua.

**New Covenant**—In the Book of Isaiah, the unconditional covenant of life and peace God makes with his elect whom he delivers into the millennial age.

**New Creation**—The re-creation of the earth and reconfiguration of the heavens following a worldwide destruction and its resultant chaos.

**New Exodus**—The end-time exit of God's elect people out of Greater Babylon that resembles Israel's release from bondage and exit out of Egypt.

**New Flood**—A flood of fire launched by the king of Assyria/Babylon as destructive, comparatively speaking, as was the Flood in the days of Noah.

**New Jerusalem**—A city built by its righteous inhabitants at the beginning of the millennial age that unites with a similar celestial city.

**New Name**—The name God gives those who ascend to a higher spiritual level after they have proven loyal under the terms of his covenant.

**New Passover**—An end-time deliverance in which the angel of death passes over God's elect people when the wicked are destroyed from the earth.

**New Testament**—The books that contain the higher law or gospel Jesus taught that pertains to the new covenant God makes with his people.

**New Versions of Ancient Events**—The occurrence of end-time events predicted by the prophet Isaiah that resemble events in Israel's past.

**New Wandering in the Wilderness**—An end-time event resembling Israel's wandering in the Sinai wilderness, though of briefer duration.

**Noah**—A patriarch, the tenth generation from Adam, in whose days God sent a flood that destroyed the earth's wicked inhabitants.

**Northern Kingdom of Israel**—The ten-tribed kingdom that separated from Israel's southern tribes under Solomon's servant Jeroboam.

**Numbers**—The fourth book of the Bible, which deals with Moses' taking a census of Israel and with the circumstances of Israel's wilderness wandering.

**Odyssey**—The Greek myth of Odysseus, whose three tests that he passed resemble three tests by which God tries his end-time covenant people.

**Old Testament**—The writings of the prophets and chroniclers from Genesis through Malachi that record God's dealings and covenants with Israel.

**Offspring as a Covenant Blessing**—A primary blessing of God's conditional and unconditional covenants with his people and with individuals.

**One Mighty in Valor**—A title deriving from God's blessing of Abraham that applies to God's end-time servant and others who assume the role of seraph.

**Oneness of God**—God's unity of purpose and uniformity of action, as distinct from the commonly held belief of a single or solitary God.

**Opposing Archetypes**—In the Book of Isaiah, two primary contrasting entities or institutions that exist in the end-time such as Zion and Babylon.

**Outer Darkness**—In the Book of Isaiah, a condition experienced by those who fail to qualify for a new exodus to Zion in God's Day of Judgment.

**Paradigmatic Hierarchy**—An order of spiritual categories through which one may ascend or descend by emulating those above or below.

**Paradise**—The glorious condition Adam and Eve, humanity's first parents, inherited, which God's elect inherit who live into the millennial age.

**Paradisiacal Glory**—A state of earthly splendor pertaining to a higher spiritual level, which God's elect inherit who live into the millennial age.

**Parallelism**—Two or more parallel statements or components, synonymous, complementary, or antithetical, that convey a scriptural message.

**Parity Covenant**—A covenant between equals as in the concept of “one for all and all for one” that characterizes God's end-time servants.

**Passover**—Deliverance from the tenth plague God sent on Egypt that led to Israel's release from bondage, which Jews and others celebrate annually.

**Passover Lamb**—The yearling lamb without blemish whose blood on a house's doorposts and lintels caused the angel of death to pass over that house.

**Patriarchs**—Israel's ancestors, notably Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom God made unconditional covenants concerning their posterity.

**Patriarchy**—A form of familial relationships in which the father assumes a leadership function based on his role of provider and family protector.

**Patriarchy and Matriarchy**—A form of familial relationships in which the roles of father and mother toward their children complement one another.

**Pattern of Prophecy**—A pattern common to the basic elements of all Hebrew prophecies, though they may have originated centuries apart.

**Paul**—The Jewish apostle to the Gentiles who wrote many epistles and predicted end-time events as recorded in the New Testament.

**Peace**—A condition synonymous with salvation, wrought by Jehovah God of Israel, which characterizes the earth's millennial age.

**Perdition**—A point of no return for those who descend spiritually by committing gross crimes such as murder, molestation, and satanic rituals.

**Persian Empire**—The Near Eastern empire (539–334 B.C.) that succeeded the Babylonian Empire and was succeeded by the Greek Empire.

**Personifications in Metaphor**—Terms that describe persons who personify certain character traits such as God's *band, staff, ensign, or light*.

**Pharaoh King of Egypt**—The king of Egypt, the great superpower of Isaiah's day, who typifies the leader of a similar end-time superpower.

**Philistines**—Israel's hostile neighbors who harassed God's covenant people but whom David overthrew after Samuel made him Israel's king.

**Pilgrimage to Zion**—Israel's ancient pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem that functions as a type of Israel's end-time exodus to Zion.

**Pillar of Cloud**—The cloud by day and fire by night that protected Israel's tribes during their wilderness wandering to the Promised Land.

**Plagues**—Misfortunes in the form of covenant curses that happen to those who break God's covenants or who violate the rights of his people.

**Polarization of People**—People taking opposite sides on decisive issues or portending matters, particularly in the end-time before Jehovah comes.

**Poor and Needy**—People of meager means, who often suffer at the hands of others, but whom Israel's God most frequently identifies as his people.

**Posterity**—A primary blessing pertaining to God's conditional and unconditional covenants with his people and with individuals.

**Power of God**—God's divine might and strength with which he may endow a person or people whom he appoints to fulfill a saving role.

**Praise of God**—The vocal expression of joyous gratitude to God commonly manifested by those whom he delivers from a trial of their faith.

**Precedents as Types**—Ancient events that established historical precedents, which function as models or types of similar, end-time events.

**Precepts of Men**—Popular ideas, doctrines, or beliefs that purportedly derive from God's revealed word but which have no scriptural basis of fact.

**Priesthood**—Power and authority from God to minister in his name, received from one having authority as when Moses ordained Aaron.

**Prince of Peace**—A title deriving from God's blessing of Abraham that applies to God's end-time servant and others who assume the role of seraph.



**Promised Land**—A primary blessing of God's conditional and unconditional covenants with his people Israel and with individuals.

**Prophecy**—The prediction of events that will occur in the future, commonly relating to a prophet's own time, to the end-time, or to both.

**Prophecy of Isaiah**—The prophetic oracles and writings of the Hebrew prophet Isaiah (*ca.* 742–701 B.C.) as recorded in the Book of Isaiah.

**Prophet**—One whom God endows with the ability to see or know the future, whom God may call to prophesy to his people or other nations.

**Prophet as Paradigm**—A prophet's function as a model of righteousness to God's people and of ascent to higher spiritual levels.

**Prophetic Ministry**—A vocation to serve God's people or other nations by one whom God calls and ordains to prophesy and preach repentance.

**Prophetic Oracles**—Utterances by a prophet of God to his people or other nations that are spoken while under the influence of God's holy Spirit.

**Prophetic Pattern**—A configuration of words and ideas, intentionally repeated and layered into a text, that convey a prophetic message.

**Prophetic Theme**—A topic or idea such as repentance, loyalty, or salvation that pervades a prophetic text or portion of a text.

**Prophetic Warning**—The admonition by a prophet or prophets that people should repent of doing evil or evil consequences will inevitably follow.

**Protection Clause of the Davidic Covenant**—The promise of God’s protection when the king keeps God’s law and the people keep the king’s law.

**Protection Clause of the Sinai Covenant**—The promise of God’s protection when God’s people collectively keep the law of the Sinai Covenant.

**Proxy Protection**—A king’s role of answering for his people’s transgressions when interceding with God for their physical deliverance.

**Proxy Sacrifice**—(1) Under the Mosaic Code, an animal’s life in place of a transgressor’s; (2) under a higher law, a proxy savior’s offering of himself.

**Proxy Salvation**—God’s deliverance, spiritual or temporal, obtained by a proxy savior on behalf of others under the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

**Proxy Savior**—One who answers for others’ transgressions when seeking their deliverance under the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

**Psalms**—Songs and poems praising God in times of distress or at God’s deliverance such as those composed by David in the Book of Psalms.

**Pseudonyms**—Terms that identify a person or people indirectly through the use of aliases instead directly by their actual names.

**Punishment and Deliverance**—Key themes of Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure that deal with God’s punishment of the wicked and deliverance of the righteous.

**Purification**—A process of repenting of transgression one may pass through that leads to a state of innocence or freedom from sin and iniquity.

**Rebellion and Compliance**—Key covenantal themes of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure that characterize two opposite groups of God's people.

**Rebirth**—The state of being spiritually reborn or re-created typical of ascent to higher spiritual levels that accompanies keeping the law of God's covenants.

**Rebuilding Ancient Ruins**—Activity characterizing life in the millennial age, when God's covenant people restore former human habitations.

**Rebuilding the Temple**—Reconstruction of God's house, his sanctuary in Jerusalem, in preparation for Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth.

**Re-creation**—God's regeneration of those who ascend to higher spiritual levels typified by their transformation nearer to his image and likeness.

**Redemption**—Deliverance from evils or covenant curses by one who functions as a proxy savior under the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

**Redemptive Suffering**—The suffering endured by a proxy savior who bears the covenant curses due to others so that God may deliver them.

**Regeneration**—A feature typical of the millennial age, when people's bodies undergo a transformation and are healed of afflictions and diseases.

**Remission of Sins**—God's forgiveness of the transgressions of those who repent of doing evil, with its accompanying disburdenment of guilt.

**Repentance**—Admission of and sorrow for sins before God, and their complete abandonment as evidenced by the keeping of his commandments.

**Restitution**—A just repayment or compensation for transgression, whether paid by the offender or by a proxy savior who assumes the debt.

**Restoration**—In Hebrew prophecy, the reinstatement of all the positive features of Israel's past that were lost on account of transgression.

**Resurrection**—Based on Jehovah's proxy salvation, the physical raising from death to life on a spiritual level matching one's righteousness or wickedness.

**Return from Exile**—The end-time return of Israel's dispersed peoples and tribes in a new exodus to Zion from the four parts of the earth.

**Return to Chaos**—The earth's return to a chaotic condition on account of wars and natural disasters prior to the earth's millennial re-creation.

**Reunion of Israel**—The end-time return of the long-dispersed twin houses of Israel and their tribal association in renewed covenantal bonds.

**Revelation**—Truths, laws, or covenants God reveals through his prophets for the benefit of humanity's wellbeing and everlasting happiness

**Reversal of Circumstances**—The turnaround from a cursed to blessed state by those who repent, and from a blessed to cursed state by those who don't.

**Reversal of Covenant Curses**—The end-time transformation of curses turning into blessings for the Zion/Jerusalem category and levels higher.

**Rhetorical Analysis**—The study of a text's use of words and language, often revealing embedded meanings that might otherwise go unnoticed.

**Rhetorical Definition**—An author’s definition of a word or idea that is determined by analyzing additional uses of it in his writings.

**Rhetorical Links**—The presence in a text of words, ideas, or motifs that show interpretive interrelatedness or interdependence.

**Right Hand**—(1) In ancient texts designating “the man of the right hand”; (2) in the Book of Isaiah denoting God’s end-time servant—his *right hand*.

**Righteous Warrior Figure**—In the Book of Isaiah, God’s end-time servant when depicted as a composite of the biblical types of Abraham and Cyrus.

**Righteousness**—A quality exemplified by observance of the whole law of God’s covenant as personified by his end-time servant.

**Righteousness from the East**—God’s end-time servant who personifies righteousness, whom God raises up to restore his long-dispersed people.

**Rituals**—Ceremonies, practices, or ordinances, as with those instituted of God, that symbolize or dramatize his covenant relationship with his people.

**Rod and Staff**—Twin metaphorical pseudonyms or aliases (1) of God’s end-time servant; and (2) of his tyrannical counterpart, the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Roman Empire**—The empire that dominated Palestine in New Testament times (27 B.C.–395 A.D.), which succeeded the Greek or Hellenist Empire.

**Royal Accession**—Ascent to royal status on the highest spiritual levels upon a vassal’s proving loyal to God, his emperor, under all conditions.

**Ruin and Rebirth**—Key themes of Isaiah’s Seven-Part Structure that deal with the ruin of God’s alienated people and the rebirth of Zion.

**Sabbath Day**—The seventh day of the week, a day of rest from work, whose observance is a measure of one’s keeping God’s covenant.

**Sacrifice**—(1) Under the Mosaic Code, an animal’s life in place of a transgressor’s; (2) under a higher law, a proxy savior’s offering of himself.

**Salvation**—The state of being redeemed from all evil, temporal and spiritual, by Jehovah God of Israel, who personifies salvation.

**Samuel**—The prophet whom God called as a young man, who anointed Saul, Israel’s first king, and who later anointed David to replace Saul.

**Sanctification**—The process of purifying one’s life of sin and iniquity and of acquiring divine attributes, until one becomes holy or sanctified.

**Satan**—The adversary of all that is good and true, who rebelled against God and fell from grace, who seeks to overthrow all that is of God.

**Satanic Rituals**—Practices that desecrate and pervert sacred rites, epitomizing people’s ultimate apostasy from the truth and love of God.

**Saul**—Israel’s first king, who transgressed God’s commandment and fell from grace, whom God replaced as king with David the son of Jesse.

**Savior**—One who saves others temporally or spiritually to any degree by rendering them a service or making sacrifices on their behalf.

**Savior-God of Israel**—Jehovah, God of Israel, who saves his people from their sins and from every evil or covenant curse, including death.

**Saviors on Mount Zion**—God's servants who act as deliverers of his people at the time God restores Israel from exile to promised lands.

**Scripture**—Writings accorded special status or recognition as being sacred or composed by prophets and chroniclers under divine inspiration.

**Sea and River**—(1) In the Ugaritic Myth, names of a god of chaos, Baal's enemy; (2) in the Book of Isaiah, pseudonyms of the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Searching Scripture**—A deliberate challenge God presents of diligently examining his revealed word, from which alone comes greater understanding.

**Second Coming**—Jesus' coming in glory as King of Zion, constituting his ascent phase following his descent phase through suffering and humiliation.

**Seer**—One whom God endows with the ability to see visions of future events or other phenomena, commonly for the benefit of humanity.

**Self-Exaltation**—The act of glorifying oneself or regarding oneself as preeminent, a form of idolatry that inevitably leads to humiliation.

**Sennacherib**—The Assyrian king who invaded Judea in 701 B.C., whose 185,000-strong army that besieged Jerusalem was slain by an angel of God.

**Septuagint**—The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible completed in Alexandria, Egypt, in the second century B.C. by seventy Jewish scholars.

**Seraphs/Seraphim**—Persons such as Enoch and Elijah who attain the seraph level of Isaiah’s spiritual ladder, who minister between the worlds.

**Servant Figure**—That aspect of God’s end-time servant that expresses his spiritual, ministering phase as a proxy savior of God’s people.

**Servant Phase**—The conditional phase of a proxy savior’s ministry that is followed by a son phase under the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

**Servants of God**—In the Book of Isaiah, proxy saviors who minister to God’s end-time people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

**Service and Suffering**—Primary means of purification and sanctification that one experiences when serving God and suffering in his cause.

**Seven-Part Structure**—A synchronous holistic structure of the Book of Isaiah that reveals a systematic theology and an apocalyptic prophecy.

**Seventh Heaven**—The spiritual level to which Isaiah’s spirit ascended when he saw God in his glory as recorded in the *Ascension of Isaiah*.

**Shear-Jashub**—Isaiah’s son whose name, “A Remnant Shall Repent/Return,” foreshadows the exile of God’s people and their end-time return.

**Shebna**—A steward of the house of David who exalts himself, whom God replaces with Eliakim as a precedent and type of God’s end-time servant.

**Sheol**—The world of spirits associated with death and Hell, containing the lowest spiritual levels, the abodes of the damned.



**Sin**—The transgression of God’s laws and of moral principles, whose effect is guilt and whose consequence is malediction or covenant curse.

**Sinai Covenant**—The conditional covenant God made with his people Israel as a nation in the Sinai wilderness through the mediation of Moses.

**Sodom and Gomorrah**—The cities God destroyed by a rain of fire and brimstone for their consummate wickedness, saving only Lot and his family.

**Sodom-and-Gomorrah Destruction**—An end-time destruction of the world’s wicked inhabitants resembling that of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Solomon**—The son of David and Bathsheba who inherited David’s throne, expanded Israel’s dominions, and built the temple in Jerusalem.

**Son Phase**—The unconditional phase of a proxy savior’s ministry that is preceded by a servant phase under the terms of the Davidic Covenant.

**Songs of Salvation**—Hymns of praise and thanksgiving by those whom God delivers, notably by his elect who live into the millennial age.

**Sons and Daughters of God**—In the Book of Isaiah, a spiritual category of God’s elect or those who attain the son/servant level.

**Sons and Servants of God**—In the Book of Isaiah, those who serve as proxy saviors to God’s people under the terms of the Davidic Covenant

**Southern Kingdom of Judah**—The kingdom that remained under Davidic rule when Israel’s ten northern tribes rebelled against Solomon’s son.

**Spiritual Blindness**—A condition resulting from an idolatrous materialism and superficial spirituality that characterizes God's end-time people.

**Spiritual Ladder**—In the Book of Isaiah, a hierarchy of seven discernible categories or spiritual levels of people whom Isaiah describes.

**Spiritual Ministry**—A divine calling to serve humanity as do priests under the Levitical Covenant and proxy saviors under the Davidic Covenant.

**Spiritual Salvation**—Deliverance from all evil through Jehovah's atonement for transgression as manifested in curse reversals such as rising from the dead.

**Stars**—Cosmic bodies of different dimensions and brightness that typify the resurrection of the just to varying degrees of glory or exaltation.

**Storm Imagery**—Figurative language Isaiah uses to depict God's end-time Day of Judgment upon the wicked of his people and the nations.

**Structural Analysis**—The study of literary patterns that shape a text, revealing underlying ideas and transcendent meanings.

**Suffering and Salvation**—Key themes of Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure that deal with the suffering of the wicked and salvation of the righteous.

**Suffering and Service**—Primary means of purification and sanctification that one experiences when serving God and suffering in his cause.

**Suffering Figure**—The subject of Isaiah 53:1–10, whom Isaiah identifies in a literary structure as Jehovah, the God of Israel and King of Zion.

**Suzerain-Vassal Covenants**—Treaties or covenants made between ancient Near Eastern emperors and their vassal kings that parallel God's covenants.

**Symbolic Names**—Names that express ideas or portend the future such as the name of Isaiah's son Shear Jashub, "A Remnant Shall Repent/Return."

**Symbolism**—The representation of one thing to signify another, such as Isaiah's describing political and ecclesiastical collusion as a Covenant with Death.

**Synchronous Structures**—Literary structures such as Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure that view a text synchronously or as depicting a single scenario.

**Synonymous Parallels**—Twin statements or poetic elements that express similar or synonymous ideas, in which one clarifies or nuances the other.

**Systematic Theology**—The study of God and his relationship to humanity as a divine system, as revealed, for example, in Isaiah's Seven-Part Structure.

**Tabernacle**—The portable edifice the Israelites carried with them in their wilderness wanderings, within whose inner sanctum God conversed with Moses.

**Temple**—A house of God such as the Jerusalem temple that is used for performing covenantal ordinances and as a venue for God's conversing with prophets.

**Temple Architecture**—A temple's design, including demarcated areas of increasing sanctity that parallel ascending spiritual levels of people.

**Temporal Salvation**—Deliverance from evils of a physical nature such as God's protection against enemies or against the threat of death.

**Ten Lost Tribes**—The ten tribes of Israel's Northern Kingdom who were taken captive into Assyria in 722 B.C. and became lost from known history.

**Terms of the Covenant**—Stipulations comprising God's law and word, including (1) promises of blessings; and (2) warnings of curses.

**Testimony**—In theological terms, a witness of the truth received through God's holy Spirit, often shared in attempts to persuade others to believe.

**Tests of Loyalty**—In the Book of Isaiah, tests or trials pertaining to a person's descent phase that God orchestrates, which try the person's faithfulness.

**Theology**—The study of God's attributes as revealed through his prophets, including his relationship to humanity and divine teachings.

**Theology of Spiritual Ascent**—The doctrine of advancement through ascending spiritual levels to higher realms of glory or exaltation.

**Theophany**—God's manifestation of himself to people individually or collectively, in secret or in public, as a testimony of his reality.

**Thief in the Night**—In the Book of Isaiah, the king of Assyria/Babylon, an archtyrant who precedes Jehovah's coming to reign on the earth.

**Throne of David**—The right of righteous descendants of David to his throne as with Israel's Messiah, with God's end-time servant, and others.

**Tongue and Lips**—Twin metaphorical pseudonyms or aliases (1) of God's end-time servant; and (2) of his tyrannical counterpart, the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Transgression**—The breaking of divine laws or of moral principles, whose effect is guilt and whose consequence is malediction and a spiritual loss of light.

**Trusting in God**—The principle of exercising reliance on God, particularly in times of adversity, which serves as a test of one's loyalty.

**Truth of God**—The reality of God's existence, of what God has revealed through his prophets, and of his teachings of things as they are.

**Twelve Tribes of Israel**—The denomination of God's people as tribal groups identified by the names of Jacob's twelve sons, their ancestors.

**Types**—In the Book of Isaiah, precedents of persons and events from Israel's past that function as models or patterns of end-time ones.

**Typological Analysis**—The study of precedents or types, showing how sacred history repeats itself, specifically in the end-time.

**Typological Motifs**—Recurring themes or ideas based on types from the past that assist in identifying an end-time sequence of events.

**Typology**—The study and classification of precedents or types, illustrating the Hebrew worldview that history cyclically repeats itself.

**Tyrant King**—The end-time king of Assyria/Babylon, an archtyrant who, with his evil alliance of nations, conquers and desolates the world.

**Unbelief**—Refusal to believe in God born of fear and spiritual inertia—an impediment to divine empowerment in accomplishing life's mission.

**Unconditional Covenant**—A covenant whose promised blessings God grants unequivocally to those who have proven loyal under all conditions.

**Urzeit and Endzeit**—The concept of ancient history juxtaposed with end-time history and of a fulfillment of prophecy divided between them.

**Vassal**—In the ancient Near East, a king who is subject to an emperor and who is known as his servant and son within a covenant relationship.

**Vindication**—Being justified before God, often by a proxy savior, obviating the need to suffer covenant curses as a consequence of transgression.

**Violation of Rights**—The infringement of freedoms, especially those of God's covenant people, which brings covenant curses on violators.

**Virgin Zion**—The Woman figure that represents a righteous category of God's people with whom God reestablishes a covenant relationship.

**Visions**—The seeing of events or phenomena not normally perceived that may forewarn or apprise the visionary of what is going to happen.

**Visions of Isaiah**—Among many, chiefly Isaiah's first vision of Jehovah in the temple and his latter vision of the end from the beginning.

**Voice and Mouth**—Twin metaphorical pseudonyms or aliases (1) of God's end-time servant; and (2) of his tyrannical counterpart, the king of Assyria/Babylon.

**Waiting for Jehovah**—The key principle of anticipating Jehovah's coming and relying on his deliverance, even in the midst of extremity.

**Wandering in the Wilderness**—Israel's ancient journey through the Sinai wilderness that functions as the type of a similar, end-time journey.

**Wickedness**—Acts that offend God and break his laws such as idolatry, deceit, injustice, oppression, fornication, violence, and murder.

**Wise and Learned**—Those whom God censures, whose wisdom and learning he overturns because they teach doctrines and precepts of men.

**Woman Babylon**—In the Book of Isaiah, the Woman figure that represents God's alienated people and all evil or non-Zion entities.

**Woman Zion**—The Woman figure that represents God's covenant people who repent, who live into a glorious millennial age of peace.

**Wonderful Counselor**—A title deriving from God's blessing of Abraham that applies to God's end-time servant and others who assume the role of seraph.

**Word of God**—The truths, laws, and covenants God reveals through his prophets that lead to his children's wellbeing and everlasting happiness.

**Word Links**—Repeated terms, intentionally embedded in a text, that connect ideas and contexts and elucidate their message and meaning.

**World Conqueror**—The king of Assyria/Babylon, an end-time archtyrant who gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his own soul.

**World Conquest**—An evil takeover of the world that follows God's end-time people's apostasy as in ancient patterns of world conquest.

**Zion**—A people of God who repent of transgression and the place to which they return, where God protects them in his Day of Judgment.

**Zion Ideology**—Under the terms of the Davidic Covenant, the principle of keeping God's law that vouchsafes his blessings and divine protection.

**Zion/Jerusalem**—God's covenant people who repent of transgression, who receive a remission of their sins and live into a millennial age of peace.

**Zion's Inviolability**—Zion's indestructibility based on the protection clause of the Davidic Covenant when the terms of the covenant are met.