

BSF Scripture for Kingdom Divided Lesson #20

FIRST DAY:

1. Read the lesson notes and References

SECOND DAY:

Read Isaiah 40

Isaiah 40

Comfort for God's People

[40:1] Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.

[2] Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

[3] A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

[4] Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

[5] And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together.

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

[6] A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

[7] The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass.

[8] The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

[9] You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!"

[10] See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,

and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.

[11] He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

[12] Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?

[13] Who can fathom the Spirit of the LORD, or instruct the LORD as his counselor?

[14] Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge, or showed him the path of understanding?

[15] Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.

[16] Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires, nor its animals enough for burnt offerings.

[17] Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing.

[18] With whom, then, will you compare God? To what image will you liken him?

[19] As for an idol, a metalworker casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions silver chains for it.

[20] A person too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot; they look for a skilled worker to set up an idol that will not topple.

[21] Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded?

[22] He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

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[23] He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.

[24] No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.

[25] “To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.

[26] Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

[27] Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, “My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God”?

[28] Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. [29] He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

[30] Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; [31] but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Question 3b

Matthew 1:21; [21] She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-7;

Praise to the God of All Comfort

[3] Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, [4] who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. [5] For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. [6] If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if

we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. [7] And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

Question 4

Isaiah 40:1-11; See above

Isaiah 40:12-26; See above

Isaiah 40:27-31; See above

Question 5

Isaiah 40:27-31 - see above

THIRD DAY

Read Isaiah 41:1-44:23

Isaiah 41

The Helper of Israel

[41:1] “Be silent before me, you islands! Let the nations renew their strength! Let them come forward and speak; let us meet together at the place of judgment.

[2] “Who has stirred up one from the east, calling him in righteousness to his service? He hands nations over to him and subdues kings before him. He turns them to dust with his sword, to windblown chaff with his bow.

[3] He pursues them and moves on unscathed, by a path his feet have not traveled before.

[4] Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD—with the first of them and with the last—I am he.”

[5] The islands have seen it and fear; the ends of the earth tremble. They approach and come forward;

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[6] they help each other and say to their companions, “Be strong!”

[7] The metalworker encourages the goldsmith, and the one who smooths with the hammer spurs on the one who strikes the anvil. One says of the welding, “It is good.” The other nails down the idol so it will not topple.

[8] “But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend,

[9] I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, ‘You are my servant’; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.

[10] So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

[11] “All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish.

[12] Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them. Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all.

[13] For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

[14] Do not be afraid, you worm Jacob, little Israel, do not fear, for I myself will help you,” declares the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

[15] “See, I will make you into a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth. You will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff.

[16] You will winnow them, the wind will pick them up, and a gale will blow them away. But you will rejoice in the LORD and glory in the Holy One of Israel.

[17] “The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the LORD will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

[18] I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs.

[19] I will put in the desert the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive. I will set junipers in the wasteland, the fir and the cypress together,

[20] so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

[21] “Present your case,” says the LORD. “Set forth your arguments,” says Jacob's King.

[22] “Tell us, you idols, what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, [23] tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, so that we will be dismayed and filled with fear.

[24] But you are less than nothing and your works are utterly worthless; whoever chooses you is detestable.

[25] “I have stirred up one from the north, and he comes—one from the rising sun who calls on my name. He treads on rulers as if they were mortar, as if he were a potter treading the clay.

[26] Who told of this from the beginning, so we could know, or beforehand, so we could say, ‘He was right’? No one told of this, no one foretold it, no one heard any words from you.

[27] I was the first to tell Zion, ‘Look, here they are!’ I gave to Jerusalem a messenger of good news.

[28] I look but there is no one—no one among the gods to give counsel, no one to give answer when I ask them.

[29] See, they are all false! Their deeds amount to nothing; their images are but wind and confusion.

Isaiah 42

The Servant of the LORD

[42:1] “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations.

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[2] He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets.

[3] A bruised reed he will not break, and a moldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; [4] he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”

[5] This is what God the LORD says—the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it:

[6] “I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,

[7] to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

[8] “I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols.

[9] See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”

Song of Praise to the LORD

[10] Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you islands, and all who live in them.

[11] Let the wilderness and its towns raise their voices; let the settlements where Kedar lives rejoice. Let the people of Sela sing for joy; let them shout from the mountaintops.

[12] Let them give glory to the LORD and proclaim his praise in the islands.

[13] The LORD will march out like a champion, like a warrior he will stir up his zeal; with a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies.

[14] “For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held myself back. But now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant.

[15] I will lay waste the mountains and hills and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn rivers into islands and dry up the pools.

[16] I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.

[17] But those who trust in idols, who say to images, ‘You are our gods,’ will be turned back in utter shame.

Israel Blind and Deaf

[18] “Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see!

[19] Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one in covenant with me, blind like the servant of the LORD?

[20] You have seen many things, but you pay no attention; your ears are open, but you do not listen.”

[21] It pleased the LORD for the sake of his righteousness to make his law great and glorious.

[22] But this is a people plundered and looted, all of them trapped in pits or hidden away in prisons. They have become plunder, with no one to rescue them; they have been made loot, with no one to say, “Send them back.”

[23] Which of you will listen to this or pay close attention in time to come?

[24] Who handed Jacob over to become loot, and Israel to the plunderers? Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned? For they would not follow his ways; they did not obey his law.

[25] So he poured out on them his burning anger, the violence of war. It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand; it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart.

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Isaiah 43

Israel's Only Savior

[43:1] But now, this is what the LORD says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

[2] When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

[3] For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead.

[4] Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life.

[5] Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.

[6] I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ and to the south, ‘Do not hold them back.’ Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth—

[7] everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”

[8] Lead out those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf.

[9] All the nations gather together and the peoples assemble. Which of their gods foretold this and proclaimed to us the former things? Let them bring in their witnesses to prove they were right, so that others may hear and say, “It is true.”

[10] “You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.

[11] I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.

[12] I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “that I am God. [13] Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?”

God's Mercy and Israel's Unfaithfulness

[14] This is what the LORD says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring down as fugitives all the Babylonians, in the ships in which they took pride.

[15] I am the LORD, your Holy One, Israel's Creator, your King.”

[16] This is what the LORD says—he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters,

[17] who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

[18] “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. [19] See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

[20] The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, [21] the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

[22] “Yet you have not called on me, Jacob, you have not wearied yourselves for me, Israel.

[23] You have not brought me sheep for burnt offerings, nor honored me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with grain offerings nor wearied you with demands for incense.

[24] You have not bought any fragrant calamus for me, or lavished on me the fat of your sacrifices. But you have burdened me with your sins and wearied me with your offenses.

[25] “I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

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[26] Review the past for me, let us argue the matter together; state the case for your innocence.

[27] Your first father sinned; those I sent to teach you rebelled against me.

[28] So I disgraced the dignitaries of your temple; I consigned Jacob to destruction and Israel to scorn.

Isaiah 44

Israel the Chosen

[44:1] “But now listen, Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.

[2] This is what the LORD says—he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

[3] For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

[4] They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.

[5] Some will say, ‘I belong to the LORD’; others will call themselves by the name of Jacob; still others will write on their hand, ‘The LORD’s,’ and will take the name Israel.

The LORD, Not Idols

[6] “This is what the LORD says—Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.

[7] Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come—yes, let them foretell what will come.

[8] Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.”

[9] All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless. Those who would speak up for them are blind; they are ignorant, to their own shame.

[10] Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit nothing?

[11] People who do that will be put to shame; such craftsmen are only human beings. Let them all come together and take their stand; they will be brought down to terror and shame.

[12] The blacksmith takes a tool and works with it in the coals; he shapes an idol with hammers, he forges it with the might of his arm. He gets hungry and loses his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint.

[13] The carpenter measures with a line and makes an outline with a marker; he roughs it out with chisels and marks it with compasses. He shapes it in human form, human form in all its glory, that it may dwell in a shrine.

[14] He cut down cedars, or perhaps took a cypress or oak. He let it grow among the trees of the forest, or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow.

[15] It is used as fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.

[16] Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, “Ah! I am warm; I see the fire.” [17] From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, “Save me! You are my god!”

[18] They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand.

[19] No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, “Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?”

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[20] Such a person feeds on ashes; a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, “Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?”

[21] “Remember these things, Jacob, for you, Israel, are my servant. I have made you, you are my servant; Israel, I will not forget you.

[22] I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.”

[23] Sing for joy, you heavens, for the LORD has done this; shout aloud, you earth beneath. Burst into song, you mountains, you forests and all your trees, for the LORD has redeemed Jacob, he displays his glory in Israel.

Question 6

Exodus 20:3-6; [3] “You shall have no other gods before me.

[4] “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. [5] You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, [6] but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Question 7a

Matthew 3:16-17;

[16] As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. [17] And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Matthew 12:15-21; God's Chosen Servant

[15] Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill. [16] He warned them not to tell others about him. [17] This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

[18] “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

[19] He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets.

[20] A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory.

[21] In his name the nations will put their hope.”

FOURTH DAY

Read Isaiah 44:24-47:15

Jerusalem to Be Inhabited

[24] “This is what the LORD says—your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, the Maker of all things, who stretches out the heavens, who spreads out the earth by myself,

[25] who foils the signs of false prophets and makes fools of diviners, who overthrows the learning of the wise and turns it into nonsense,

[26] who carries out the words of his servants and fulfills the predictions of his messengers,

who says of Jerusalem, ‘It shall be inhabited,’ of the towns of Judah, ‘They shall be rebuilt,’ and of their ruins, ‘I will restore them,’

[27] who says to the watery deep, ‘Be dry, and I will dry up your streams,’

[28] who says of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, “Let it be rebuilt,” and of the temple, “Let its foundations be laid.”’

Isaiah 45

[45:1] “This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut:

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[2] I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron.

[3] I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who summons you by name.

[4] For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by name and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me.

[5] I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me,

[6] so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other.

[7] I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.

[8] “You heavens above, rain down my righteousness; let the clouds shower it down. Let the earth open wide, let salvation spring up, let righteousness flourish with it; I, the LORD, have created it.

[9] “Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker, those who are nothing but potsherds among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making?’ Does your work say, ‘The potter has no hands?’

[10] Woe to the one who says to a father, ‘What have you begotten?’ or to a mother, ‘What have you brought to birth?’

[11] “This is what the LORD says—the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker: Concerning things to come, do you question me about my children, or give me orders about the work of my hands?

[12] It is I who made the earth and created mankind on it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts.

[13] I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness:

I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the LORD Almighty.”

[14] This is what the LORD says: “The products of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush, and those tall Sabaeans—they will come over to you and will be yours; they will trudge behind you, coming over to you in chains. They will bow down before you and plead with you, saying, ‘Surely God is with you, and there is no other; there is no other god.’”

[15] Truly you are a God who has been hiding himself, the God and Savior of Israel.

[16] All the makers of idols will be put to shame and disgraced; they will go off into disgrace together.

[17] But Israel will be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation; you will never be put to shame or disgraced, to ages everlasting.

[18] For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: “I am the LORD, and there is no other.

[19] I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, ‘Seek me in vain.’ I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right.

[20] “Gather together and come; assemble, you fugitives from the nations. Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood, who pray to gods that cannot save.

[21] Declare what is to be, present it—let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me.

[22] “Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.

[23] By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear.

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[24] They will say of me, 'In the LORD alone are deliverance and strength.' " All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame.

[25] But all the descendants of Israel will find deliverance in the LORD and will make their boast in him.

Isaiah 46

Gods of Babylon

[46:1] Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low; their idols are borne by beasts of burden. The images that are carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary.

[2] They stoop and bow down together; unable to rescue the burden, they themselves go off into captivity.

[3] "Listen to me, you descendants of Jacob, all the remnant of the people of Israel, you whom I have upheld since your birth, and have carried since you were born.

[4] Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

[5] "With whom will you compare me or count me equal? To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?

[6] Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it.

[7] They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands. From that spot it cannot move. Even though someone cries out to it, it cannot answer; it cannot save them from their troubles.

[8] "Remember this, keep it in mind, take it to heart, you rebels. [9] Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.

[10] I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'

[11] From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.

[12] Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are now far from my righteousness.

[13] I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel.

Isaiah 47

The Fall of Babylon

[47:1] "Go down, sit in the dust, Virgin Daughter Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, queen city of the Babylonians. No more will you be called tender or delicate.

[2] Take millstones and grind flour; take off your veil. Lift up your skirts, bare your legs, and wade through the streams.

[3] Your nakedness will be exposed and your shame uncovered. I will take vengeance; I will spare no one."

[4] Our Redeemer—the LORD Almighty is his name—is the Holy One of Israel.

[5] "Sit in silence, go into darkness, queen city of the Babylonians; no more will you be called queen of kingdoms.

[6] I was angry with my people and desecrated my inheritance; I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy. Even on the aged you laid a very heavy yoke.

[7] You said, 'I am forever—the eternal queen!' But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen.

[8] "Now then, listen, you lover of pleasure, lounging in your security and saying to yourself, 'I am, and here is none besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.'

[9] Both of these will overtake you in a moment, on a single day: loss of children and widowhood. They

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will come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and all your potent spells.

[10] You have trusted in your wickedness and have said, 'No one sees me.' Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me.'

[11] Disaster will come upon you, and you will not know how to conjure it away. A calamity will fall upon you that you cannot ward off with a ransom; a catastrophe you cannot foresee will suddenly come upon you.

[12] "Keep on, then, with your magic spells and with your many sorceries, which you have labored at since childhood. Perhaps you will succeed, perhaps you will cause terror.

[13] All the counsel you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you.

[14] Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame. These are not coals for warmth; this is not a fire to sit by.

[15] That is all they are to you—these you have dealt with and labored with since childhood. All of them go on in their error; there is not one that can save you.

Question 9a

2 Chronicles 36:22-23; [22] In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing:

[23] "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: " 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up, and may the LORD their God be with them.' "

FIFTH DAY

Read Isaiah 48

Isaiah 48

Stubborn Israel

[48:1] "Listen to this, you descendants of Jacob, you who are called by the name of Israel and come from the line of Judah, you who take oaths in the name of the LORD and invoke the God of Israel—but not in truth or righteousness—

[2] you who call yourselves citizens of the holy city and claim to rely on the God of Israel—the LORD Almighty is his name:

[3] I foretold the former things long ago, my mouth announced them and I made them known; then suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.

[4] For I knew how stubborn you were; your neck muscles were iron, your forehead was bronze.

[5] Therefore I told you these things long ago; before they happened I announced them to you so that you could not say, 'My images brought them about; my wooden image and metal god ordained them.'

[6] You have heard these things; look at them all. Will you not admit them? "From now on I will tell you of new things, of hidden things unknown to you.

[7] They are created now, and not long ago; you have not heard of them before today. So you cannot say, 'Yes, I knew of them.'

[8] You have neither heard nor understood; from of old your ears have not been open. Well do I know how treacherous you are; you were called a rebel from birth.

[9] For my own name's sake I delay my wrath; for the sake of my praise I hold it back from you, so as not to destroy you completely.

[10] See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

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[11] For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this.
How can I let myself be defamed? I will not yield my
glory to another.

Israel Freed

[12] “Listen to me, Jacob, Israel, whom I have called:
I am he; I am the first and I am the last.

[13] My own hand laid the foundations of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens; when I
summon them, they all stand up together.

[14] “Come together, all of you, and listen: Which of
the idols has foretold these things? The LORD's
chosen ally will carry out his purpose against
Babylon; his arm will be against the Babylonians.

[15] I, even I, have spoken; yes, I have called him. I
will bring him, and he will succeed in his mission.

[16] “Come near me and listen to this: “From the first
announcement I have not spoken in secret; at the time
it happens, I am there.” And now the Sovereign
LORD has sent me, endowed with his Spirit.

[17] This is what the LORD says—your Redeemer,
the Holy One of Israel: “I am the LORD your God,
who teaches you what is best for you, who directs
you in the way you should go.

[18] If only you had paid attention to my commands,
your peace would have been like a river, your well-
being like the waves of the sea.

[19] Your descendants would have been like the
sand, your children like its numberless grains; their
name would never be blotted out nor destroyed from
before me.”

[20] Leave Babylon, flee from the Babylonians!
Announce this with shouts of joy and proclaim it.
Send it out to the ends of the earth; say, “The LORD
has redeemed his servant Jacob.”

[21] They did not thirst when he led them through the
deserts; he made water flow for them from the rock;
he split the rock and water gushed out.

[22] “There is no peace,” says the LORD, “for the
wicked.”

SIXTH DAY

Review Isaiah 40-48

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