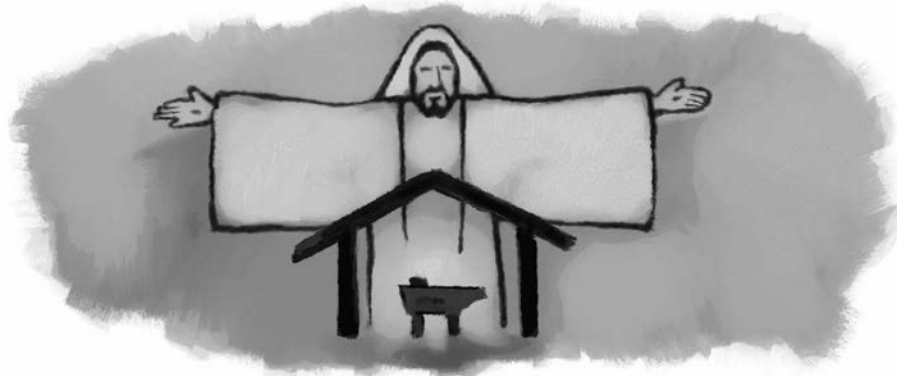


Prince of Peace



SABBATH—JANUARY 23

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Isaiah 9:1–5; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Isaiah 9:8 to Isaiah 10:34; Isaiah 11; Isaiah 12:1–6.

MEMORY VERSE: “A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counselor [Teacher], Powerful God, Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6, ICB).



Jesus is the only One who can give us real and everlasting peace.

“**DR. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER** was in charge of the team that built the first atom bomb. Dr. Oppenheimer answered questions about the bomb from a group of lawmakers in the United States. The group asked Dr. Oppenheimer if there was anything to keep humans safe from the atom bomb.

“‘Of course,’ Dr. Oppenheimer said.

“‘And what is that?’ the lawmakers asked.

“Dr. Oppenheimer looked at the group. ‘Peace,’ he said.”
—Paul Lee Tan, editor, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times* (Rockville, MD: Assurance Publishers, 1979), page 989, adapted.

Peace is just a dream for most people. Someone said that the earth has been at peace for only about 8% of its history. History shows us that humans broke at least 8,000 agreements (Paul Lee Tan, page 987, adapted). Many people believed World War One would be the last war ever fought.

This week we will read about the only One who can give us real and everlasting peace: Jesus.

NO MORE SAD HEARTS FOR THE ONES WHO SUFFERED (Isaiah 9:1–5)

Isaiah 9:1, ERV, Nlrv, ICB, and NLV, starts with the word “ ‘but.’ ” When a sentence starts with “but,” we see that something new or different is about to happen. What change does Isaiah 9:1 show us? How is the change different from what we see in Isaiah 8?

Isaiah 8:21, 22 shows us what happens to people who turn from God to evil spirits. They lose all hope. The Lord says, “ ‘They will look around them at their land. And they will see only trouble and darkness and awful gloom [no hope]. And they will be forced into the darkness’ ” (Isaiah 8:22, ICB). **But** a time will come when “ ‘there will be no more heavy hearts for those [people in Galilee] who were suffering’ ” (Isaiah 9:1, NLV). God chooses the people in Galilee above all His people for a special blessing. Isaiah 9:2, Nlrv, tells us what this special blessing is: “ ‘The people who are now living in darkness will see a great [surprising and powerful] light.’ ” The light is a word picture for Jesus. Then God “ ‘will make the nation [Israel] grow’ ” (Isaiah 9:3, ERV). That will happen because God “will take away the rod that the enemy used to punish [His] people” (Isaiah 9:4, ERV).

Why does Isaiah name Galilee? Because Galilee was one of the first parts of land that Israel lost in war. When Ahaz asked Tiglath-pileser the Third for help, Tiglath-pileser took Galilee and the Transjordan area. Tiglath-pileser made these areas part of his kingdom (2 Kings 15:29). He also carried away some of the people who lived there. So, the message of Isaiah is: the first lands lost to Assyria will be the first lands that God makes free.

What does God use to make His people free? For the answer, read Isaiah 9:6, 7. When does God make the special message in Isaiah 9:1–5 happen? And how does He do that? Also read Matthew 4:12–25.

Where does Jesus start His work for God on earth? In Galilee, of course! Jesus announces the Good News about the kingdom of God in Galilee. He heals the sick. He makes people free who are controlled by demons (Matthew 4:24).

The work of Jesus is a perfect example of how Old Testament happenings and promises show us the things that will happen in New Testament times.



Jesus heals the sick.

A CHILD FOR US (Isaiah 9:6, 7)

Now we will read about another special Child that will be born. This is the third special Child that Isaiah talks about. As we saw last week, Isaiah told us about Immanuel and Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

What is special about the Child in Isaiah 9:6, 7?

Do you see that this Child has several names? These names show us many things about Him. In Bible times, kings and gods had many names to show that they were powerful.

The Child that Isaiah talks about “ ‘will be Wonderful’ ” (Isaiah 9:6, ERV). In the same way, the Angel of the LORD tells the father of Samson that His name is “ ‘too wonderful for you to understand’ ” (Judges 13:18, ICB; in both verses, the word written as “wonderful” comes from the same Hebrew word.) Then the Angel of the LORD goes up to heaven in the fire on the altar where Manoah burns animal offerings to God. In this way, the Angel of the LORD shows us that He will offer Himself for our sins more than 1,000 years later.

The special Child also is from heaven. He is named “ ‘Powerful God’ ” and the “ ‘Father Who Lives Forever’ ” (Isaiah 9:6, ERV). Luke tells us that Jesus is the future “son of Adam,” who is “the son of God” (Luke 3:38, ERV).

This special Child that Isaiah talks about also is a King from the line of David. This King will have an everlasting kingdom. He will be a King of peace.

Look at all these things about this special Child. Who is the only Person that this Child can be? For the answer, read Luke 2:8–14.



Jesus is born to us. He comes to save us and give us peace.

Some people have tried to say that this special Child is King Hezekiah. But the Bible shows us that this Child is more than an ordinary human. Only one person fits: Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God, who came to us from heaven. He is the One who made this earth and every good thing in it (John 1:1–3, 14; Colossians 1:15–17; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:2). Jesus is born to us. He comes to save us and give us peace. He is with us always (Matthew 28:18–20). He continued to be God when He came to us. At the same time, He also became human. That is why He knows how weak we really are. He understands our fight against sin.

THE ROD OF GOD'S ANGER (Isaiah 9:8 to Isaiah 10:34)

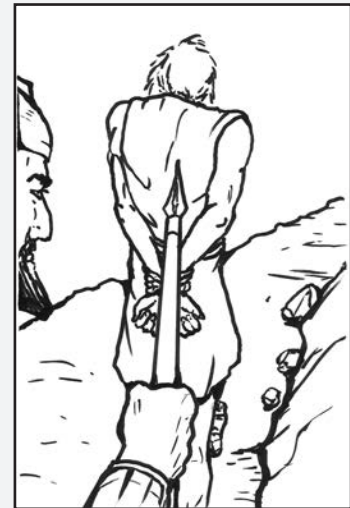
Isaiah 9:8 to Isaiah 10:34 shows us that God will make His people free one day from their enemies. His people are sad because they trusted evil spirits for advice. Then the Assyrian army beat God's people in war and took away many people from Israel as prisoners. But Isaiah promises that the time will come when God will "take away the rod that the enemy used to punish your people, as you did when you defeated [beat] Midian" (Isaiah 9:4, ERV).

Read about the sufferings of the people of God in Isaiah 9:8 to Isaiah 10:34. Compare their suffering with the curses in Leviticus 26:14–39. Why does God punish His people a little bit at a time, and not all at one time? What does this show us about God and His plan for our lives?

If God wants to destroy His people, He can let the Assyrians do it right away. But God is patient. He "doesn't want anyone to be lost. He wants everyone to change their ways and stop sinning" (2 Peter 3:9, ERV). God lets Israel and Judah see that bad things happen because of their poor choices. God wants His people to understand that what they do is wrong. God wants His people to have a chance to make better decisions. But the people of God continue to do evil. They turn their hearts against God and His special messengers. So, God stops protecting His people. But they keep fighting against God. This keeps happening until God cannot do anything more to save His people.

Read again Isaiah 9:8 to Isaiah 10:34. What sins are the people guilty of doing? Who do they sin against? Who is guilty?

What we see here is the power of free will or choice. God made humans free. He had to. If we are not free, we cannot really love Him. When you have free will, you can choose to sin. When we sin, God chooses to bring us back to Himself again. He does this by showing us His love. Because He loves us, He often does not protect us from our wrong decisions. He lets us feel the pain, suffering, and fear that come from our bad choices. Then we will see what our turning away from Him leads us to. Even so, many people do not turn away from sin and come back to God. Free will is a wonderful gift. But we must not use it in the wrong way.



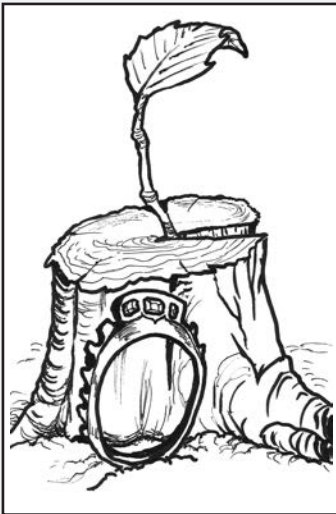
God lets Israel and Judah see that bad things happen because of their poor choices.

JESUS: THE ROOT AND THE BRANCH (Isaiah 11)

Read Isaiah 11:1. The family of King David is named “Jesse’s family” in Isaiah 11:1, NlrV. Isaiah says that the family of Jesse is the same as a tree that has been cut down. A new little tree will grow out of the dead tree. Who is the “new little tree” a word picture for? (Read Zechariah 3:8 and Zechariah 6:12 for the answer.)

The “stump [the part of the tree left in the ground after the tree is cut down] of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:11, ERV) is a word picture. Jesse is the name of the father of King David. So, the stump shows us that the future sons of King David will lose power (compare Daniel 4:10–17, 20–26). But “a small tree” (Isaiah 11:1, ERV) or a “branch” (Isaiah 11:1, ERV) will grow from the dead stump. This word picture shows us that a new king will come from the family of David.

This new king is named the “branch” (Isaiah 11:1, ERV). He also is named “the Root of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:10, NlrV). How can the new king be the same as a branch from the family tree of Jesse if the new king also is the same as a root that started the tree? How can this saying make any sense? (For the answer, read Revelation 22:16.)



A “‘branch’ ” (Isaiah 11: 1, ERV) will grow from the dead stump. This word picture shows us that a new king will come from the family of David.

The only answer that makes sense is Jesus Christ. He is the “ ‘beginning of David and of his family’ ” (Revelation 22:16, NLV) or the “ ‘Root and the Son of David’ ” (Revelation 22:16, NlrV). Jesus is a future Son of David (Luke 3:23–31). Jesus also comes from Adam, who is the “son of God” (Luke 3:38, ERV). How is Adam the son of God? Jesus made him (read John 1:1–3, 14). So, Jesus is both the early father of David and the future son of David too!

What does the new King do to solve the problem of sin and evil? For the answer, read Isaiah 11.

The new King punishes evil people. He brings peace. The new King will make His people free. He will bring them back to live in Israel and Judah (compare Isaiah 10:20–22). He will rule both lands again the same as King David did. But the new King will be more powerful than David. The new King will bring peace to all living things. Then animals will not eat other animals. They will live together in peace (Isaiah 11:6–9).

SHOW YOUR LOVE TO ME (Isaiah 12:1–6)

Isaiah 12 is a short song of praise to God. The song praises God for His mercy and His strong comfort. The song is sung by a member of Israel after God brings the Jews back to their land. The singer compares God's promise of making His people free to the time when God saved His people from slavery in Egypt (read Isaiah 11:16). The song is much the same as the song that Moses and the Israelites sang when God saved them from the army of Pharaoh at the Red Sea (read Exodus 15).

Compare this song in Isaiah 12 to the song of Moses and the Lamb in Revelation 15:2–4. What are both songs praising God for?

Isaiah 12:2 hints that the coming Savior is Jesus. The verse says: “ ‘God is the one who saves me’ ” (Isaiah 12:2, ERV). The name of Jesus means that “ ‘he will save his people from their sins’ ” (Matthew 1:21, ERV).

Why is the name of Jesus important? What does it show us that He will do?

The Lord saves us (Isaiah 12:2). He also is the **way** that we are saved. Jesus is the Holy One of Israel. He is with us (Isaiah 12:6). That promise means everything to us. Think about it: God is with us! Wow! Jesus worked miracles. He also **became** one of us when He “became a man” (John 1:14, ERV) and “made his home with us” (John 1:14, Nlrv). He died for our sins. He also **became** sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus makes peace. He also **is** our peace (Ephesians 2:14).

Now we understand why Isaiah says that the future king from the family of Jesse is so special. “He will be like [the same as] a banner [flag] that brings nations [people groups] together” (Isaiah 11:10, Nlrv). When Jesus is nailed to the cross, He brings all people to Himself (John 12:32, 33)! A small group shall come back to the “Mighty God” (Isaiah 10:21, Nlrv). Our God is the Child born for us. He is the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6, ERV)!

Read Romans 3:24. Our works will never be good enough to save us. What does it mean that Jesus is the way that we are saved? How does this Bible truth give you hope?



Isaiah 12 is a short song of praise to God.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: “The human father wants with all his heart everything good for his son. The father looks into the face of his little child. The heart of the father fills with fear when he thinks about all the evil that can happen in this life. He wants to protect his child from the power of Satan. The father wants to keep his son away from sin and fighting. God felt all these things that a father feels. Only more. He gave His only Son to make sure that our little ones can be saved.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 49, adapted.

“Jesus Himself agrees to do the work that is necessary to save humans. No angel or man can do this important work. The Son of Man is the only one who can die on the cross. Only God can do what is necessary to save us. Jesus agrees to connect Himself with sinners. They are not loyal to God. Jesus agrees to become human, the same as we are. He gives His own blood. He becomes an offering for sin. In heaven, God measured the guilt of humans. The anger of God at sin is very deep. God sees that it will cost a lot to save humans. But Jesus announces His decision. He will be responsible for doing everything necessary to give hope to sinners.”—Ellen G. White, *The Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1896, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

① As we saw in Isaiah 11, the Lord showed us both comings of Jesus in one picture. This may help explain why some of the Jews do not accept Jesus at His First Coming. They expect Jesus to do the things that will happen only at the Second Coming. How does their mistake help us see why it is important that we understand Bible teaching about what will happen at the Second Coming? How can false ideas about the Second Coming of Jesus cause people to believe the end-time lies of Satan? (For the answer, read Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, chapter 39.)



“The human father wants with all his heart everything good for his son.”

Summary: The name Isaiah means “The LORD saves.” In the time of Isaiah, God promises to save His people from the dark times ahead. The people turned away from God. So, their sins will bring awful punishments in the future. But God promises His people hope. The hope is Jesus. His name means “The LORD is the Way that we are saved.”

THREE LOST BOYS

“Marta, I want to talk to you,” says Grandmother Ana. Marta Aguirre is a nurse. Her husband Luis Arboine is a doctor. Marta and Luis enjoy Mexican Independence Day celebrations in their town when Grandmother Ana comes to them. Ana used to be a patient of Luis and Marta.

Grandmother Ana explains that her son-in-law died seven days ago. He was only 33. He died of a heart attack. His wife has been in prison for the past eight years. The couple have three sons who are 10, 9, and 7. Grandmother Ana must now care for the boys. But Grandmother Ana is not working. She does not have money to take care of them. The boys cry a lot.

“I do not know what to do,” Grandmother Ana says.

Marta also is not sure. So, she asks her pastor. He tells Marta to invite the boys to a week of prayer for children. The meetings are all about horses. The program starts in three weeks.

Grandmother Ana agrees to send her grandsons to the meetings. The oldest grandson is 10-year-old Juan. He has not been in a church. So, at first, Juan does not want to go to the meetings at all. The middle grandson is 9-year-old Luis. Luis never heard about God before. He wants to learn more. Luis cries when he learns about Jesus dying for his sins. Luis remembers his own father dying. The youngest boy is 7-year-old Francisco. At first, Francisco sleeps most of the time at the meetings.

Soon the boys cannot wait to go to the meetings. Grandmother Ana sees the boys wearing new clothes that the church members give them. So, Grandmother Ana thinks that maybe the boys want to go to church to get more presents. Grandmother is surprised when she learns that her grandsons do not care about the new clothes. They want to learn more about Jesus.

The boys fall in love with Jesus during the week of prayer. They go to church every Sabbath after the meetings end. Marta starts to give the boys Bible studies every Sabbath afternoon.

Six months later, the pastor invites the boys to a church campout for kids. The boys love worship time. At one worship, a 9-year-old boy talks. The boy is disabled. So, he cannot do some things that other children can do. The boy announces that he wants to be baptized. Luis is touched by the announcement. He decides that he also wants to give his heart to Jesus. His brothers do too. The church is filled with people on that day.

Today the boys are 15, 14, and 12. They are in charge of the videos for their church each Sabbath. Luis has preached six sermons. He hopes to be a pastor. “The boys are different now,” Grandmother Ana says. “I thank Marta and her husband, Luis.”

But Luis says that the Holy Spirit gets all the praise. “It is the Holy Spirit who does the work,” he says.

INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



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