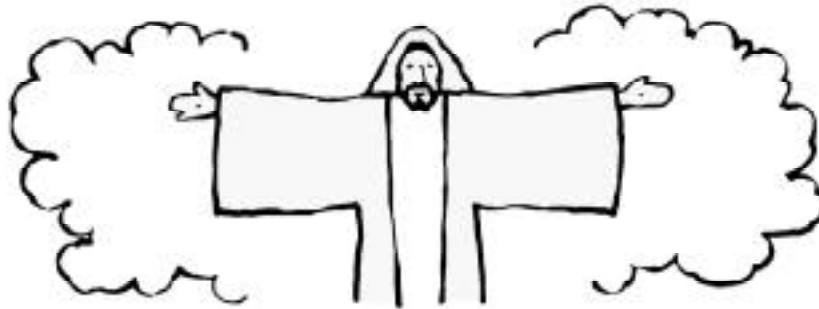


Noble¹ Prince of Peace



SABBATH—APRIL 24

“THE PEOPLE CRY, PEACE, PEACE, WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE.” Dr. Robert Oppenheimer was the leader of a group which created the first atomic bomb. He was called to face a committee in the United States. This committee asked him if there was any defense against the atomic bomb. Dr. Oppenheimer answered, “Yes!”

Then Dr. Oppenheimer looked over the quiet committee members and said softly, “The defense against the atomic bomb is peace.”

Lasting peace is a dream that escapes the human race. Since the beginning of history, the world has been entirely at peace only about 8 percent of the time. During this 8 percent of time, at least 8,000 treaties² have been broken. During the 50 years after the end of World War I, there were two minutes of peace for every year of war.

In 1895, Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, established a fund to give a prize for individuals who make great contributions to peace. But in recent years, even some winners of the Nobel Peace Prize have been involved in war.

This week, we will read about the only Person who can bring true peace.

A LOOK AT THIS WEEK’S LESSON: Who is the Child named in the prophecy of Isaiah 9? What kind of peace and freedom would He bring? How are both of Jesus’ comings described in Isaiah 11?

MEMORY VERSE: “A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And he will be our ruler. He will be called ‘Wonderful Counselor,’ ‘Mighty God,’ ‘Eternal’³ Father,’ ‘Prince of Peace’ ” (Isaiah 9:6, TEV).

¹noble—good; without fault; fair.

²treaties—agreements between nations that allow for peace.

³eternal—without beginning or end; lasting forever.

SUNDAY—APRIL 25

END OF GLOOM (SADNESS) FOR GALILEE (Isaiah 9:1-5).

Why does Isaiah 9:1 show that something would come that was very different from the way things were when Isaiah wrote?

Isaiah 8:21, 22 describes the hopeless people who depend on evil spirits rather than on the true God. Everywhere they will “see nothing but trouble and darkness, terrifying darkness, into which they are being driven” (Isaiah 8:22, TEV). But there will come a time when “there will be no gloom for those [people] who were in anguish [suffering]” (Isaiah 9:1). The people of the Galilee area are chosen to receive the special blessing of “a great light” (Isaiah 9:2). The people will multiply and be joyful because God will have broken “the rod [control] of their oppressor [enemy]” (Isaiah 9:4).

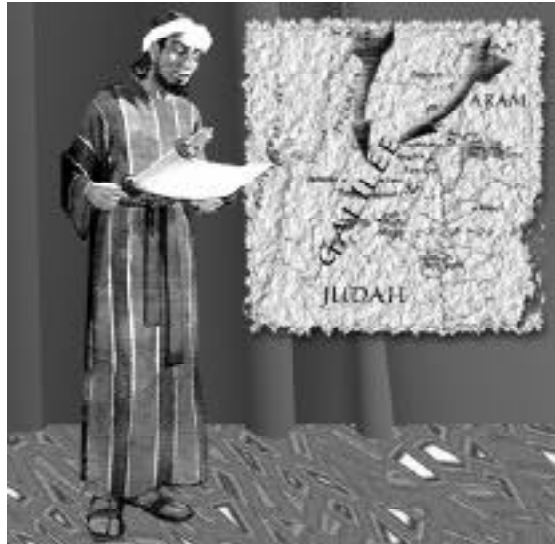
Galilee is shown in Isaiah 9:1-5 because it was among the first territories (lands) of Israel to fall under Assyria’s control. When Ahaz⁴ asked for help, Tiglath-pileser III⁵ took the Galilee and Transjordanian areas of northern Israel. He carried some of the people away as slaves and turned the territories into Assyrian states (2 Kings 15:29). So Isaiah’s message is that the first people to fall would be the first people to be freed and saved.

⁴Ahaz—Judah’s 12th king.

⁵Tiglath-pileser III—a strong king of Assyria.

⁶demoniacs—people who had demons or evil spirits.

⁷events—things that happen.



Who does God use to save His people? Isaiah 9:6, 7.

When and how was the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-5 fulfilled? Matthew 4:12-25.

Jesus’ early ministry (work) was in the Galilee area. This is where He gave hope by announcing the good news of God’s kingdom and by healing people. Jesus also freed demoniacs⁶ from slavery to evil spirits (Matthew 4:24). Here is a perfect example of how the Bible uses Old Testament events⁷ as symbols to say what will happen in New Testament times. God mixed symbols from one time period with symbols of another time period. For example, in Matthew 24, Jesus used the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 as a symbol of the end of the world.

If someone were to ask you what Jesus freed you from, what would you answer? What personal testimony⁸ can you give about the power of Jesus in you life?

MONDAY—APRIL 26

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

Here is the third special birth in the book of Isaiah. This follows the births of Immanuel⁹ and Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

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

This Child has several names that describe Him in different ways. In the ancient¹⁰ Near East, kings and gods had different names to show their greatness.

The Child is “wonderful.” In the same way, the Angel of the Lord (Jesus) described His own name to Samson’s father as “wonderful” (Judges 13:18). The Angel then went up toward heaven in the flame of sacrifice from Manoah’s altar (Judges 13:20). This was to serve as a symbol of His offering Himself on the cross more than 1,000 years later.

The Child is introduced as God (“Mighty God”) and the eternal Creator (“Everlasting¹¹ Father”; Luke 3:38—“Adam, son of God”).

The Child is a king from David’s family. His kingdom of peace will be eternal.

Think about the names of the Child in Isaiah 9:6, 7. Who alone could this Child be? Luke 2:8-14.

Some people say the child is King Hezekiah.¹² But Isaiah 9:6, 7 shows Someone who is far better than any human person. Only one Person fits: Jesus, the Son of God and the Creator (Colossians 1:15-17; Colossians 2:9; John 1:1-3, 14; Hebrews 1; Hebrews 2). He was born to us to save us and to give us peace. He has received all authority (power) in heaven and on earth. He is with us always (Matthew 28:18-20). While He is still God, He also became a human for all time. Being human, He can understand our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15). “Unto us a child is born” . . . forever!



⁸testimony—what you say about Jesus based on what He has done for you.

⁹Immanuel—a promised Child expected to be born soon. The name *Immanuel* means “God with us.” The Child turned out to be Jesus, who was born about 725 years later, fulfilling this prophecy.

¹⁰ancient—very old.

¹¹everlasting—lasting forever; without beginning or end.

¹²Hezekiah—one of Judah’s later kings. Hezekiah was a good king who made mistakes late in his life.

“When Jesus came to our world, Satan was on earth. Satan tried to fight Jesus from the time Jesus was born until the time Jesus died. Satan blamed God for requiring the angels to deny themselves. But Satan himself knew nothing about denying himself. Satan would not make any sacrifice for other angels or people. He just blamed God for not denying Himself. After Satan was removed from heaven, Satan continued to blame God for not doing Himself what He wanted people to do. So Jesus came to the world to show us what God is really like.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 407, 408.

What does this quote tell us about God’s character?

TUESDAY—APRIL 27

GOD’S ANGER (Isaiah 9:8–10:34).

Isaiah 9:8–10:34 explains Isaiah 9:1-5. Isaiah 9:1-5 is a prophecy about freedom for the suffering people. They were the same people who had trusted in evil spirits and who had fallen under Assyrian control. Read Isaiah 9:4.

How did God’s people suffer? Isaiah 9:8-10. Compare¹³ Isaiah 9:8-10 with Leviticus 26:14-39. Why did God punish His people a little at a time rather than all at once? What does this show about God’s character and goals?

¹³compare—show how things are the same.

If God had wanted to destroy His people, He could have given them to the Assyrians right away. But He is patient, “because he does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all [people] to turn away from their sins” (2 Peter 3:9, TEV). As in the time of the “judges,” God let the people of Judah and Israel experience some results of their foolishness. This experience helped them understand what they were doing and gave them a chance to make better choices. When they were stubborn and continued in their evil ways, God sent His messengers with appeals. When they did not listen to these appeals, He further withdrew His protection. But the people continued to rebel again and again until there was nothing more God could do.

What sins are the people of Israel guilty of? Against whom have they sinned? Who is guilty among them? Isaiah 9:8–10:2.

What we see here and all through the Bible is the work of free will. God made humans free to choose to love Him. (He had to make humans free to choose to love Him because without that freedom they could never truly love Him.) This freedom means people can choose to do wrong. Often God tries to lead us to Him by showing us His love. He also will let us suffer the results of our wrong choices. These results include pain, suffering, fear, and trouble. He does all these things to help us understand what it means to

choose to turn away from Him. But even then, His love and the results of our wrong choices do not always help people to put away sin and come to God. Free will is wonderful. We could not be human without free will. But it is so sad when people use free will to make bad choices.



God gave Adam and Eve the freedom to choose to love Him.

How has God used suffering in your life to turn you away from a wrong choice? (Or are you still making wrong choices?)

WEDNESDAY—APRIL 28

**ROOT AND BRANCH IN ONE
(Isaiah 11).**

Who is the “shoot” that comes out “from the stump of Jesse” in Isaiah 11:1? Read also Zechariah 3:8; Zechariah 6:12.

¹⁴ancestor—a relative who has lived before you.

¹⁵restore—to make something as it was in the beginning.

¹⁶remnant—a small group of God’s faithful people.

Isaiah 11:1 uses the same symbol of a fallen tree as does Isaiah 10:33, 34. David is the son of Jesse. The “stump of Jesse” shows the idea that David’s family would lose its power (Daniel 4:10-17, 20-26). But there would arise a “shoot/branch” from the dead “stump.” That means a ruler would come from David’s family.

Why is the new ruler from David’s family also called the “root of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:10)? What sense does this make? Revelation 22:16.

The “root” or “shoot” describes Jesus. He is both “the root and the descendant [future Child] of David” (Revelation 22:16). Jesus came from the family of David (Luke 3:23-31). He also came from Adam, who was the “son of God” (Luke 3:38). This suggests that Jesus created Adam (John 1:1-3, 14). In this way, Jesus was both David’s ancestor¹⁴ and his descendant!

How does the new Ruler from David’s family stop sin and backsliding? Isaiah 11.

The new Ruler thinks and acts according to God’s will. He fairly punishes wicked people, and brings peace. When He takes over, God will bring back, restore,¹⁵ and unite a faithful remnant¹⁶ of Israel and Judah (Isaiah 10:20-22). There will be a strong, united kingdom, the same as in the days of King David. King David defeated the Philistines and other people. But the

new Ruler will be greater than David. The new Ruler will make things as peaceful as the world was when God created it. For example, animals will no longer eat other animals. All animals will live in peace with one another (Isaiah 11:6-9).

Mark which verses in Isaiah 11 are talking about Jesus' first coming and which verses are talking about His second coming.

In Isaiah 11, both comings of Jesus are presented as one picture. Both comings are tied together because they are two parts of a whole, the same as the two sides of a coin. The "coin" of salvation requires both comings to be complete. The First Coming already happened. We await the Second Coming as the fulfillment of all our hopes as Christians.



The "coin" of salvation requires both Jesus' first coming and His second coming. Both are part of salvation.

What did Jesus do at the First Coming that gives us hope for the Second Coming? What purpose does the First Coming serve if it does not lead to the Second Coming?

THURSDAY—APRIL 29

**"YOU COMFORTED ME"
(Isaiah 12:1-6).**

Isaiah 12 is a short psalm of praise to God for His merciful¹⁷ and powerful comfort. Isaiah 12 was to be sung by the people after they were no longer captives of Assyria. Isaiah 12 compares their freedom from Assyria to the freedom the Hebrews experienced in the Exodus from Egypt (Isaiah 11:16; Exodus 13). Isaiah 12 is almost the same as the song of Moses and the Israelites when God saved them from Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea (Exodus 15).

Revelation 15:2-4 is the song of Moses and the Lamb (Jesus). What are both Isaiah 12 and Revelation 15:2-4 praising God for?

Isaiah 12:2 comes close to naming the coming Savior as Jesus. It says that "God is my salvation" and "he has become my salvation." The name Jesus means, "the Lord is Salvation" (compare Matthew 1:21).

What is the importance of Jesus' name?

God *does* salvation (Isaiah 12:2). He also *is* salvation. The Holy One of Israel (Jesus) with us (Isaiah 12:6) is everything to us. *God is with us!* Jesus *did* miracles. He also "became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14). Jesus *accepted* our sins

¹⁷merciful—to be full of mercy. Mercy is kindness we do not deserve.

on the cross. He also *became* sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus *makes* peace. He also *is* our peace (Ephesians 2:14).

So it is no surprise that “the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples” (Isaiah 11:10)! When Jesus is lifted up on the cross, He draws (pulls) all people to Himself (John 12:32, 33)! A remnant shall return to the Mighty God (Isaiah 10:21). This Mighty God is the Child (Jesus) born for us. He is the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6)!

Think more about the idea that Jesus is our salvation. Romans 3:24 says that salvation is in Jesus. Salvation is something that happened in Him. Through God’s grace and mercy, we can have an eternal part in that salvation too. The salvation that was in Him can become our salvation by faith, instead of by works. No works we do are good enough to save us. Only the works Jesus did can bring salvation. He credits (gives) His works to us when we have faith in Him. How does this truth give you hope of salvation, especially when you feel you are so unworthy?

FRIDAY—APRIL 30

ADDITIONAL STUDY: “A human father looks into the face of his little child and trembles (shakes) at the thought of life’s danger. He wants to protect his child from Satan’s power. He wants to keep his child from temptation and trouble. To meet a more bitter struggle and a more fearful risk, God gave His only begotten Son. God gave His Son so life might be made

¹⁸oppression—when people are not treated fairly.

sure for our children. God’s giving His Son is true love.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 49.

“Jesus agreed to do what needed to be done for our salvation. No angel, no person, was enough for the great work of salvation. The Son of man (Jesus) alone must be lifted up on the cross. Only Jesus as the Son of God could do the job of saving humans. Jesus agreed to connect Himself with sinners, to accept our nature, to give His own blood, and to make His soul an offering for sin. In the courts of heaven, our guilt was measured, the price of sin was figured, and Jesus announced that He would pay this price so we would have hope.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1896.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Isaiah 11 shows both the first and second comings of Jesus. This helps explain why some of the Jews did not accept Jesus at His first coming. They expected Him to do the things that will happen only at the Second Coming. This shows us how important it is for us to understand how Jesus will come the second time. How can false ideas of His second coming set people up for Satan’s great end-time tricks? Read *The Great Controversy [War]*, chapter 39.

SUMMARY: Isaiah’s name means “salvation is of the Lord.” God promised His people salvation from the oppression¹⁸ that was coming upon them as a result of their backsliding. This oppression would come from Assyria. This promise of salvation finds its greatest fulfillment in Jesus, whose name means “the Lord is Salvation.”