

VOLUME 17

THE BIBLE SERIES

A METAPHYSICAL  
AND SYMBOLICAL  
INTERPRETATION OF

**The Bible**

by  
Mildred Mann



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## ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes is unique among the books of the Bible, for it is the only one that does not emphasize the necessity of putting God first. The author was an original thinker whose writings conveyed the individualistic and cosmopolitan spirit of his time. His worldly and rationalistic outlook on life was quite the opposite of that of the prophets who believed in an indwelling God, and who proclaimed His Word and worked towards strengthening the Israelites' faith in Him. The author of Ecclesiastes never sought oracular or spiritual inspiration but taught only those truths which, through observation and experience, he understood to give meaning to existence, and which were to him the only guideposts to life. He did not teach that man must fear God or be obedient to Him but stressed reliance on man's own inner resources.

The wonders of God's creation never filled him with reverence and awe. To him the rhythmic ebb and flow, the eternal cycle of death and renewal of nature's processes represented the inexorable turning of the wheel of existence, an impersonal Force, remote from man and his cares. In chapter 1:47 he gives a graphic description of this seemingly purposeless repetitiousness: "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever. The sun also ariseth and the sun goeth down and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north: it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."

This endless cycle fills him with weariness, a sense of the futility of life and the insuperable distance between God and man. And yet, in spite of this, he has an optimistic attitude towards existence and blithely teaches that the good things of life are well worthwhile, transient though they be. The whole book presents a skeptic's viewpoint of life that can be summed up in one phrase: "What's the use."

The title "Preacher," does not have the same meaning

as that of "rabbi," or "prophet," but is derived from the Hebrew word "Koheleth," which is generally given the meaning of "one who addresses an assembly," or "one who collects or gathers" and therefore indicates very definitely that this book belongs to the Wisdom literature of Israel. Its teaching was not given to the general public, but to a select few. It is therefore rather astonishing to find it in our Bible.

Who the author of this book actually was has never been established to everybody's satisfaction. He speaks of himself as a "son of David," but then, everybody who came after David called himself that. It is however known that the book was written around 180 B.C. and its language is basically Hebrew interspersed with Aramaic phrases.

The book was used in the Temple at Jerusalem on the third day of the Feast of the Tabernacle, or the Feast of Rejoicing. It is the Harvest Festival and, with the offering of the first fruits to God, Ecclesiastes was read to remind the Jews not to be too joyful, for "all is vanity." This is still done today.

Another thing that makes this book unique is the fact that it is not a product of orthodox Judaism. At this period in Jewish history, the development and change in the Hebrew people's concept of God has already reached the point where they believe in the importance of ritual and sacrifice. Then the Preacher appears on the scene—a man who evaluates life from a purely physical point of view, in which sacrifice and ritual have no place. He teaches of a God who created the universe and all that is in it, and established order in this universe so that there is a time and a season for all things. He states flatly that man is little better than the animals, an idea quite contrary to the thought of the time, and to that expressed by the Psalmist: "I have said ye are gods: and all of you are children of the most High" Ps. 82:6. The Preacher does not even mention Yahweh, nor does he touch on the Messianic concept. There is in fact no room in his philosophy for such a possibility.

This great mind studied the history of Israel, and found—as we have found—that Jehovah's promises were not always kept. He found that the people still experienced famine, war, and exile, despite the fact that a covenant between Yahweh and the chosen people had been made. The prophets' explanation for this was that the people did not live up to their side of the covenant and therefore automatically nullified God's obligations. The Preacher does not accept this explanation. He takes a philosophical view

of the matter and believes that God is completely removed from the affairs of men. God has established a system of natural order—very close to our present day acceptance of the laws of Nature—and left man very much on his own.

Ecclesiastes exhibits a penetrating knowledge of human nature and implies that man needs Divine Wisdom, yet the Preacher does not know what this Wisdom is, and makes no effort to describe it. He looks upon God as a completely Impersonal Power and believes that man is here to make the best of what he has. He tells us that the person who does not get all the enjoyment out of life that he can, is a fool. He is completely materialistic and confines his philosophy of life entirely to individual reaction.

Ecclesiastes certainly could have been written for the twentieth century, for most people of this age believe that the right philosophy is to "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die;" to do as they please, but to be smart enough to keep just within the law. Today, that is considered intelligence and shrewdness. Obviously mankind has not progressed much since the Preacher's day.

CHAPTER 1. In the first 11 verses the Preacher speaks of the apparently aimless repetitiousness of nature's ceaseless activity. In the final verses he deals with the futility of human life.

CHAPTER 2. This chapter may be summed up in six words: "You can't take it with you," or as a friend of mine so succinctly puts it: "There are no pockets in shrouds." Neither worldly goods nor learning, the Preacher tells us, has permanence. In the end, the rich man and the wise man end exactly as the fool does. From a material point of view this is of course true.

CHAPTER 3 is to some degree rather similar to Job's demand for recognition from God. Job's cry was more personal than the Preacher's, who also feels that he is caught up in a tremendous injustice—the futility of life. He is perplexed by the never ending train of opposites that obscure God's purpose, and stresses the fact that there is no moral order to be obeyed. Man is born, grows to manhood, ages and dies. That is all. "Vanity, all is vanity" is the theme of his philosophical observations. This differs completely from anything that has ever been presented in the Bible before or after this book. It teaches that everything is predetermined and what we do is of no great consequence—death alone is the victor.

In CHAPTER 4 the Preacher points out the wisdom and advantages that lie in working in cooperation with others rather

than in competition with them.

In CHAPTER 5 he tells us to worship God with humility. Rather cynically, he warns us not to be surprised at injustice and corruption for we are all subject to the temptation of graft. It is good for man to remember that "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labor, which he may carry away in his hand" (v.15). He does, however, think that it is a good idea while still on earth to use and enjoy the riches God has given us.

CHAPTER 6 points to the fact that many wealthy people are very often the most miserable in the world. He says that the only satisfaction in this life is to live in the immediate moment and to enjoy the good that God has provided.

CHAPTER 7: Here the Preacher brings out the fact that the wise man also is subject to corruption. God has created man to be upright but man has discovered perfidious ways by which he thinks he can make life more enjoyable. Laughter, the Preacher says, is for fools and even the getting of wisdom ends in the grave.

CHAPTER 8: The Preacher says that man cannot solve the riddle of life. When he tells us that he has seen the good man suffer and the wicked prosper, he is speaking from the point of view of one lifetime. He sees only one segment of man's Karmic patterns.

CHAPTER 9: Though the Preacher again stresses the fact that death is inevitable, he none the less believes that it is better to be alive than to be dead, for while there is life there is hope. Those who are dead do not know anything nor do they have any further experience.

CHAPTER 10: The Preacher points out that a foolish man may occupy a high place, but it is the wise man who smooths the paths of mankind. A fool's tongue will often give him away, but the words of a wise man exalt him.

CHAPTER 11: Wisdom can give a person a zest for living to the utmost of his ability. There is not too much we can do about changing our circumstances but having the wisdom to grasp life's opportunities and taking a few chances all help to make life more palatable. Being philosophical about the way of life enhances the enjoyment of it.

The Preacher does not believe that God is interested in man as a person. He has established a pattern to which man must conform whether man is willing to do so or not. There is no escape, so man might as well learn to live his life with all the grace

he can. The Preacher worships God because he believes that God is a Power, but on the other hand he is perfectly sure that it does not matter how good man is, God makes no moral demands on him. Some men are good because that nature is expressing through him and others are bad for the same reason. There is not much that can be done about it. If a man is good, he can acquire wisdom, while the evil man will become more so as time goes on. Ultimately, both of them end up in the same place.

In CHAPTER 12 the Preacher reminds us to remember our Creator while we are young and before our infirmities are upon us. Then he gives a charming and poetic description of these infirmities. "Grinders" that "cease because they are few" refer to the teeth of the aged; "those that look out of the windows be darkened," are the eyes with failing light; "the doors shall be shut in the streets when the sound of the grinding is low;" are the ears that do not hear so well; "he shall rise up at the voice of the bird" indicates that the aged sleep very little and usually rise at dawn.

Verse 5 symbolizes desire. The almond tree has always been an aphrodisiac, but, says the Preacher, it will do the aged no good. There is nothing left for the old to do but to sit down and philosophize about the meaning of life for his next step is the grave. The "silver cord" is symbolical of death and refers to the etheric cord that is attached to the physical body, the "golden bowl" symbolizes the Spirit. Verses 9 to 11, the first epilogue, were written in praise of the Preacher by a disciple. *The Interpreter's Bible* says that the second epilogue (vss. 12-14) was added by an unknown hand to "safeguard the doctrine of divine retribution."

The Preacher in Ecclesiastes was a philosopher whose mind was constantly seeking answers to what seemed to him the riddles of Life. His desire was to lead a good and ethical life, even though its results seemed futile. However, the Preacher represents a certain stage of growth.

This is really the preliminary step to Mysticism. One thing emerges from the Preacher's advice, and that is one lives up to the highest one knows, even though life seems unfair because it is the only way to live.

"Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise." Eph. 5:14.

M. M.



## SONG OF SOLOMON

Although this book bears Solomon's name, it was not written by him. It has, however, been established that it is of his time, that it originated in the 9th or 10th Century B.C., and that it is perhaps the work of several persons. The Song of Solomon is a poem of great lyrical beauty but its lack of structure and repetitiveness indicates that it is not the finished work of a literary man. Its phraseology is very similar to those of the medieval mystics, whose verbal outpourings about their "union with Christ," as they called it, were filled with sensuous symbols of erotic expression.

Esoterically speaking, the human being finds that he reaches his highest point of development through the realization of the divine aspect called Love. The emotional reaction of the soul which finds union with God can never be accurately described; there are no words for it in any tongue, so the mystic can only use the language of human experience in his effort to give utterance to that which has stirred him so deeply.

It is rather startling and amusing to discover that the Song of Solomon was at one time used as a wine song. Since nobody seemed to understand its hidden meaning, it was sung as a ribald love song by young men in the wine houses on Saturday nights after the Sabbath had ended. The Hebrew priests protested vehemently against this practice, for though they themselves did not understand its meaning, they intuitively sensed its religious nature, and because it had Solomon's name attached to it they wanted it canonized.

The two Rabbis, Hillel and Shammai, who lived in the second century, created quite an uproar about its canonization. Shammai, who considered it indecent, was completely against such a step, but Hillel, who was a much more tolerant

person, thought that it belonged in Scripture, and it was his opinion that finally prevailed. Thereafter, it became part of the Passover service and was read on the eighth day of the Festival in praise of what God had done for his people.

As might be expected, the form and meaning of the Song of Solomon gave rise to a great deal of speculation and discussion among the theologians. Some authorities declared it to be a "song of felicity and marital excellence." Others decided that the story of a king's abduction of a beautiful maiden who resisted his advances, remaining faithful to her love, the shepherd, was a song of loyalty to one's love.

The idea that it was a dramatic allegory, as in the case of the book of Job, was also advanced. The cast was first thought to consist of two characters but it was finally decided that it consisted of three members: the King, the maiden (the Shulamite), and the shepherd.

There were many variations of interpretations given through the years. Among the more interesting was that of Origen, one of the great Bible interpreters of early Christianity, who thought there was a possibility that the Song might represent the celebration of Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter. However, he felt that a deeper allegorical meaning was to be found in the book, namely that the bridegroom was the Christ and the bride the Church. In his commentaries he even went so far as to say that the individual believer was the bride. The Catholic concept that the bride was the Virgin Mary and the Christ was the groom was also popular for a while. Martin Luther interpreted the bride as symbolizing the Hebrew state and the poem as being a song of praise to God by Solomon for the nation's loyalty to him.

Actually, the King symbolizes the active Principle (the intellect), the Shulamite the soul, and the shepherd the Presence of God (the Superconscious). The mystical interpretation is that of a drama of the mentality, the emotions and the Presence of God. The theme is Love and even though it is presented in sensuous terms, there is an amazing purity about

it. It is a song of Love between the soul and her God which comes with the tremendous realization that she is no longer alone. The Presence becomes a conscious reality. The book was written to depict the spiritual ecstasy the individual experienced.

In CHAPTER 1 the word black is a symbol of the subconscious while green stands for "fertility." The various fruits, the spikenards and mandrake, mentioned in this book were considered aphrodisiacs in those days.

CHAPTER 2 portrays the union of the Soul with God (the shepherd) and the intellect's efforts to stop it. The left hand represents that which absorbs and the right that which gives out.

In CHAPTER 3 "mother" symbolizes Nature and "Solomon" wisdom. The "daughters of Jerusalem" are those who have complete peace. The "rose" and "hinds" represent the activity of God. The "watchmen" are the various levels of the mind. "Swords" symbolize watchfulness against the rationalizations of the mind.

CHAPTER 4. The "garden enclosed" refers to the Garden of Eden, which is very often used in connection with the human being and symbolizes "perfection," or "state of perfection;" as everything that is grown in it is in a state of perfection.

CHAPTERS 5-7. These chapters further develop the sense of perfection which dawns in the individual who has experienced God. He reacts with a tremendous sense of humility in the realization that he has participated in this soul-shaking experience. The soul expresses in passionate words of love filled with sensuous images the sublime ecstasy with which the visit from her beloved fills her. When conscious union with the Presence within occurs, there is a complete inner change; an uprooting of the old negative concepts which are the poisons of the soul—the resentments, the fears, all those "little foxes that spoil the vines," (2:15)—and in their place come those positive conditions that are so often symbolically called "the fruits of the spirit."

So you find in these chapters that the garden brings forth everything that is good. The pomegranate, an aphrodisiac, symbolizes the emotional drive behind the soul of the initiate, for you will never find a great mystic who does not have a strong emotional nature. It is the transmutation of love to its highest plane that brings about this outpouring of Love in the only terms that our language provides.

The king represents the mentality who is held captive "in the galleries," which is what must actually happen. "Let us go into the villages," speaks of the consciousness that cannot remain in the Presence of the Beloved too long. Periods between the experiences of the union lessen, but the first encounter does not last more than a few minutes because the human body cannot endure it. The emotions can, but the body cannot, for the vibrations are too high for it.

CHAPTER 8. This chapter is, of course, the epilogue to the Song of Solomon. The sister referred to is the person who has not yet reached the stage of unfoldment at which union with God is possible. The vineyard produces the "fruits of the spirit" and has served as a symbol for this concept in all religions.

I do not know how many of my students are familiar with one of the great mystical poems - "The Hound of Heaven" by Francis Thompson. If you do not know this, I would suggest that you get a copy of it, for this very exquisitely describes the beginning of the "courtship" of the Presence and the soul. The Song of Songs is the culmination of that "courtship".

M. M.

## ISAIAH

With the exception of the first five books of Moses, Isaiah is probably the most important book of the entire Old Testament. From a literary point of view it ranks among the most beautiful.

The book is composed of 66 chapters, which were not all written by the same man. A period of approximately 200 years separates the "First Isaiah," whose works are included in chapters 1-39 and the "Second Isaiah," to whom chapters 40-66 are attributed. Based on evidence found in recent excavations there is reason to believe that the last 26 chapters were written by a "Third Isaiah."

Of the three groups of men who guided the people of Israel—the priests, the prophets and the Wisdom teachers—the prophets were the most prominent and most highly revered. The priests were in charge of the ritualistic side of worship and in a sense were the "treasurers of the Tribes," for they were paid for performing the rituals.

The Wisdom teachers were not so much concerned with the ritualistic side of Hebrew worship, nor were they interested in the prophetic side of the religion. Their main concern was with the living of a good, moral life, and it is this branch of the Hebrew faith that holds sway in Judaism today.

First Isaiah, who is considered the most outstanding of all Hebrew prophets, lived around 700 B.C. It was not, however, the things he said or did that made him greater than the other prophets—Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Nahum, Ezra—it was the spiritual experience we call "direct revelation" that set him apart. He spoke with the voice of authority, as evidenced by some of the phrases he uses, such as "And the Lord said unto me," and "And the Lord hath spoken." Speaking with au-

thority is the mark of the initiate, and it sometimes is a source of annoyance to the uninitiated. When a person has union with God, he hears the Voice within him and knows without a shadow of doubt that it is God speaking to him and through him. The prophet was only about 18 or 20 when he had his great realization of God's Immanence and describes his vision in symbolical terms in chapter 6.

First Isaiah lived during the reign of four kings, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. He was prophet to Uzziah and Jotham, but he retired from public life soon after Ahaz ascended the throne and refused to follow his advice. He returned to public life again under Hezekiah. By then he was in his seventies or eighties and, according to the records of the time, he was still a very healthy, powerful man and a very human person.

The first 39 chapters of Isaiah are composed of his prophecies and memoirs. He wrote frankly and in great detail about everything that happened in his lifetime, and his memoirs reveal that he was a rich, sophisticated man of the city who evidently moved in court circles and possibly sat on the King's Council. He was a married man and the father of several children.

*The Interpreter's Bible* makes a very interesting statement concerning Isaiah. We are told that he believed Yahweh was the exalted One, and they go on to say that "His exaltation must be experienced to be realized, for it is not merely a dimension of infinite immensity and power confronting man, but an absolute moral difference." This is completely true.

CHAPTER 1 is wholly oracular and reference is made in verse 2 to the Fatherhood of God which, contrary to popular belief, is not an exclusively New Testament concept. It also points out that God does not delight in sacrifices.

In CHAPTER 2, we find that as the Israelites began to mingle socially with their neighbors, their allegiance to the Holy One of Israel is weakened. Isaiah does not state that it is wrong for them to mingle with people not of their own

faith, but he does warn them against forsaking their own God for idols.

He was disturbed by the unruliness of the Israelites, and warns them of what will happen if they do not change. He is sufficiently intuitive—another earmark of the initiate—to know that they will not change and that his prophecies will come true. In spite of this inner conviction, he still tries to influence them.

CHAPTER 3: This chapter tells anyone who wants to know what the ladies of the 6th century B.C. wore. It also shows that Isaiah's interests were not confined to religious matters only, but that he had an intimate knowledge of secular affairs too. He was well acquainted with the social and political conditions of his time.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first seven verses deal with social anarchy, since the people are in a rebellious mood; verses 8-12 constitute a threat to the people themselves for rebelling against God's authority; and in verses 13-15 the avaricious and corrupt rulers are threatened with annihilation for exploiting the nation.

Isaiah must have been a tremendously powerful figure in his community, for he does not mince words but speaks more frankly than any other man would have dared. Life was very cheap in those days and prophets did not always have immunity. These men of God were no longer as revered as they had been in the time of Nathan and Samuel. Samuel had been quite a tyrant in his day, and though he blamed God when his prophecies were not always fulfilled, the people never lost their awe of him. Isaiah was completely fearless and though he must have been a thorn in Ahaz' side, the King never dared to lay a finger on him.

CHAPTER 4 is an insert from another writer. It is a song of thanksgiving, an esoteric psalm, and neither the author nor the date of its composition is known. The "daughters of Zion" symbolize the soul that has had conscious contact with God as I have previously pointed out. It is a lovely passage but there



is not much valid symbolism in it. Even the Bible, the greatest book ever written, must be read with a discriminating eye. Those who are wise study it to find out what God has to say to them through its pages, but do not blindly accept everything in it.

The seven women who take hold of one man represent the seven endocrine glands, or the seven Chakras, as the Hindus call them. The man represents the body in symbolism and the subconscious is represented by a woman.

CHAPTER 5 is not part of the prophet's memoirs, nor is it a prophecy. It is a parable. The vineyard is diligently cultivated by its owner and should bear excellent fruit, but does not and is therefore doomed to destruction. The only symbolism in the passage is the vineyard, which grows because it is part of Nature; we grow because it is part of our divine heritage. The fact that "the vineyard" is well tended and yet does not yield according to its potential, indicates that the "bearing of fruit" is man's responsibility, and his care of his responsibility has been superficial.

CHAPTER 6 is distinctly different in tone and content from anything that has gone before. It is an account of the prophet's spiritual experience. He describes a vision he had experienced in complete consciousness, in which he saw Seraphim, the term used for angels, or higher beings (although they in no way resemble our idea of angels), with six wings. The number six represents Service and Love. Wings are the symbol of the uplifted consciousness.

For the space of an instant or an hour—nobody knows for how long—Isaiah's consciousness reached a very high level. He believed that he had seen and been touched by God. Being thus suddenly face to face with his God was a breathtaking experience, one for which he was consciously unprepared. A Voice asks: "Whom shall I send?" and Isaiah answered: "Here I am! Send me!" (vs. 8), without a moment's hesitation, without stopping to count the cost. Most of us, when we are asked to do something, whether on the physical or spiritual level,

hold back because we realize that acceptance will involve extra responsibility. The real initiate never counts the cost.

The reference to the live coal is a rather interesting piece of symbolism, and implies that all impurity was burned away. This idea of purification was also brought out in a previous chapter when it speaks of "the daughters of Zion" having their "filth washed away" (4:6). This is part of the experience of the soul who has had conscious contact with God, though it is not a reference to actual impurity in the initiate, but alludes to the great humility or unworthiness that he feels. And this is a description of the first real spiritual experience of a man who was one of the greatest figures in the Old testament.

The "10th" symbolizes a "New Beginning," and the "seed," the Divine Spark within. And here they refer to the same experience that is described in chapter 9:6 when he says: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." This is the seed.

We could ask why Isaiah should have wanted to reveal so personal an experience as his vision, since as a rule initiates are reluctant to speak about such things. However, he did it for reasons that are psychologically interesting. He was very young when this occurred and thereafter he spoke with authority, as all do who have contacted God. His contact with God was so real that it was God Who spoke through him, and He never speaks meekly. Isaiah had taken a great responsibility upon himself, and because of his youth, he felt the need to bolster his position. His sincerity and authority came through so strongly that it made a tremendous impression on those who heard him. He was never ridiculed and though kings would not always listen to him, no one dared to lift a finger against him.

CHAPTER 7 is very interesting. The narrative is resumed and, while it was written by Isaiah, most of it is in

the third person. Ahaz was a self-willed young king and it is after the incident recorded here that Isaiah retired because he felt that he was only wasting his time trying to help the King.

In verse 3 God speaks to Isaiah and tells him to meet with Ahaz to give him a message of courage and faith. Ahaz, however, does not believe him, so the prophet tells him to ask God for a cosmic signature. Ahaz, who is a rather unscrupulous person replies that he will not tempt the Lord his God. Isaiah tells him that God will, even so, give him a sign. This brings us to the controversial text (vs. 14) that has caused a certain disagreement among the different Bible authorities. Although most theologians think this verse foreshadows the birth of Jesus it actually has nothing to do with that event. Immanuel does, of course, mean "God is with us," but in the original Hebrew, the word which is translated as "virgin" in our Bible, actually meant "maiden," "a young woman of marriageable age." This prophecy did come to pass but had nothing to do with the "Virgin Birth," of Jesus. *The Interpreter's Bible* raises the possibility that the maiden might even have referred to Ahaz' new wife. Historically, Isaiah was trying to prevent an alliance between Judah and Damascus and knew that Ahaz planned to sell out his people in spite of the prophet's warnings. So he first reasoned, then threatened, and finally decided to retire from the scene. Verses 18-25 describe the coming invasion and the last of the survivors.

CHAPTER 8. Isaiah's son's name means "the enemies shall be slain." Isaiah retired from active ministry to await the fulfillment of his prophecies and to complete his memoirs. He once more stresses the doom that awaits Syria and Ephraim, although he understood even more than he recorded. The oracle of the two rivers symbolize the hordes of Assyrians that Ahaz let loose on his land when he made an alliance with Syria instead of trusting in God.

Verses 11-15 are a description of the difference between the fear of man and the fear of God and Isaiah once more warns that the fear of God is the way of Wisdom. Whereas his past

writings had been for public consumption, these scrolls were now sealed and held in a safe place while Isaiah confidently awaited the fulfillment of his prophecies to attest to the truth of his writings.

CHAPTER 9. Who is the Messiah about whom he writes so beautifully in verse 6? *The Metaphysical Bible Dictionary* states that the Messiah is "the one who comes to save;" that he is "the king." In Hebrew he is called the Messiah; in Greek the Christos, which has the same meaning and which the Christians have shortened to Christ.

Mankind has always felt the need of having someone to bear their burdens, and this produced the desire for a human Messiah down through the ages. Metaphysicians used to believe that God did everything for us, but we have now learned that *God does not do anything for us*, since everything has already been done. It is up to us, through the use of His Law, to physically manifest the perfection that He has already given us in our lives. The government of the Universe is on the shoulders of the Infinite, it is not upon the shoulders of Presence within. The Presence has given us life and it is now up to us to put it to good use. This text refers to the fact that in each and every one of us there is the Presence of God, of Whom the prophet said: "...his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

There is one thing we can be sure of; despite the fact that Isaiah had experienced at least the First Initiation, he still had a temper! One idea which is prevalent in metaphysical thinking is that anyone who has had as great an experience as Isaiah had must, from that point on, be perfect. I can assure you that even when a person has reached the Fourth Initiation, he has not yet reached perfection. As long as we are in the flesh, no matter how great our progress, we are still human beings. Some ministers think that we should never lose our tempers. Yet, when Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple, there was no denying that he was giving vent to

"righteous indignation," and when the fig tree did not bear fruit, Jesus did not attempt to heal it; he withered it.

CHAPTER 10 is an example of Isaiah's not infrequent outbursts of anger. However, his prediction about Ephraim did prove to be completely accurate, as did those about Israel and Judah. His nobility of character overshadowed his very human reactions, for he rose above his personal feelings when his advice was not followed, and continued his efforts to help his nation.

In verses 5-16 he paints a very accurate picture of God's historical role in this planet. It is a brief sketch of God's adventure in individualizing Himself in the human race. It is a symbolical concept of the Divine Plan in the temporal world in which the Assyrians are shown to be an instrument in the hand of God for the attainment of His ends.

CHAPTER 11 is divided into two sections. The first nine verses deal with what is called the "Davidic Messiah;" what he is to do and what his powers are. It refers to a Hebrew king who will actually be worthy of the divine honor bestowed upon all kings of the Davidic line when they ascend the throne—that of being Yahweh's adopted son. And, as such, one who will lead the Israelites into an age of peace and plenty.

In the second section (vss. 10-16), on the other hand, Isaiah is speaking of a "Messiah" who will be instrumental in the restoration of the Jews after their dispersion. He describes the fulfillment of a definite plan of restoring to them the land that was originally theirs but which, for various reasons, they had lost. I do not think these verses were pertinent to his time, but they are being fulfilled to a great degree in our time. The final section is a prediction of what is to be in the next hundred years.

CHAPTER 12. Here again we come upon one of those chapters that seems to be completely out of context; a song of thanksgiving which is preceded by a description of a messianic king and followed by a prophetic poem about Babylon. Its author (or authors) is unknown, yet it could very well have been written

by Isaiah in a spirit of tremendous thanksgiving, after his prophecy in chapter 11, for great things to come, even if he himself would not live to see its fulfillment.

CHAPTER 13. There is no mistaking that this chapter is an oracle on the doom of Babylon—an event which did not take place until more than 160 years later. In the time of Isaiah, Assyria was the great world power, and it is therefore a little puzzling that he chose Babylon as the subject for this chapter, except that his knowledge of symbolism may have led him to do so: Babylon stands for the completely destructive side of the subconscious. It is also a rather fascinating and horrifying chapter dealing with a concept that is still prevalent among people today; that which the Christians refer to as the “day of Judgment,” and which is known to the Jews as the “day of the Lord.” I am perfectly sure that Isaiah was aware that there was no such thing as a day of Judgment, but, like many of the very great teachers of antiquity, he gave milk to the babes and meat to the strong. In dealing with a people whose knowledge was limited and who were at an early stage of evolution, many of the teachers projected a God of Wrath and of Fear in order to keep the people in line. So Isaiah paints a picture of the terror that will reign on that catastrophic day of the Last Judgment. Even Jesus at times resorted to this method of teaching by means of warnings (as in Matthew 24), because it was one of the few methods that the man of average development really understood. Even in our day it is relatively rare to find a person with spiritual understanding and development. This concept was a step in the growth of the race, and this chapter deals with it.

CHAPTER 14. This is probably one of the most remarkable passages not only in the whole Bible but in all religious literature. *The Interpreter's Bible* describes it as an oracle concerning “the certain overthrow of the proud will to mastery of the world, which is at the same time an assault upon the throne of God”—a power drive that finally leads to its own destruction. Isaiah's identification of this “proud will” with

Lucifer (vs. 12) is in part derived from a Canaanite nature myth which had its origin, in turn, in the beginning of religious teaching. Isaiah's oracle will be fulfilled when this "proud will," which uses power for evil and seeks to overthrow God Himself, is destroyed. So, in effect, this is a description of the end of the war between the forces of Good and the forces of Evil which will culminate in the final victory of Good over Evil.

It is true that every time you or I violate the Law; every time we are resentful, filled with hate, or do not live up to the highest we know, we strengthen the power of Evil. But it is most important for us to realize that every time we make the effort to change our thoughts and direct our feelings and actions in line with the highest we know, we augment the power of Good on the material plane; that power which Jesus exemplified. So we each have a unique responsibility. And the more the number of those people who live up to this responsibility increases, the sooner will the power of Evil be destroyed.

CHAPTER 15 is another oracle of doom, this time concerning Moab, a neighbor of Judah, and it includes a description of the flight of refugees. It may also be read on a symbolical level. Moab represents the carnal mind, the mind that is completely untrained, undisciplined. It is the type of mentality that keeps getting into difficulties and that continues repeating old habit patterns. The chapter itself not only deals with an historical event, but is also the representation of a human being and the qualities within himself which he has to handle.

CHAPTER 16. The thematic lesson of this chapter, which is still dealing with the downfall of Moab, could very well be expressed by the old saying "Pride goeth before a fall," for Moab is extremely proud and materialistic. Then, in verse 12, it is stated: "And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail." This indicates that Moab did finally turn to God, but that it was unfortunately too late and too half-heartedly. So the oracle of doom

stands, and Moab was later wiped out. Symbolically, in other words, the negative state of mind was ended.

CHAPTER 17. Isaiah took country by country and made his prediction of what the future held for each of them. As we read these chapters, we find that he was quite accurate. In this chapter he deals with the downfall of Ephriam and Damascus. These prophecies did not make him very popular with the people, of course, for things were going well at that time. Naturally, no one wanted to listen to him.

CHAPTER 18. This is a magnificently worded passage which deals with Egypt who was, at that time, considered one of the greatest powers on the face of the earth. She was avaricious and power-mad, but, strangely enough, she got along fairly well with the Hebrews. She was extremely cruel to her other neighbors on the west, however, and was also brutal to her own poor people. Her ritualistic cult, which had long since drifted away from its rather beautiful original concept—the worship of Ra, Isis and Horus—had become one of many, many gods and was considered on a par with the Babylonian cult.

CHAPTER 19. In the first four verses of this beautifully written chapter we learn that Yahweh is about to descend on Egypt to wreak His vengeance on her by bringing civil war to the land, and by overthrowing the Egyptian gods. Verses 5-10 deal with the drying up of the Nile, which never actually happened, although the Egyptians did suffer terrible droughts. One is not quite sure, in verses 11-15, whether God is speaking through Isaiah or whether the human side of the prophet suddenly emerges, for he is taunting the wise men of Egypt. One almost gets the feeling of a rivalry between the prophet and the Egyptians. He challenges their wisdom and warns against trusting them. The prophet then predicts the future worship of Yahweh in Egypt. The Egyptians as a nation, of course, never worshipped Him, but at the time of the birth of Jesus there were about one million Jews in Egypt. And after the time of Jesus a sect of Christian Copts flourished there through-



out the centuries to the extent that, although they were a minority group, there are still several million Copts in Egypt today.

CHAPTER 20 presents prophecy at its best. There are, of course, degrees of prophetic ability, ranging from psychic augury, which is very often nothing more than a statement of our own subconscious desires, to the purely intuitive knowing. When we study the lives of the great mystics we should bear in mind that there are also different means of receiving prophetic knowledge. Apparently Isaiah was one of those who really *saw*. Not everyone does. Ezekiel also had visions, but his were more psychic than mystic in character. A few mystics have had the faculty of clairaudience; an inner hearing where the Presence speaks as clearly as if I were speaking to you in person. A number of conversations between these mystics and their God have been recorded. In addition, there is a third type of communication where the mystic does not hear, does not see, but has a sudden *knowing*. They know and that is all there is to it: nothing can change their belief in the truth of their knowing. Nothing can shake it. They speak with the same authority as Isaiah does.

Returning to this chapter, mention is made of sackcloth—the Hebrew sign of mourning—to symbolize the fact that the prophet believes it is too late for anything to change the course of events. The die is cast and there is no turning back. It is one of the few instances where Isaiah limits the idea of God.

The symbolism of being stripped was enacted by Isaiah in order to dramatize his message; that the people had no means of outer assistance to help them out of the position they had gotten themselves into. He showed this by depriving himself of his clothing and personal possessions. Stripping is a definite and recurring symbol in the language of the subconscious. And in its personal and deeper sense it means the person is devoid of anything except life, and can therefore hide nothing. This is easily understandable since the act of appearing in the nude before a group of people can be a completely devastating experience.

CHAPTER 21. This is a symbolic picture of the fall of Babylon which took place about 200 years later, so that it is difficult to say whether Isaiah is referring to some unrecorded trouble with Babylon or whether he is using Babylon in the symbolic sense of utter confusion which ultimately wrecks itself. Unfortunately, the translation of this portion of Isaiah leaves much to be desired. The discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls has cleared up quite a few uncertainties in the translation, but not all of it. It is considered to be one of the ten doom oracles.

It is evidently a description of a subconscious or subjective vision, including as well the personal emotional reaction to that vision. Two basic ideas are brought out here. In the first, "the spoiler despoileth," (verse 2) Isaiah refers to the Law of Karma when he says that those who punish Israel are, in turn punished. He points out that, while various nations will take the Jews into captivity, these nations will, in time, reap what they have sown and nothing can prevent it.

The second idea is expressed in the words: "O my threshing, and the corn of my floor" (verse 10). In spite of the fact that this is an oracle of doom, there is still the realization that it represents a purification and may be read as an actual spiritual initiation in which the dross is burned out. You know, each time we progress, no matter what our level of development may be, we only do so by giving up something. Nothing in life is free. And it is equally true that each time we overcome a negative quality or characteristic, something positive must be put in its place, for "nature abhors a vacuum." This is true whether it applies to a nation or an individual. The prophet is saying that although the nation will be "destroyed," by being taken into captivity, a part of the nation will be saved. This is the meaning of the corn on the floor.

CHAPTER 22. Driven by bitterness and grief over their reckless disregard for his words, Isaiah furiously turns upon the Hebrews and reproaches them for their revelry at a time

of pending doom. We must not forget that aside from being a prophet he was a statesman; a man of power with a voice in the government (and evidently also a man with an ear to the ground). For this reason he directed the full force of his fury towards Shebna, the King's steward, for urging an armed attack on Assyria, and prophesies his destruction.

CHAPTER 23. Tyre was a seaport, the Paris of the ancient world; rich, powerful and lusty. Dedicated to gaiety and revelry, her creed was: "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." The Hebrews, who were well established in trade with her at that time, often came back with ideas far removed from the concept of the One God of Israel which, of course, did not please Isaiah. His vilification of Tyre does not, however, contain any trace of the censure of the Israelite's mixing with other tribes which was indulged in by the other prophets. He was much more deeply concerned with the idea that the desecration of the rites and the purity of man was a sin before God.

CHAPTER 24. Although the prophet here paints a picture of dreadful desolation and terror, it is none the less an extremely beautiful passage. It refers to the covenant between God and man which says in effect: "If you will keep my statutes and obey my laws, I shall be unto you a Father, and you shall be unto Me a son." It is the Law, and Isaiah is unhappy that this covenant has not been honored, and he knew that man's difficulties stemmed from his failure to keep his part of the covenant.

CHAPTER 25. *The Interpreter's Bible* calls this a "psalm of thanksgiving for victory." It is a very lovely one even though it does refer to the fate of those who are not obeying the Law. However, its purpose was to promote the belief that the potentially helpless Jews were instruments of God's purpose, which in a very important sense they are. This "stiff-necked" people have been the hardiest of all people; they have lived through conditions that most nations could never have withstood, and yet they endured. There is a reason for this. We are

all the outpicturing of our own concepts, and what is true of the individual is equally true of the race. The Jews are a people who, for thousands of years, fought to maintain the idea of the One God. This belief was so strong that, although the original force of the magnificence of this concept has been diluted, it perpetuated a people who, in some way, symbolize the eventual worship of One God by all people. Because of the various creeds, most of us believe that God should be worshipped in one definite form or another. But God was not meant to be worshipped in any tangible form. Jesus said very clearly: "God is Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). From the time of Abraham to the time of Moses and Joshua, the Hebrews worshipped only One God, and in that worship was their power.

Specifically, we find here that the physical conditions which existed in Isaiah's time do as well exist, in a different set of circumstances, in our time. For example, we have a saying that "politics makes strange bedfellows;" and it does. At the time of Isaiah the Jews had been at war with the Egyptians for centuries; they hated the Egyptians, and looked upon them as treacherous and vile, and suddenly they made a pact with Egypt to march against Assyria. In our time we have seen the Allies, who were sworn enemies of Russia, make an agreement with her to destroy Germany. Human nature has not changed. Both the Israelites and the Allies did it for political expediency, and both lived to regret it.

But to return to Isaiah, what upset him so terribly was that the Jews refused to live according to his word, which he knew to be the Word of God, and refused to understand that their failure to do so was at the root of all their problems. He knew that they approached their problems only from a material point of view. He raised his voice urging, pressing, entreating the Hebrews to try his way, but it was a voice in the wilderness. They would not listen. He suffered one of the most frustrating experiences that could occur in anyone's life. He had reached the point where he knew the Truth and tried to give it

to his people, but they rejected it.

CHAPTER 26. In verse 3, Isaiah says: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." This is one of the most famous of the metaphysical affirmations; we use it, Divine Science and Unity use it, and most of the orthodox creeds do too.

The verse states very simply that if you keep the idea of God, the knowledge of God and what He means to you and what you mean to Him, in the forefront of your mind to the extent that it becomes such a part of your awareness that you do not have to consciously dwell on it or remind yourself—it becomes as much a part of your awareness as your own name—you will have that inner knowing, that realization of peace. This chapter is another hymn of thanksgiving which also brings out the idea of resurrection. It stresses that it is *man's fear* which is to be slain and, in this instance, the fear of the Jews.

CHAPTER 27 may be headed "The Day of Salvation is at Hand." It employs symbolism often used by Isaiah; the leviathan, the dragon which, like the dragon with the seven horns and three heads in Revelation, represents power, which in this instance was being badly abused. This power shall be eliminated. Dragons, serpents and snakes do have varying symbolic meanings. In Hinduism, the dragon or serpent represents the Ancient Wisdom. One of its symbols is the serpent swallowing its tail, thus making a perfect circle, which stands for Infinite Wisdom. In this instance, however, it means personal power, which is why he says the leviathan will be slain. Isaiah then speaks of the vineyard, symbolizing Israel, which will bring forth good fruit, but must be pruned and carefully tended.

CHAPTER 28 not only applies to the Hebrews, but also to us, for as the prophet says "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong" (verse 22). Isaiah, while he must have known bitter disappointment, had tremendous national pride and tremendous will. In spite of setbacks and rejections,

he wrote, taught and pleaded with his people to turn back to the way of God. He points out here that Israel, or the vineyard, was planted by God and that no matter what the Hebrews do they can never destroy their full fruition, though they may delay it.

CHAPTER 29. Here again the prophet tells of the marvelous works of God. Ariel is the earliest name for Jerusalem, and means "the altar hearth" or "the highest altar." The first four or five verses are rather reminiscent of chapter 28 where he warns them what is going to happen. Actually it is a direct reference to his previous oracle, since at this time some of his earlier prophecies were confirmed, and he wants to impress the people with his accuracy of which he had written proof for he had the foresight to write them down at the time he made them.

However, in this oracle he says that the triumph of Yahweh's plan requires the deliverance of Jerusalem, whereas in the earlier oracles he was sure that Jerusalem was going to be wiped out. In this we see his growth: as he increased his contact he was able to impart more and more of God's ideas.

The chapter itself, particularly verses 9-12, deals with what happens when man does not understand God's words. Verses 13 and 14 stress the overthrow of conventional ideas of religion. Isaiah was quite advanced for his time, and was neither a conformist, nor was he bound by the rites practiced by most of the tribes.

Then he turns on a conspiracy which was rife at that time. The Jews are eager to join with Egypt in an attack on Assyria. Isaiah disagrees with this plan as it is not the will of God, and he denounces it vigorously. The chapter ends with the promise of salvation for the remnant. Actually, Egypt was beaten in the attack, but the Israelite's turn came a little later, so he was proved to be correct in his disapproval.

CHAPTER 30. Verse 21 is one of the greatest texts used by metaphysicians: "And thine ear shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye

turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Actually, the entire chapter is very interesting. We are again told the result for the Jews when the attack is made on the Assyrians. And he stresses the Law of Karma at the end of the chapter by pointing out that the Egyptians were beaten by the Assyrians who, in turn, will be beaten by another enemy. It is also interesting to note that here, as in the last chapter, condemnation turns into promise and once more an assurance of help is given. The rebellion against Assyria in 705 B.C. (just prior to the time Isaiah came out of retirement) is not termed a rebellion against Assyria by the prophet, but *against Yahweh*, for Isaiah knows that nothing is ever accomplished by violence, and he therefore censures the Israelites and points out that they can only lose in the end by resorting to violence. And he is proven correct.

In the last verse he mentions "Tophet," a place for burning, that is similar to the place where the Assyrians sacrificed their children by fire in the worship of their god Moloch. This was considered the abomination of all abominations by the Jews, and Isaiah warns them that a pit is prepared and filled with fire kindled by the "breath of the Lord" for those who do not return to their God.

CHAPTER 31 is one of Isaiah's greatest prophecies. He made it at a time when the Assyrians were pressing the Israelites particularly hard and the Hebrews were, strange to relate, seeking the help of Egypt. And Egypt did give promises of help, however, since her power had by this time diminished tremendously, her position was rather unstable and the prophet begged his people not to rely on her for help.

This chapter deals with the "strength of armies or the power of the Spirit" according to *The Interpreter's Bible*. In reading it it becomes evident that Isaiah is asking the Israelites to do something that we all find difficult to do in our own lives at certain times, that is, to "Stand still and see the glory of the Lord." If we realize how difficult this is for those of us who have had specific training, then we know it must have

been twice as hard for them. He pleads with them (for this is one of his gentler prophecies—you will recall that some of them are quite fiery and threatening) and tells them that nothing can stand against God—something they certainly should have known from previous experience.

CHAPTER 32. This might be called an appendage to what has gone before. It moves from a prophecy about the nation to one concerning the individual. It promises that the rulers will acquire a sense of justice, and society, a sense of wisdom. It is the promise of evolution, of growth, for humanity even though it is at a slow pace.

CHAPTER 33. Here again we have a reference to the promises of God to those who keep His covenant. No matter how many times we turn away, or break the Law and hurt ourselves, the promise of help remains when we return to God. It is never withheld. In this chapter Isaiah indicates that no matter how much he chastises them for their transgressions, in time all will be made right. *But he does not say it will happen in his time.* "In quietness and confidence is your strength" the prophet says (30:15), but he does not say that quietness and confidence is going to raise us to the stature of a Jesus or a Moses, a David or an Isaiah in one lifetime. What he does say is: "This is the way, walk ye in it..." (30:21).

CHAPTER 34 is the reverse of the previous chapter, and it expounds on the fearful end of the enemies of God with eloquence and in pictorially vivid language. Isaiah depicts the clash between good and evil (though not as clearly as in chapter 14) and also the clash between the Creator and the forces that defy Him.

In CHAPTER 35 we find one of the most beautiful of all the great promises of the Bible. It is a perfectly inspired psalm from a heart that realizes that God is in each of us; that God has a plan for each of us and that in order for us to find that plan we must walk in the Way. It is not by coincidence that it is called a "*highway*" for it is not just an ordinary road, but one elevated far above the one on which we are ac-



customed to travel every day. In order to travel on this road we must forget our petty selves, stop fussing and fretting about things we do not have or want to get, and begin to count our blessings. For that is the avenue of approach; to give thanks for our blessings and keep our minds off the things we have not as yet achieved and know that, in the fullness of time, of our own understanding and effort, we shall achieve our goal—and that is the highway.

The dragon lying in the weeds, to which Isaiah refers, represents our fears, doubts and stupidities that lie in the subconscious mind, and sometimes in the conscious as well. Until we rout them out and return to the pattern in which we were made, we will not advance. This is the highway, the way of holiness (or, being made whole), and when we find it "sorrow and sighing *will* flee away." We are so trained in negative thinking and self-protection that we can only say "I want." We must learn to say "I give," for, until we do that we will never find the Way—not only metaphysically, but in all ways.

CHAPTER 36. This is an extremely fascinating chapter, not, however, especially due to its literary beauty or mystical importance, but because of the historical event that is recounted—an event also recorded in Assyrian history. During the seige of Jerusalem, the Assyrian king, through Rabshakeh his principal envoy, presents Israel with an ultimatum: they will be wiped out if they do not surrender. His arguments for this step are so shocking and unanswerable that the Jewish leaders ask him to negotiate in a language (the Syrian or Aramaic, the diplomatic language of the time) not understood by the Jewish population who are lined up along the walls of the city. The envoy mocks their trust in a God Whose sanctuaries have been destroyed by their own king (II Kings 18:4), but when he offers them refuge after surrender, not a single man in the line along the wall moved, or replied. This is a factual, historical event. The people of Israel stood firm, for they have a peculiar quality, evident even today, of refusing to be intimidated or threatened. Rightly or wrongly, this show of courage

was, and is, a magnificent thing.

CHAPTER 37. The narrative continues, although, in places, not as historically accurate as it was in the previous chapter. Hezekiah rends his clothes and goes to the temple to sacrifice. Then this man, who had previously declined to follow the prophet's advice, sends word to Isaiah asking for a prophecy. Through the voice of Isaiah, God answers the king and says that Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, will perish because he suffers from spiritual pride. And so he did, but not until twenty years later; a fact not mentioned here but recorded in the historical writings of the time. Another interesting point, which is also not mentioned in this chapter but for which there are evidential records, is that despite Hezekiah's brave stand he did pay tribute. As far as the destruction of the army itself is concerned, we are given to understand here that it was attacked by something that killed it off overnight, although no verification has been found for this. It is known that the king did retreat because of a disturbance in some of his northern colonies. Mention is also made of a "remnant" out of Judah that shall be left, but this does not take place until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., whereas the prophecy was made c. 705 B.C.

CHAPTER 38. Hezekiah's prayer is almost identical to the one found in II Kings (ch. 20), you may recall, in which it is recorded that he made a prayer and had a healing. It is one of the most beautiful evidences of healing that we have in the Old Testament. He did of course have the help of Isaiah—you will recall that Isaiah healed prior to this event—so that it was the work of the prophet and the king's own faith that produced the healing, and he lived for another fifteen years.

CHAPTER 39. This chapter gives a very clear picture of Hezekiah as a good and kind man but, unfortunately, not a very bright one. The chapter might be headed "beware of Greeks bearing gifts." A group of men come to see him bearing gifts from the king of Babylon and, evidently as part of their entertainment, he shows them countless treasures, which had

come down through the centuries, and particularly those which belonged to the temple. Isaiah, who was not only a great mystic, but also a very shrewd man, knew that it was just a question of time before there would be raids on the treasury as well as the art treasures, and tells him so. Eventually this did take place, but Hezekiah was happy nevertheless because of Isaiah's prophecy that he was going to have peace for the remainder of his life. The possibility of the raids, or, even, that his sons would later be killed did not bother him particularly—that was God's doing, not his.

This brings us to the end of the writings of First Isaiah.

The First Isaiah was a towering figure of mental and spiritual stature. He was extremely brilliant and very much a most sophisticated man of the world. In addition to this, he was an Initiate.

For the first time in Bible history we have the picture of that rare combination of living with God, and at the same time, living with his world. Too many people still have the idea that retreat from life is the only way to find God. It is not. It is not a way of deprivation. It is a way of fulfillment.

And the First Isaiah point the way.

M. M.

## THE SECOND ISAIAH

We now move forward 140 years to possibly one of the greatest periods of enlightenment the world has ever known; a renaissance in religious thought. During the latter part of the sixth century B.C., an unknown Jew lived in Babylonia; a man born in captivity who was later called Second Isaiah. Several thousand miles to the east at the beginning of the fifth century there lived a prince of India, Gautama, who was later called Buddha. And even further to the northeast another man named Lao-Tse lived in China. Thus, this relatively short period of time gave the world three of its greatest thinkers (Confucius also lived at this time but I do not consider his teaching to be of a religious nature). These men presented three different, yet interestingly similar, views of the goal of the human being; what his potentials were and how to develop them. In the case of Buddha and Lao-Tse, their concept was based on a personal realization of this goal whereas Second Isaiah was more concerned with its national reference. The really beautiful thing about him and his work is that he not only speaks for his own people; he speaks for the nations of the world.

Second Isaiah emerged at a time when the world was in great upheaval; a period of transition after the end of the old regimes. Assyria had lost its power and Egypt was once more re-building its power, while Israel was no longer a nation and the "remnant of Judah" was languishing in exile in Babylon. A new king, Cyrus of Persia, was gaining stature on the world stage. Empires were rising and empires were falling. There was complete unrest, very similar to the conditions we are living through today. And, as always at a time of unrest, man's spiritual need became intensified and evident. "Man's extremity

is God's opportunity." It is against this background that Second Isaiah speaks.

Second Isaiah was rooted in the traditions of Israel, and he very clearly reflects the social environment of that day. There was a transition from the previous orthodoxy of the Mosaic period to the philosophy which began to emerge from the Babylonian exile, with its roots in a new environment and atmosphere; a new social order which in many ways was consciously and unconsciously assimilated. This transition in belief and social order presents a rather interesting comparison to our times where we have occasion to see many minority groups in their isolation from, or assimilation into our own and other countries.

The difference between the two Isaiahs, as shown in their writings, is very revealing. The writings of the First are extremely terse, compact and have a stately cadence that is expressive of the dignified patriarch. The work of the Second has a singing, lyrical quality and conveys a much warmer, more human attitude. We never feel we cannot approach him. The First is typical of the other prophets in his use of invective and warnings, and he says that only after humanity has suffered enough will it find salvation. The Second, on the other hand, is only concerned with redemption and salvation. He is not concerned with the sins that have been committed, but only with the redemption of the people and their future.

A wonderful philosophy and comprehension of history develops in Second Isaiah, and a very clear portrait of God as the Creator and Redeemer emerges here. There is no parallel to this in First Isaiah, who portrays a God of Vengeance (for reasons we have discussed) Who would mercifully save when one had paid sufficiently rather than from a redeeming Love.

First Isaiah was a remarkable, unbending figure that commanded respect. Only in chapters 9 and 11 do we have a glimpse of his human side, when we read of his personal concept of God and of his inner experience: "For unto us a child is born. . ." (9:6). Second Isaiah had not reached that stage

of development and so to him God is the Creator of the Universe Who lives in Heaven. It is really quite fascinating to see that Second Isaiah, who did not have the degree of development achieved by the First, is much more gentle, kind and sympathetic, and that the First, who has had the initiate's experience, has become highly severe in his attitude towards others. His reaction to his personal experience was impatience with anyone who did not understand his concept of God; that He lives in us as we each live in Him. He resented anyone who would dare to doubt this concept. This often happens in the first stages of a mystic's experiences. Second Isaiah is a warm, gentle man who regrets the fact that people fall away from their God, and to whom the most important aspect of religion is, not that people be punished for their transgressions but that they return to Him. It is quite startling to see the difference in outlook of these two men. The great love, the tremendous tenderness and compassion, so evident in Second Isaiah is a far cry from First Isaiah.

The real name of Second Isaiah has not been discovered. It seems probable that he took the name of Isaiah because, since he was not very well known, his works, if given under his own name, would not have been accepted by the scribes. He was a great mystic, although not an initiate. He lived in captivity with his people and was certain that the time for the delivery of the remnant of Judah was at hand. He tells us very simply (in chs. 40-55) what is going to happen, and it does.

It seems, from the only sources we have, there were approximately 5000 Jews living very happily in Babylonian captivity. As we have mentioned before, they had assimilated well and many had even taken up the religious forms of their captors. Second Isaiah (from this point on we shall use the common name of Isaiah to designate him) knew their day of deliverance was at hand and he tells them that Yahweh will come. He never says that He is coming as a physical being, but he says He is coming in the form of a *great liberation*.

He points out very beautifully that this coming will be their redemption. We see that this refers, historically, to the fact that the people have evolved to the level where a second Exodus is about to take place. Not an Exodus like the one which took place with Moses, who brought them out of Egypt and the wilderness, but one that will take them back to Jerusalem, which is to be rebuilt. It is to be an Exodus of Freedom.

He pictures Yahweh as the God of History, and Israel as a nation redeemed and brought to a certain point of responsibility as a witness to the One God, IF Israel will accept this responsibility. He says that the coming universality of the belief in the One God is the reason for this redemption. They were a chosen people—because they had chosen to worship One God—and he believes they have a great future and a great contribution to make to the world. He believes this, he says, because God has told him so. He does not believe redemption is confined to Israel alone; he believes they will lead other nations along with them. And so we find chapter 40, which is the first chapter of Second Isaiah, is a clarion call. Yahweh is coming with peace and joy. And the second chapter deals with the Judgment and the summons for the Missions, a theme which is repeatedly developed.

In these chapters, a new concept, that of the "servant of the Lord" emerges. Heretofore we have had the idea of Israel as the "chosen people" of the Lord with somewhat the character of a "spoiled brat" since they violated almost every law that had been given them and had little or no appreciation for what God had done for them. This was particularly true of their leaders. And now Isaiah develops a new concept which, because his God is One of Infinite Power, is not as personal as that of First Isaiah. Isaiah believes that some of his people have reached the point of realization where they were indeed what he calls the "servant of the Lord." As time went on, they slowly became that.

Isaiah points out that Israel has been called to a high destiny, but she has been blind and deaf to it and so finds



herself in trouble. But, he tells them, Yahweh is gracious, and the redemptive motif is clearly developed to the point where Cyrus is named the human deliverer of the Jews. Cyrus, of course, is a non-Jew; he is a worshipper of Marduk the great Babylonian god. So it is particularly interesting to see that he is the instrument chosen by Yahweh to save His people. Here we see that the operation of the Law, or your own Karma, is not necessarily confined to the individual creed. This is one of the points in the history of Israel that has never been squarely faced. They admit that it was Cyrus who captured Babylon, but they never thought of him in terms of their own deliverance; a deliverance which led to their becoming a rather powerful nation for quite a while. They did not learn, and were again scattered with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

CHAPTER 40. This poem, which is quite reminiscent of some of the lovely passages of Job, was written by Second Isaiah to announce a new day, the day of the coming of the Lord; the Holy One of Israel, Creator of the ends of the earth, and Lord of the Universe, Who dwelled also in man and manifested Himself in the affairs of the nations.

CHAPTER 41. In this chapter the prophet speaks of the coming together of the nations under the guidance of Israel. The people of the world, regardless of what creeds they follow or were born into, are called to stand before God in judgment, for His authority over the nations is not limited only to those who worship Him but also to those who bow the knee to the graven images of their captors. The prophet rightly believes that, regardless of who people are or what their beliefs are, *all* of humanity is part of the Creation, history, and redemption of man; that all men participate in what we often call the spiral of evolution in life. This was to be the second Exodus, experienced on a higher level than the first Exodus. It was to be the spiritual return home.

CHAPTER 42. In this chapter the idea of Israel as the servant of the Lord, both the nation and the individual, is introduced for the first time. Chapter 40 told us that Yahweh was

going to do something new and wonderful for His people; that God was the Creator and that everything that happened was His doing. In chapter 42, however, the prophet puts forth a new idea, namely that God does not work outside His creation but through it, and since humanity is part of this, God also works through each person. Many historical events seemingly took place of their own volition on the material plane, but now the point has been reached where the nation as well as the individual is to be the participant in, as well as the beneficiary of, the action of God. It is rather interesting that First Isaiah speaks of his nation as a people who walked in darkness and saw a great light, whereas Second Isaiah states that his people will *be* the great light of the world—if they walk according to the Law. Again the upward sweep of evolution is brought out, that even though its movement is slow, it is nevertheless sure. If the Hebrews had had the ability to fulfill this mission at that time, what a different world we would have today!

He gives a description of the servant who is to do the bidding of the Lord, the One Who is the Holy One of Israel. Israel he proclaims to be His chosen people; the nation that will bring all people to Him in worship, not necessarily according to the Jewish ritual but in their own forms of worship of the One God.

In CHAPTER 43—a very beautiful one—Isaiah deals with the idea that whenever man returns to God and lives according to His law, redemption and salvation are his—he is made whole. “Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old” (verse 18), clearly gives the theme of this chapter, and underlines the glorious things that are ahead for us if we will only follow along the path.

CHAPTER 44 deals with those of the Jews who had worshipped Babylonian idols. This, to a man of Isaiah’s temperament and understanding is an unforgivable sin. However, he was undoubtedly inspired by God and must have been torn by the conflict of, on the one hand, wanting his people to return to the worship of God without further punishment and, on the other, by his reaction to their violation of his personal belief in the One God, Yahweh.

Of course, it was not only the Jews of old who took after

strange gods. We, ourselves, limit God by what we believe He can do. When we believe that a small "idol"—a good luck charm—or a certain ashtray or other fetish has power, and we really believe it, it will have power for us—God will only be to us what we want Him to be. We are speaking the truth when we say that God is Infinite. He is. But our experience of His Infinitude depends entirely upon the limits we ourselves put on It. We usually say: "God can do anything but. . ." Wherever we have a problem we are not worshipping God, for that is where we are not giving Him power. We make an idol of the problem by endowing it with power.

CHAPTER 45. Actually, this is one of the few places in the Bible where the Law of Karma is very definitely and clearly brought out, which makes it one of the most important chapters in the Bible. Karma is a Principle: it is Principle in action. It is the Law of Cause and Effect, and it does not matter whether we are a Jew, Christian, Mohammedan, Hindu, Buddhist, or metaphysician, the Law ALWAYS works, and "ignorance of the law" will not excuse us. Until we understand the Law and how to use it, we will always get into trouble.

For most people religion is emotions—not thinking emotions—just emotion. They may be very practical in all areas of their life—their health, work and so on—but when it comes to religion all logic and reason seems to fly out of the window! And nobody seems to see the logic of Karma except those of us who are in metaphysics. Although it is an infallible law, it seems to be completely overlooked by the orthodox religions. None of the sects, except the Jews who teach it in a very limited way, seem to realize that over and above the very personal aspects of religion there is the Law: this is a universe of Law and Order. In metaphysics we have a saying: "Order is Heaven's first Law." Nothing ever happens to you or to me that is not brought forth by the natural order of things, by the Law of Cause and Effect which we invoke.

In this chapter the Law is summed up in verse 7: "I form the light, and create the darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord (or Law) do all these things." Actually, it deals with

an amazing and beautiful concept. Principle is not concerned with our seeking or not seeking God. It is the Law. The Law is constantly working and must always be directed, either consciously or subconsciously. We certainly do gain wisdom and control of this Law through our meditations and by living the Life, but everything that you or I do, or have done, or will do, is the result of the Law in action. That is why we are always warned in the Bible to be very careful of what we do, say and think. "That which you think upon grows" (and eventually bears fruit), is another way of expressing this principle.

In the beginning of creation God brought everything into existence by the power of His Thought—in a sense we are thoughts in the mind of God. And when He thought, the Law was invoked and it gave form to these thoughts in the outer world. This is also the way in which we ourselves create our environment and experiences.

Never forget that the Law is completely impersonal, it is not interested in whether you or I are hurt or not, grow or not, or even whether we love God or not. None of these things impresses the Law. In the same way that the sun rises every day at its appointed time, the Law inexorably produces results according to the principle stated in Job 22:28: "Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee." When we decree a thing we make a Law, and if we really believe it, it must materialize. It is the Law that responds to the power of the Word. "The Law never changes, the Word does."

There was a wonderful irony in the choice of Cyrus as God's instrument, for the intolerance of the Hebrews towards all peoples but their own since the time of Exodus had been extremely strong. Then the prophet tells them they will be saved, not by one of their own, but by a despised non-Jew. The Law of Karma works in very strange ways indeed. Though a foreign political tyrant may seem to be more remotely concerned with our destiny than our own governmental leaders, if he exists in a position of leadership to us it is because we have collectively fostered such a man and he has become part of our Karma. It is the individual

attitude of the inhabitants of a country which directs the Law and brings forth tyrants who wreck the lives of millions of people. It also produces the Saviours, when the mood of a people has changed. Neither one appears by chance. At some time or other all of us have brought them into being by our own thoughts, words, deeds, reactions and ideas.

The beautiful metaphysical statement which we often use in meditation: "God is the only Presence and the only Power" is enlarged upon and explained in this section. And again, God is the only Power and there is nothing that can stop that Power from acting. It can be directed in any way that we choose, but it always brings forth that which is impressed upon it. And in verses 9-13 Isaiah speaks of the Father-Son relationship which is established between God and man.

In CHAPTER 46 Isaiah again speaks of the practice so prevalent among the Babylonian Jews—their worship of idols. He again tries to impress upon them that there is only One God, and that God is Yahweh. He describes the impotence of the Babylonian gods which were carved by men from gold, silver, stone and wood, and had to be placed in shrines by men, whereas Yahweh had been and always would be their support from generation to generation.

CHAPTER 47. In this chapter the prophet turns his prophetic vision on the city of Babylon. She is called a virgin because her time of ravishment had not yet arrived. He taunts her with a description of her fall and complete degradation. Her end will come not only because of the cyclical rise and fall of nations in history but by the direct intention of Yahweh as a means of redeeming his people. He refers to her occult powers which were used for personal aggrandizement and the practice of magic which inevitably end in destroying those who practice it.

CHAPTER 48. The prophet here speaks of old things and new, the real meaning of the word Israel (Is-ra-el) and the possibility of having conscious union with God. They could become what they should be by remaining true to the One God, the God of Israel. He also brings up an interesting point in the relation of

prophecy to history, which in turn poses the question of prophecy and free will.

Generally speaking, since there is free will, prophecy is impossible. However, there are those who live so close to God that they are able to see for their segment of time and a little beyond what the path of evolution is going to produce; they are able catch a glimpse of the Divine Plan.

Isaiah recounts what the Hebrews had experienced up to their sojourn in Babylon and then tells them that they have reached the stage where complete physical, as well as spiritual, liberation could be theirs provided they walk in the path of God.

CHAPTER 49. We have now come to what is probably the core of Second Isaiah's message. It is a question which, theologically speaking, has puzzled not only the church fathers from whom present day theology sprang, but even the learned *Interpreter's Bible*, namely, Isaiah's concept of the "servant of the Lord." *The Interpreter's Bible* is of the opinion that it refers only to the nation of Israel. This definitely is not so. In many instances it refers to Isaiah himself, but there is a deeper meaning which Isaiah could only express in terms of "the servant of the Lord," since to him the idea of the Son of God had not yet become a reality. (First Isaiah did experience this reality, and the clue lies in his words "Unto us a son is born. . ." (9:6), after which he details his own spiritual experience.) However, Isaiah, the "servant of the Lord" was beginning to apply this term to someone other than himself. This, you might say, is really the beginning of the Messianic prophecy, for in chapters 52 and 53 he gives a strikingly accurate picture of a man who lived 500 years later.

CHAPTER 50. Isaiah continues to prophesy about the servant of the Lord who knows what is in store for him, and that suffering will be part of his lot. Now it was not Isaiah who was going to go through this experience, but a figure yet to come. Isaiah did not experience the suffering recorded in verse 6. His people probably looked upon him with tolerant acceptance, for there is no record of their having turned their backs on the worship of idols.

The last section of Second Isaiah's writings (chs. 51-55) is to me the most beautiful of the whole book, not only because of its poetic grandeur but also because of the profound depth of its emotion and the importance of its theme.

CHAPTER 51. This beautiful chapter assures the Hebrews of redemption and salvation, the end of their punishment and the blotting out of their wrongs. In the Old Testament so often the prophets, speaking for Yahweh, take the attitude of a parent towards a child. The child is often punished or scolded, but this disciplining always ends with a word of hope and faith. So it is in this passage. They are reminded of all the amazing things that have happened to them since the time before they left Egypt and it ends with the promise that all that they had lost would be given back to them, and more, if they abide in the Word of the Lord.

CHAPTER 52. Here again the Grace of God is pointed out to the people by the prophet. The redemption of Zion—the soul who has had conscious contact with God—is at hand and her sorrow a thing of the past. Symbolically, the uncircumcised are those whose hearts are not open to God, and the unclean those who do not take the trouble to discipline themselves. Isaiah points out very unmistakably that without these two no one would ever find God for himself, and that to attain this there was one Law that had to be obeyed: one had to have the desire, and one had to live the life to the best of one's ability.

CHAPTER 53. This is one of the tremendous passages in the Bible. God's Presence was in Jesus even as He is in you and in me, and this chapter has always impressed me not only as a very literal description of Jesus, but also a description of what happens to the Indwelling Christ when He is incarcerated in our flesh until we ourselves free him. He never intrudes upon us, we have to seek Him, and every time we do anything wrong, we strengthen His prison walls. We keep the doors shut and all that He can do for us is to give us the power of life, but how we use it is our own choice.

CHAPTER 54. This chapter restates the covenant between God and Israel. If they had honored their covenant, the Hebrews

would never have undergone the tribulations that were theirs. Even so, Isaiah brings forth the idea that living the good life brought forgiveness.

CHAPTER 55. Here again we have a beautiful restatement of the covenant. The 11th verse is well known in the metaphysical movement: "So shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." It too is referring to the Christ within the individual, as it also does to Jesus.

It is part of the salvation of Israel, and it promises us our heart's desire which comes by Grace, provided—and there is a proviso—we live according to the Law. Most of us have a basic understanding yet, strangely, we do not always have the courage to live according to the Law. Only when we get to that stage of development where we realize the power of the Word is ours *when we believe in it*, will it be true for us. If we do not have faith, it would be to our advantage to get faith, for through faith is the road to freedom.

We have now reached the chapters ascribed to Third Isaiah. However, we must remember that these chapters were not necessarily written by one man. We find a diversity of style here, although chapters 60-62 might very well have been written by Second Isaiah, and since this group of chapters was written about 30 to 40 years later it is generally accepted that it is the work of some of his disciples who wanted to perpetuate his prophecies. Though this section deals with a later period, it still carries out the basic ideas of both First and Second Isaiahs.

CHAPTER 56. Although this chapter is related in thought to the work of Second Isaiah, there is a great deal more emphasis on the cult, ritual and all of the formalization of religion which shows that whoever wrote it had a far greater leaning towards the ritualistic than towards the real form within.

The subject of eunuchs is quite interesting. In the time of the prophets and even much later, male prisoners were very often mutilated by their captors and there were also those who thought



that self-mutilation was a way of worshipping God. Even today the idea of mutilation is practiced in the East, as is celibacy in many religious groups. It always amuses me that people seem to think they know more about this matter than God. A certain caste of Hindus permits its adherents to marry and propagate and then return to abstention. On the other hand, there is also the Jewish concept which says: "Be fruitful and multiply." The Jewish idea of immortality of the soul was, and is, based on the idea of children. And for that reason those captives who were castrated by their conquerors were treated as outcasts by their own people. But here in verse 5 it is clearly stated that they would not be barred from the house of the Lord but would be given an honorable place within its walls.

CHAPTER 57. When the Israelites returned to Jerusalem, they brought with them many forms of worship, including the practice of magic and phallic worship—concepts completely contrary to anything permitted by the Hebrew religion. In this chapter Isaiah warns against these practices with scornful irony in an effort to prevent these pagan rites. He tries to make them realize that they are the people of the Lord God, in Whom they can trust for help and guidance. This is why this section fluctuates between the most beautiful promises of redemption and absolute denunciations of those who will not listen to the exhortations. And, although they no longer had the benefit of spiritual giants such as First and Second Isaiah, the latter's disciples did have a certain degree of success in reaching the hearts of the people.

CHAPTER 58. Chapters 58 and 59 are actually linked together in meaning. This very lovely chapter could be headed "service which is pleasing to God," for it says quite specifically that ritualistic offerings and observances are not pleasing to God: He is only pleased by our walking in His path. Our motivation is the thing that is most important. The prophet makes it very clear that the only thing that is important is what is in your heart; when your heart is right, right action will follow. And this is the service which is pleasing to God.

CHAPTER 59. This chapter describes what might be called

a living encounter between Yahweh and the community at worship. The return of Israel to Palestine fell far short of the expectations of happiness for which the prophecies of Second Isaiah had prepared them. The prophet therefore points out to them why Yahweh seems so remote from them. They are not obeying the Law, he tells them. They are behaving very much like the children of Israel in the earlier days when Moses and Joshua brought them into Canaan, where they thought they could then do as they pleased, though they soon discovered how wrong they were. It was a painful discovery then, and the Hebrews experienced it again on their return to Jerusalem.

There are some particularly beautiful lines in this chapter. One especially dear to me is the first: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save. . ." Read this passage and then take a good look at yourself and see if you conform to what it means. Do you really believe this? That is what it amounts to, you know. Either you believe that God is All in all; that you have contact with Him, and He has a very definite desire to see you do the thing that is right for you—or you do not. If you do not, start building in that belief. Face the situation honestly within yourself, because until you do you will not make much spiritual progress.

CHAPTER 60 is a very beautiful passage. It is, of course, specifically intended for the people, but it is also addressed to Zion, the symbol of the soul that knows God. The prophet is speaking of a person, and a nation, who lives according to the Law of God, and he expresses not only the promise of a spiritual renaissance, but of actual material benefits. The Hebrews knew the Law and had a good understanding of its operation—that what they sowed they reaped—and though at first fear forced them to obey, as they grew in understanding they eventually developed a great love of God, even though they did not always live up to their understanding.

CHAPTER 61. To me, this entire section, particularly chapters 60-62, is among the most magnificent in the whole book, and on a par with Second Isaiah in its literary beauty as well as

its concepts. It contains a certain amount of symbolism with which most of us are familiar, as well as being an example of the phenomenon of inner speech which is to be found in the other sections of Isaiah.

These three chapters and the work of Second Isaiah represent the direct Word of God. It is the Presence living within them speaking. When this happens it means that the person to whom the words come has, to some degree, gotten himself out of the way mentally and emotionally—*he is not in a trance, but in perfect consciousness*—and the words of God Who lives within come through.

CHAPTER 62 might be called "a message to the Messianic people." As far as the writer is concerned, it is, of course, addressed to the Hebrews. Unfortunately—and this is true not only of the Hebrews, but even more so of the Christians—the whole concept was misunderstood. Actually everyone is an Israelite—no matter where he was born, or what his creed, if he puts God first. The real meaning of Israel is "prince with God," as I am sure you all know. Once we grasp this idea we find that we have to live in accordance with this concept. An Israelite is one who tries to live a spiritual life to the best of his ability and according to his understanding.

We therefore find that the promises in these chapters to the Messianic people are given to those who really live righteously. None of us can do this perfectly, and there is always the temptation to observe the ritual and put the responsibility on God. In this chapter, however, the prophet tells his people that the Messianic people are responsible for their own actions.

CHAPTER 63. The disciples of Second Isaiah evidently had difficulty in getting the people to walk in righteousness, hence the image of an avenging conqueror. They therefore pray to God and acknowledge their own belief that He is their Father and Redeemer.

CHAPTER 64 is a prayer for the universal rule of God, and a very lovely prayer it is. There is a confession of guilt, and a plea for the people to return to God and all things will be restored.

It is one of the chapters which is used in the synagogue; a "common prayer" for the people.

CHAPTER 65. In this chapter the Presence of God speaks through Isaiah and predicts what will happen when the salvation of the Lord is established upon the earth. When everyone acknowledges, each in his own way, that there is but One Power and One Presence. This age of peace will be in force at all times and in all centuries.

Looking at our world today I am not sure that we have made much progress since the time the prophet wrote this. At any rate, it is a clear statement of what happens to the person who lives by the Law and puts God first, as well as what the person who does not do this can expect. There is nothing that we could possibly think of that could not be ours if we lived according to the Law. I am aware that there is the question of time and a tremendous amount of work and self-training involved in demonstrating this Truth, but that never need prevent any of us from rising high enough in consciousness, in a split second, to gain our desired good, provided the real desire is there. The beautiful promise in verse 24: "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" is the complete truth for all of us who have tried it.

CHAPTER 66. This and chapter 65 are actually one chapter. In the first verse God says through Isaiah: ". . .The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? . . .", which is an extremely beautiful way of saying that temples and churches are of no importance in His worship; worship in the heart is what is important.

*The Interpreter's Bible* calls the subject of verses 1-16 "The New Birth of Zion and the Fire of Judgment," and here Isaiah says that there will come a time when all people will know that they are the seed of God; when they will demonstrate the Presence of God within themselves as Jesus did, and that until that time there would be trouble and tribulation. And he speaks to "all flesh" and says that the "end" of man will be this new birth in consciousness—his realization that he is divine spirit—

and at that time the "new heavens and the new earth" which the Lord has made will be his habitation.

Verses 20-24 summarize the entire book of Isaiah. The beginning is found in Isaiah's cry: "Behold your God; God is within you." Second Isaiah takes up this cry and, from a less personal point of view, refers it to the nations of the world. And here the word is spoken to both the individual and to "all flesh," that, ". . . behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isaiah 65:17), and that ". . . all flesh shall come to worship before me, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 66:23).

Certainly there have never been two and possibly three more different men than we meet under the name of Isaiah. Yet, each one was motivated by the same idea - God. Each one dedicated his life to God, and made every effort to arouse and help his fellowmen.

The First Isaiah lived the aspect of Truth. The Second and Third, who probably was one of his disciples, stressed the aspect of Love.

It is not a question of who is the greater prophet. Truth is not greater than Love, and Love is not greater than Truth, Life, Spirit, Soul, Wisdom or Principle. Love is the first of the Aspects, because unless we manifest Love to some degree, we never really understand the Truth of the others.

M. M.

Thank you, and God bless  
you.

Mildred Maan

## Seven Steps in Demonstration

**Desire:** Get a strong enthusiasm for that which you want in your life, a real longing for something which is not there now.

**Decision:** Know definitely what it is that you want, what it is that you want to do, or have, and be willing to pay in spiritual values.

**Ask:** [ When sure and enthusiastic ] ask for it in simple, concise language...

**Believe:** in the accomplishment with strong faith, consciously and subconsciously].

**Work at it** ... a few minutes daily in seeing yourself in the finished picture. Never outline details, but rather see yourself enjoying the particular thing ...

**Feel gratitude.** Always remember to say, "Thank you God," and begin to feel the gratitude in your heart. The most powerful prayer we can ever make are those three words, provided we really feel it.

**Feel expectancy.** Train yourself to live in a state of happy expectancy ... Act it until it becomes part of you, as it must and will.

These are the seven steps. Follow them and they will bring you whatever it is that you need.



## \*FORMULA FOR DEMONSTRATION

( A demonstration is answered prayer..  
the manifestation of the Presence,  
Power and Love of God. )

" **A**sk And Ye Shall Receive,

**S**eek And Ye Shall Find,

**K**nock And It Shall Be

Opened unto you"

- *JESUS*

(\*The formula is ASK .... Mildred Mann )