CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
MAY25 2024

Scripture Story: Isaiah 11; 12; 44.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapters 26; 31.

hope for the world?



Photo by Luis Guerra, Jr.

keytext

"They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams. Some will say, 'I belong to the LORD'; others will call themselves by the name of Jacob; still others will write on their hand, 'The LORD's,' and will take the name Israel."

(Isaiah 44:4, 5, NIV)

flashlight

"Had Israel been true to her trust, all the nations of earth would have shared in her blessings. But the hearts of those to whom had been entrusted a knowledge of saving truth, were untouched by the needs of those around them. As God's purpose was lost sight of, the heathen came to be looked upon as beyond the pale of His mercy. The light of truth was withheld, and darkness prevailed. The nations were overspread with a veil of ignorance; the love of God was little known; error and superstition flourished" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 371).

what do you think?

Rate which of the following items people are most likely or least likely to pass on to others. (Note: 1 would be the item people would have no problem giving away; 7 would be the item least shared with others.)

___ Clothing
___ Car
___ Beliefs
___ Money
___ Jesus
___ Books
___ Cell Phone
___ Tablet
___ Laptop

did you know?

Did you know that the prophet Isaiah lived through the reigns of three different kings of Judah? Scholars believe that his ministry started sometime around 740 B.C. and ended in 681 B.C. His ministry began under the evil King Ahaz, ran through the spiritual reawakening brought about by Hezekiah, and ended under the evil Manasseh. While Isaiah was one of the most "political" of prophets, he never failed to speak God's truth to the weak or the mighty.



INTO THE STORY

"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

"He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. . . .

"He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth."

"But now listen, Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen. This is what the LORD says—he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams. Some will say, 'I belong to the LORD'; others will call themselves by the name of Jacob; still others will write on their hand, 'The LORD's,' and will take the name Israel."

(Isaiah 11:1-12; 44:1-5, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Read and reflect on the Scripture story for this week.

What would you say is the main point of the first passage, Isaiah 11:1-9, 12, and the second passage found in Isaiah 44:1-5?

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Circle a verse in each section that comes closest to the main point of each.

Isaiah 11:1-9 describes a very special person. Who do you think is the person being spoken of? To whom is Isaiah writing?

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What is significant about the part of the Scripture story that paints a picture of animals dwelling together? What message is God trying to convey to us through these images?

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punch lines

"You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end" **(Luke 1:31-33, NIV).**

"This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus" **(Ephesians 3:6, NIV).**

"After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: 'Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe' " **(Acts 15:7, NIV).**

"All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him" **(Psalm 22:27, NIV).**

further insight

"The members of God's church are to be zealous of good works, separating from worldly ambition and walking in the footsteps of Him who went about doing good. With hearts filled with sympathy and compassion, they are to minister to those in need of help, bringing to sinners a knowledge of the Saviour's love."—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 109

Sabbath

Read Isaiah 11:12.

God promised Israel that a special Deliverer would come from the line of King David's father, Jesse. Among the many things He would do is "raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel" (NIV). What message was God hoping to send to surrounding nations by rescuing exiled Israelites from groups that had taken them captive? How might those nations view God after such an act?

If God thought enough of the Israelites then as well as those of us today who are spiritual descendants of Abraham that He would send Jesus to save us, shouldn't we tell others the good news?

Sunday

Read Isaiah 11:1-9, 12; 44:1-5.

Read the *Into the Story* section to get at the heart of this week's lesson. Now complete the *Out of the Story* questions. The two passages in Isaiah that form the basis of this week's lesson are both hopeful in tone. God is making some very big and bold promises. The theme of hope runs through the writings of Isaiah. What do you think was happening in Judah at the time that made these messages so essential? How might Isaiah's messages apply to your life today?

How might the Spirit of wisdom and understanding express itself in your life?

The Spirit of counsel and power?

The Spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord?

Monday

Read Luke 1:31-33.

In many Western societies, a woman adopts the last name of her husband-to-be once they are married. Marie James may become Marie Smith, or Marie James-Smith. This taking on of the fiancé's last name used to be considered quite a high honor bestowed by a wife on her husband.

Read this week's *Key Text*. What did God say future descendants of Jacob would do? What do you think this promise meant to the current crop of Israelites who were scattered and downtrodden?

Tuesday

Read Ephesians 3:6.

After reading this week's *Flashlight*, write a short paragraph to finish the following statement:

Ancient Israel could have been a great spiritual example to the then-known world by

Wednesday

Refer to this week's *Punch Lines*. Did any of the highlighted verses catch your attention? After reading Isaiah 11:1-5 (*Into the Story*, passage 1), how does Luke 1:31-33 fulfill Isaiah's prophecy? Notice also that Jesus was not simply coming to bless Christian believers; He came to bless everyone who would dare believe in Him.

Thursday

Read Acts 15:7.

Watch your local evening news tonight. More than likely you'll see a story of someone touched by violence, perhaps someone experiencing a weather-related incident, or maybe just a call for folks to help out a local soup kitchen. After you've seen the telecast, ask yourself: What small thing can I do to make my community better? What next step do I need to take to make this happen? Ask a friend to join you in carrying out your good deed.

Friday

Read Psalm 22:27.

Why are you here? Why do you think God made you and placed you where you are at this special time in history? How might sharing the gospel with others help you find yourself and your purpose?

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapters 26; 31.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.