

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### First Quarter 2021: *Isaiah: "Comfort My People"*

#### Lesson 4 "The Hard Way"

#### Read for this week's study

Isaiah 7:14–16; Isaiah 7:17–25; Isaiah 8:1–10; Isaiah 8:11–15; Isaiah 8:16–22.

#### Memory Text

"I will wait on the LORD, who hides His face from the house of Jacob; and I will hope in Him"  
(Isaiah 8:17, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Prophecy Fulfilled (*Isaiah 7:14–16*)
- III. Foreseen Consequences (*Isaiah 7:17–25*)
- IV. What's in a Name? (*Isaiah 8:1–10*)
- V. Nothing to Fear When We Fear God Himself (*Isaiah 8:11–15*)
- VI. Gloom of the Ungrateful Living Dead (*Isaiah 8:16–22*)
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. In Isaiah God provided powerful evidence that He wanted what was best for His people. But they rejected the gentle, positive way He presented Himself to them. So he had to allow them to come into much more difficult circumstances to get their attention. What lessons can we learn from their mistakes today? (Sabbath Afternoon's lesson)
2. Read Isaiah 7:14-16. What does the promise of a child named Immanuel have to do with Ahaz' situation? Why does Isaiah talk about the child eating "curds and honey"? Read Isaiah 7:17-25. What would be the result of Ahaz' decision to trust the King of Assyria? When was the prophecy regarding Syria and northern Israel fulfilled? What was the larger historical background? Read 2 Kings 15:29-30; 16:7-9; 1 Chronicles 5:6, 26. Who sent Pul (Tiglath-Pileser III) to conquer Syria and Assyria? (Sunday's lesson)

3. Read 2 Kings 16:10-18 and 2 Chronicles 28:16-25. What was happening to Ahaz in the middle of this crisis? What spiritual principle do we see unfolding here? Why should we not be surprised at his actions? Our natural tendency is to trust what we can see, feel, taste or touch. But the things of the world don't last. See 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. (Monday's lesson)
4. Read Isaiah 8:1-4. Why does Isaiah tell us he legally recorded the child's name and had marital relations with his wife ("the prophetess")? What name does Isaiah give to his son and how does that name fit in to the historical situation? His name has to do with a rapid conquest, but in this case who is conquering who? Read Isaiah 8:5-8 for following events. Despite constant rebellion on Israel's part, the Lord still offers to deliver and save. What personal instruction can and should we take from this? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. Read Isaiah 8:11-15. What is the relationship between conspiracy theories and fear? To what degree are we afraid of things that will never actually happen? What does it mean to "fear God"? How can you love God and fear God at the same time? How does 1 John 4:18 address the issue? Are there things the world fears that Christians should not fear? Are there things the world does not fear that Christians should fear? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Isaiah 8:16-22. Summarize the ideas in this passage. What does this have to do with King Ahaz and the issues he was facing? What is the role of tradition (collective experience) in our understanding of the Bible? What is the role of reason and common sense? Why does God sometimes hide Himself from His own people? Read Deuteronomy 18:9-14. What does this passage say about the occult? What forms of this do we see today? What is the difference between demonic possession and severe mental illness? How can you tell which is which? (Thursday's lesson)
7. What is the impact of spiritualism on movies, books, television and popular culture? To many in today's world spiritualism seems like nothing more than a harmless distraction. Why is a proper understanding of the state of the dead important to an Adventist understanding of life? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Yet, doesn't the Bible emphasize, make it very plain, that we are supposed to fear God and be his God-fearing people? Look at that first text on the list, the message of the first of the three angels, in Revelation 14:7: "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come." (RSV) It even gives a good reason why we should fear him. But one needs to understand the word fear. If you will forgive the Greek, it's pronounced *phobos*, from which we do get phobia. But it doesn't always mean terror. Sometimes it means respect. It means reverence. Look for example at the next verse, Psalm 128:1, 2: "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord [you mean, blessed is everyone who is terrified of God? Well, read on]. You shall be happy, and

it shall be well with you.” (KJV) Surely the Psalmist isn’t saying, “Happy is everyone who is scared of God.”

This is the other meaning that the word may have. Blessed is everyone who reveres and respects the Lord. You shall be happy and it will be well with you. Note, for example, Proverbs 9:10: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (KJV) You mean to be terrified of God is the beginning of wisdom and learning? No, there again the context determines the meaning of the word. So the translation in the *Good News Bible*, right beside it, is to be preferred: “To be wise you must first have reverence for the Lord.”

Where there is no respect, there is no reverence, and very little learning can take place. Think of all the lengths to which our God has gone through the centuries to gain the respect of his people and hold it long enough to tell them some more of the truth about himself. Perhaps the most famous example is the one provided at Mt. Sinai. God came down to speak to his people. Did they all line up quietly to listen? They were noisy. They were complaining. They were fussing about the food and the water. There was no respect for God. So God could not speak to them softly that day. Instead there was thunder and lightning, and fire and smoke and earthquake. And God said to Moses, “You put a fence around that mountain. Don’t let the people come too close to me.” Now we sing “Nearer, Still Nearer,” but not that day. The people were so terrified that they spoke to Moses, here in Exodus 20:18-20:

The people were afraid and they trembled [in fact, God had said if anyone comes near the fence, he’s to be stoned or shot. If anyone breaks through the fence, I’ll burst forth and consume him. No wonder the people were afraid and trembled.]; and they stood afar off, and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die.” But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear [there is no need to be afraid]; for God has come to prove you [or to test you], and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin.” (RSV)

Notice the use of the word fear in both meanings. You see, “Do not fear” means do not be afraid, but “That the fear of him may be before you” is the word reverence. So the very same word carries both meanings in the very same passage, as you notice. But don’t you love it that Moses could stand in the middle of the earthquake and the fire, and say that there is no need to be afraid? Because he knew God, and he knew why God was raising his voice on that occasion.

We might ask, “why didn’t God speak more softly?” We know he prefers to—and he has, many times when talking to his friends, as in the still, small voice with Elijah at the mouth of the cave. But when people are hard of hearing, God will raise his voice. How grateful we should be that he is willing to raise his voice. Now did he speak too loudly? Did he terrify them too much? What were they doing forty days later when the fire, and the earthquake, and the lightning and

the thunder died away? They were dancing drunk around a golden calf in a fertility cult ritual. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #9, "There is No Need to be Afraid of God" recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/9MMCAG>*

### Further Study with Ellen White

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. {SC 105.2}

I am afraid of anything that would have a tendency to turn the mind away from the solid evidences of the truth as revealed in God's Word. I am afraid of it; I am afraid of it. We must bring our minds within the bounds of reason, lest the enemy so come in as to set everything in a disorderly way. There are persons of an excitable temperament who are easily led into fanaticism; and should we allow anything to come into our churches that would lead such persons into error, we would soon see these errors carried to extreme lengths, and then because of the course of these disorderly elements, a stigma would rest upon the whole body of Seventh-day Adventists. {2SM 43.2}

Christ came to this earth in human form that He might stand as the Captain of our salvation, so that we should not be overcome by Satan's power. And when the enemy has seemed to be gaining a signal victory over righteousness, God has been working in mercy and power to counteract his designs. {TDG 308.4}

The work of Christ is to redeem, to restore, to seek and to save that which was lost. If we are connected with Christ, we also are partakers of the divine nature and are to be laborers together with God. We are to bind up the bruised and wounded soul; and if a brother or a sister has erred, we are not to join with the enemy in destroying and ruining, but to work with Christ to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness. {HP 291.2}

While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the

hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God. {DA 173.1}

All who choose Christ's kingdom of love and righteousness and peace, making its interest paramount to all other, are linked to the world above, and every blessing needed for this life is theirs. In the book of God's providence, the volume of life, we are each given a page. That page contains every particular of our history; even the hairs of the head are numbered. God's children are never absent from His mind. {DA 313.3}

If we are determined not to be separated from the Source of our strength, Jesus will be just as determined to be at our right hand to help us, that we may not be put to shame before our enemies. The grace of Christ can accomplish for us that which all our efforts will fail to do. Those who love and fear God may be surrounded with a multitude of cares, and yet not falter or make crooked paths for their feet. God takes care of you in the place where it is your duty to be. {CH 424.1}

And while Christ opens heaven to man, the life which He imparts opens the heart of man to heaven. Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ's mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore. He opens to us the riches of the universe, and by Him the power to discern and to appropriate these treasures is imparted. {Ed 28.3}

God's healing power runs all through nature. If a tree is cut, if a human being is wounded or breaks a bone, nature begins at once to repair the injury. Even before the need exists, the healing agencies are in readiness; and as soon as a part is wounded, every energy is bent to the work of restoration. So it is in the spiritual realm. Before sin created the need, God had provided the remedy. Every soul that yields to temptation is wounded, bruised, by the adversary; but whenever there is sin, there is the Saviour. It is Christ's work "to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. {Ed 113.1}

All heaven has been looking on with interest, and ready to do whatever God might appoint, to help fallen men and women to become what God would have them. God will work for His children, but not without their cooperation. They must have indomitable energy, and a constant desire to become all that it is possible for them to be. {RC 296.3}

The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that

crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy,—joy in the Holy Spirit,—health-giving, life-giving joy. {MH 115.3}

Our Saviour's words, "Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. Though men have brought suffering upon themselves by their own wrongdoing, He regards them with pity. In Him they may find help. He will do great things for those who trust in Him. {MH 115.4}

Christ is ready to set us free from sin, but He does not force the will; and if by persistent transgression the will itself is wholly bent on evil, and we do not *desire* to be set free, if we *will* not accept His grace, what more can He do? We have destroyed ourselves by our determined rejection of His love. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." 2 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 3:7, 8. {SC 34.2}

The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver. It never makes him coarse or rough, discourteous or self-important, passionate or hardhearted. On the contrary, it refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and purifies and ennobles the thoughts, bringing them into captivity to Jesus Christ. {CT 365.1}

It is Satan's work to fill men's hearts with doubt. He leads them to look upon God as a stern judge. He tempts them to sin, and then to regard themselves as too vile to approach their heavenly Father or to excite His pity. The Lord understands all this. Jesus assures His disciples of God's sympathy for them in their needs and weaknesses. Not a sigh is breathed, not a pain felt, not a grief pierces the soul, but the throb vibrates to the Father's heart. {DA 356.2}

We must set our hearts to know what is truth. All the lessons which God has caused to be placed on record in His word are for our warning and instruction. They are given to save us from deception. Their neglect will result in ruin to ourselves. Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan. {PP 55.2}

In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. {GC 465.1}

The manifestation of God's love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. {5T 744.2}

The Lord's angels are appointed to keep strict watch over those who put their faith in the Lord, and these angels are to be our special help in every time of need. Every day we are to come to the Lord with full assurance of faith, and to look to Him for wisdom. . . . Those who are guided

by the Word of the Lord will discern with certainty between falsehood and truth, between sin and righteousness (MS 43, 1907). {7BC 907.1}

Satan's policy in this final conflict with God's people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government, while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow. And the very work which he was thus endeavoring to accomplish he charged upon the loyal angels. {GC 591.1}

God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God. {GC 591.2}