

## **ENRICHMENT LESSON 11**

# **THE STORY OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH**

### **LESSON NOTES**

**FOCUS: ISAIAH, A PROPHET OF DESTRUCTION AND OF HOPE (THE BOOK OF ISAIAH)**

- **SACRED STORY**
- **ENRICHMENT PRESENTATION**

### **THE MATERIAL**

- **LOCATION: OLD TESTAMENT SACRED STORY SHELVES, BOTTOM SHELF, UNDER "ELIJAH"**

- **PIECES: MATCHES, 3 SMALL BASKETS (9" X 5") ON ONE LARGE TRAY (20" X 14"):**

- Basket #1 (Isaiah of Jerusalem): wood plaque with swirls of color/words and music of "Holy, Holy, Holy," coal, cluster of grapes, votive candle
- Basket #2: (Isaiah of the Exile): chain, strip of brown felt (identical to the pieces used to build the sheepfold in "The Parable of the Good Shepherd," *Volume 3*, p. 77), 1 of the People of God, rock, beautiful garment
- Basket # 3: (Third Isaiah): mother surrounded by children, scroll with words of Isaiah 61:1-4 printed on it, wolf and sheep (like what is used in the "Parable of the Good Shepherd," *Volume 3*, p. 77 ), material for "Creation," (*Volume 2*, p. 41")

- **CONTROL**
- **UNDERLAY: DARK BROWN FELT STRIP, 57" X 11" (ONE LONG PIECE WITH STITCHING IN TWO PLACES TO MAKE IT LOOK AS THOUGH THE WHOLE THING IS REALLY THREE 19" SCROLLS SEWN TOGETHER)**

### **BACKGROUND**

This presentation on Isaiah enriches the presentations on the Exile and Return (*Volume 2*, p. 93) and the Prophets (*Volume 2*, p. 100). The meditation of the 8th-century prophet Isaiah on the destiny of Jerusalem left a tradition of prophecy in his name. Chapters 1-29 of the book of Isaiah are now often called First Isaiah. This is a

meditation on the crisis of pre-exilic Jerusalem in the years 742–701 B.C.E. Second Isaiah is in chapters 40–55. This takes place about 540 B.C.E. It tells of the hope for a return to Jerusalem from exile. Chapters 56–66 are called Third Isaiah. Its apparent context is after the return to and restoration of Jerusalem that was anticipated in Second Isaiah.

### **NOTES ON THE MATERIAL**

Isaiah's story is actually three stories in one tray (20" x 14"). The three different stories are kept in three separate baskets (9" x 5") in a single tray. The story icon (5" x 2.5") is the wolf and the lamb from Isaiah 11:6 and 65:25. It can be attached to the end or the side of the tray depending on the size of the shelves, the classroom or other considerations. Each basket has its own story icon: First Isaiah has an image of Jerusalem attached, Second Isaiah has a piece of chain attached, and Third Isaiah has an image of the earth attached. The underlay is a strip of dark brown felt, 57" x 11". There is stitching at two places along the underlay (spaced about 19" apart) to make the underlay look as though it is three underlays stitched together. Each object in the story is approximately the same size (no more than 4" high and 4" wide).

First Isaiah, or "Isaiah of Jerusalem," calls for the following objects: a wooden plaque with swirls of color, some musical notation, and the words "Holy, Holy, Holy", a piece of wood painted to resemble a glowing coal, a cluster of grapes and a votive candle.

Second Isaiah, or "Isaiah of the Exile," calls for the following objects: a 10" piece of heavy chain, a strip of brown felt (like the pieces used to build the sheepfold in "The Parable of the Good Shepherd"), one of the People of God, a rock and a beautiful garment.

Third Isaiah, Isaiah of the "new creation," calls for the following objects: a small statue of a mother surrounded by children, a scroll with the words of the prophet in Isaiah 61:1-4, a wolf and a sheep (like what is used in "The Parable of the Good Shepherd") and materials for "Creation" (right from the top shelf).

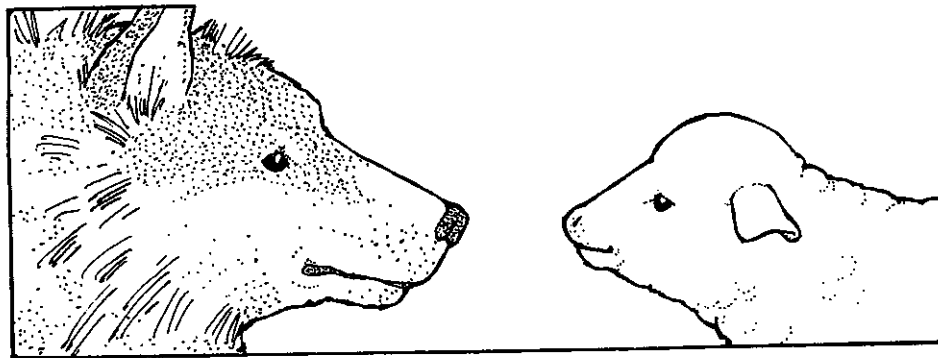
A control for the lesson is folded and placed in the tray for the children to use to check their work. The sequence of the story is important because when you change the sequence, you change the story.

### **SPECIAL NOTES**

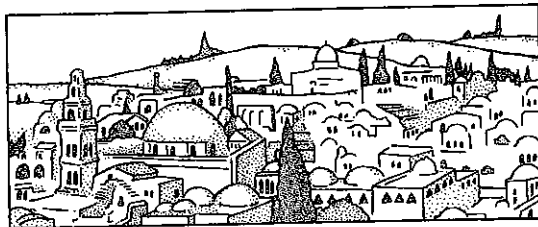
The core stories about the People of God are placed on the top of the sacred story shelves. The enrichment stories about the key people in the core stories are placed on the lower shelves of the sacred story section in the room, under the core stories they enrich and extend (see diagram below).

Isaiah's story enriches the lesson on the Exile and Return (*Volume 2*, p. 93) and the Prophets (*Volume 2*, p. 100). When you introduce the stories in this volume, take care to set them in the larger context of the sacred story of which they are a part.

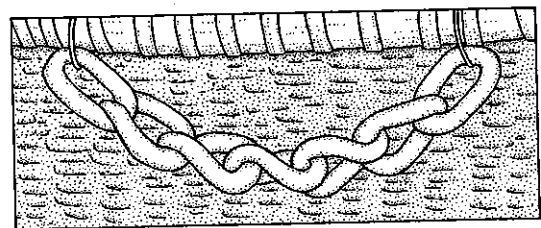
As you tell the story of Isaiah place objects on the underlay to remind you of each important event or prophecy. This time unroll the underlay all the way so the children can visually see that there are three sections from the start. At the end of the wondering, show the children the control card and then carefully place each object back in its basket and then in the tray saying something about each one like, "Here is the beautiful garment," and so forth. Lastly, model how to roll the underlay back up and place it in the tray.



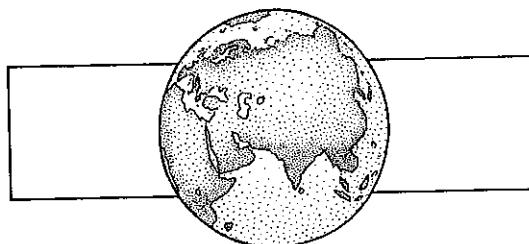
**STORY ICON FOR THE STORY OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH**



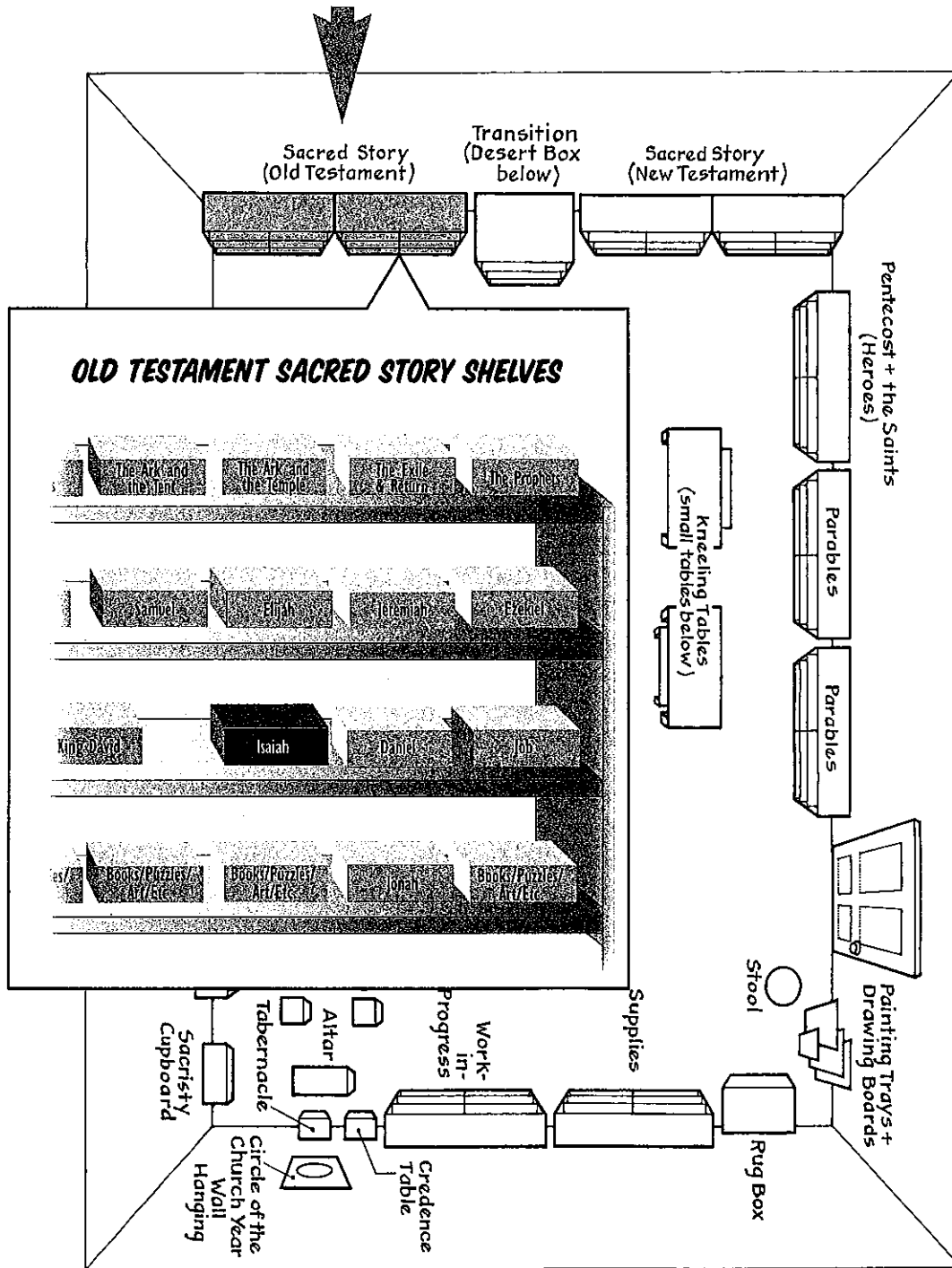
**STORY ICON FOR FIRST ISAIAH**



**STORY ICON FOR SECOND ISAIAH**



**STORY ICON FOR THIRD ISAIAH**



WHERE TO FIND MATERIALS (TEACHING OBJECTS)

## MOVEMENTS

*Move with deliberation to the shelf where the material waits.*

*Pick up the tray containing the material and return to the circle. (Be sure to have a container of matches such as from the "Baptism" lesson nearby so you can light the candle in this story.)*

*Then go and get the "Creation" lesson from the top shelf. (You will need it for the end of the story.)*

*As you return to the circle you may need to say...*

*Take the underlay from the tray and unroll it all the way as you begin the introduction—from right to left (storyteller's perspective).*

*As you mention the three scrolls, point out the places on the underlay where it has been stitched together...and as you mention the three baskets, place one at the beginning, and then the others at each of the places where the stitches can be seen between the underlay and the storyteller.*

## WORDS

Watch. Watch where I go.

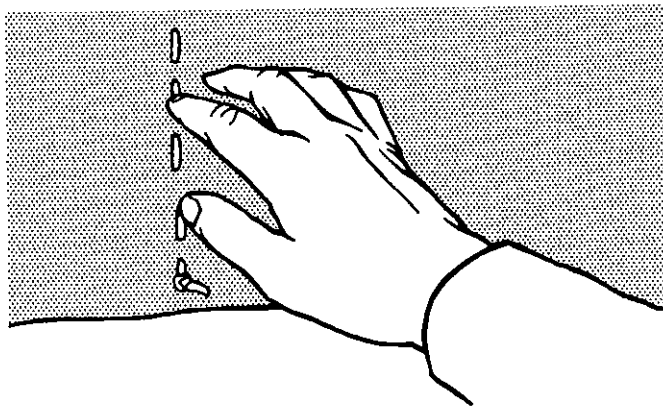
Oh...we need one more thing.

We need to be ready.

This is the story about the prophet Isaiah. But what is a prophet?

Prophets are people who come so close to God and God comes so close to them that they know what God wants. Sometimes God's message is a warning for people who are not living in the best ways. Sometimes God has a message of hope for the people going through difficult times. Sometimes it is about making all things new.

The words of Isaiah the prophet have been given to us written on a scroll. Some think there were three scrolls and that someone sewed them together. This is why we have three baskets.



**A PLACE ON THE UNDERLAY WHERE IT HAS BEEN STITCHED TOGETHER (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)**

## MOVEMENTS

## WORDS

### FIRST ISAIAH—ISAIAH OF JERUSALEM

**From Basket #1:** Place **Object #1** (card with swirls of bright colors, musical notes and the words *Holy, holy, holy*) on the underlay as you say, “*Holy, holy, holy.*”

Place **Object #2** (piece of wood painted to resemble glowing coal) on the underlay.

Place **Object #3** (bunch of grapes) on the underlay. Use your hand to draw the protective hedge and then cover the grapes. When you say that God removed the hedge, remove your hand.

Place **Object #4** (candle) on the underlay. Light the candle.

First Isaiah was called to be a prophet to the People of God during the time when the Assyrians were attacking the city. He had a vision. He suddenly found himself in the temple of God, but it was not like the temple in Jerusalem. It was even grander—a vision of heaven itself. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his presence filled the temple. All around him were angels singing: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of God’s glory.”

Isaiah was afraid. He said, “I am just not good enough to be this close to God.”

Just then an angel flew over to Isaiah and, taking a piece of burning coal from the altar, held it to Isaiah’s lips, saying, “This has touched your lips and made you clean. Your sins are forgiven.” Then Isaiah heard the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send to speak to the people? Who will go for us?” Isaiah said, “Here am I! Send me!”

Isaiah told the people that Jerusalem would be destroyed. He told how a lovely vineyard had been planted by God on a beautiful hill and surrounded it with a strong hedge. God thought the vineyard would grow good, sweet grapes, but instead it grew wild, bitter grapes. So God took away the hedge surrounding the vineyard, and the vines were trampled down. They became overgrown with briars and thorns. The rain did not fall on the ruined vineyard, so the vines withered and died.

Another time he told them about a light. Isaiah said, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.” But what was this light?

It was the brightness and warmth of a good harvest; of having a heavy load taken off your shoulders; of a child being born to show the way, a child called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

## MOVEMENTS

## WORDS

### SECOND ISAIAH—THE PROPHET IN EXILE

**From Basket #2: Place Object #1** (chain from "The Exile and Return") on the underlay as you speak about the exile. ☛ Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians and many of God's people were taken away to live in exile in Babylon.

**Place Object #2:** (felt cut to look like a straight road) on the underlay. ☛ The exiles lived in a strange land, far from Jerusalem. One day Second Isaiah came to the people and said, "Get ready. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. God is coming to be with you. God knows each one of you like a shepherd knows sheep. Do not be afraid."

**Place Object #3** (one of the People of God) on the underlay. ☛ Another time Second Isaiah came to the people and said someone is coming, someone who is chosen by God and in whom God delights. This one will teach people and refresh them when they are tired, but this person will be despised and rejected.

**Place Object #4** (rock) on the underlay. ☛ Still another time Second Isaiah told the people to remember all the way back to when the great family began and when they came through the water into freedom. When they remember and tell these stories, they will know who they are and where they came from. These stories will be like a statue that has been cut from a rock, to show them the way.

**Place Object #5** (beautiful garment) on the underlay. ☛ Finally, Second Isaiah told the People of God to get ready. They were going home, so they should prepare by making beautiful clothes to wear. When they put on those clothes, it would feel like they were already home.

## MOVEMENTS

### THIRD ISAIAH

**From Basket #3: Place Object #1** (mother surrounded by children) on the underlay as you speak about the mother.

**Place Object #2:** (scroll) on the underlay.

**Place Object #3** (wolf and sheep from "The Parable of the Good Shepherd") on the underlay.

**Place Object #4** (creation story cards from "Creation") on the underlay.

## WORDS

Some of the people did go home. The city of Jerusalem was rebuilt. God then sent more prophets to teach the people and fill them with hope for the future.

This was when Third Isaiah spoke. He said, "Lift up your eyes and look around, everyone is coming home. God will gather all the people of the world close—just as a mother does when she gathers her children close."

Another time Third Isaiah said to be at peace. It was hard to come back to Jerusalem. The city was all torn down and still black from the smoke and fire. God told Isaiah to tell the people that everything will be well.

Isaiah also said something like this: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—flowers instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of weakness; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that God may be glorified" (Isaiah 61:1-4).

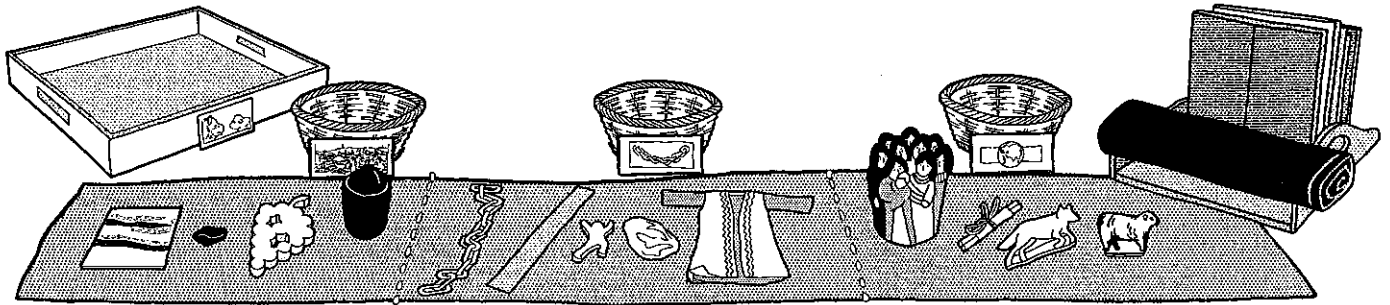
God then told Isaiah to tell the people that some day the power of peace will be so strong that even enemies like wolves and lambs will eat together and be friends.

Third Isaiah said that God will make a new heaven and a new earth like he did so long ago at the beginning, but this time the new beginning will last forever.



## MOVEMENTS

## WORDS



**COMPLETE LAYOUT OF THE STORY OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH (CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE)**

*Sit for a moment and look at the lesson from beginning to end to let the story rest. Then begin the wondering.*

I wonder what part of this story you liked the best?

I wonder what part is the most important?

I wonder which part is about you or what part you are in?

I wonder if we could leave any of the story out and still have all that we need?

*After the wondering is over, show the children the control card for them to use to check their own telling of the story. Then put the story away carefully. Pick up each object in reverse order and remind the children what the object is, saying for example, "Here is the wolf and the sheep..." After all of the objects are back in the tray, carefully model how to roll the underlay back up and place it in the tray as well. Return the lesson to its place on the shelf. Then return to your spot in the circle and dismiss the children one by one to their work.*