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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Isaiah 35.

(2015)

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But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Isaiah 35.

Topics.

- Carmel and Sharon shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.
- The blind shall see and the tongue of the mute shall sing for joy.
- There shall be a highway called the way of holiness for the redeemed.
- The Commonwealth of Israel.
- The glory of the spiritual Temple God is building in Christ.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: Isaiah is the exciting story of the Old Testament and the New Testament compacted into one book. It covers the wonder and splendour of Bible prophecy and echoes of the Lord Jesus Christ resound throughout Isaiah's visions and his messages. It teaches history as it affects God's people and constantly points to a future age when righteousness, justice, joy and peace will be established on earth. Isaiah prophesied about 740–700 B.C.

He lived during the decline of Israel in the shadow of the powerful Assyrian Empire. He spoke the word of God to a people who were "deaf and blind" (Isaiah 6:10) who refused to listen to his warnings of looming disaster.

Isaiah warned the people of Judah's that their sin would bring God's judgment (i.e., seventy-years captivity) and declared that God is sovereign and would use Cyrus the Persian to return the people from exile. He spoke also of a servant and man of sorrows who would be wounded for our transgressions faithfully accomplishing God's purposes of salvation (Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12). The final chapters give a beautiful description of a new creation in which Christ will rule as King, judging the wicked and establishing God's Kingdom on earth.

Following are four points that will help the reader understand the book of Isaiah as they travel through it: -

1. The history of Israel and Judah. At this time in the story Assyria has taken the ten tribes of Israel in the land of Samaria into captivity and marched up to Jerusalem (the two tribes of Judah) to destroy it, but failed. Later in the story Babylon attacks Jerusalem and conquers the city and takes the people of Judah into captivity. After this victory Babylon conquers Assyria which resulted in Israel and Judah being brought under the submission of Babylonian rule and the tribes being brought together during the seventy year Babylonian captivity.
2. Many of Isaiah's visions are written as though they have already taken place, but a majority of these visions are predicting future events that are about to happen during Isaiah's generation while others will come to pass in a future age. Though these visions are of future events Isaiah speaks them in the present tense, because he spoke them as they came to his mind and as he saw the events unfolding before him. They are often spoken in this manner because of the certainty of it and because God had ordained them and revealed them to his prophets who spoke them to His people so they must come to pass, because God cannot lie.(Titus 1:2).
3. Though Isaiah is primarily speaking to Judah (the two tribes at Jerusalem) much of what he says applies to Israel (the ten tribes in Samaria) because both Judah and Israel are in the same corrupt spiritual condition.

4. All the promises to Israel are now in Christ. God's promises to Israel now include the Jews and the Gentiles. This is because under the New Covenant God is building an entirely new nation made up of Jews and Gentiles of which Christ is the head. In this new nation that God is creating in the Lord Jesus Christ Jews have no advantage over Gentiles since all are one in Christ Jesus.

The apostle Paul wrote: Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (i.e., one nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Eph. 2:1-22). The practical application of what this means, is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel through Isaiah also apply to Gentiles who by faith belong to Christ.

The Millennial Age

Carmel and Sharon shall see the Glory of the LORD, the Majesty of our God.

Isaiah 35:1-2 ----- ¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus (rose in KJV); ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

The previous chapter ended with the LORD through Isaiah commanding the utter destruction of the land of Edom and it being so void of human life that thistles and thorns flourished and birds and wild animals made it their home. In contrast to this the focus is now upon the restoration of the land of Israel. The desolation of the one of the chief enemies of Israel is contrasted with the renewed beauty of Israel's own inheritance. The sense of this chapter is that the wilderness and the dry land will rejoice on account of the blessings contained in this prophecy.

The crocus plant: (v1) (rose in KJV) the word crocus comes from the Hebrew word (*chabatstseleth*) it is literally a meadow-saffron (also called, utumn crocus) it has light purple or white flowers and grows in grassy meadows. It is the plant we get saffron from and though it root is poisonous when the plant is properly prepared it provides a safe, but powerful medical drug called Colchicine which is approved by the US FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and commonly used for the treatment of gout and familial Mediterranean fever. It was used in the Byzantine Empire for joint problems such as rheumatism and arthritis and can be applied to neuralgia and itching to bring relief

The wilderness will blossom like the crocus (rose in KJV) (v1) present a picture of dry and barren deserts flourishing with these beautiful purple and white flowers springing up in lush green grassy fields. This is why the wilderness is personified as singing and rejoicing. The joy could be likened to the joy that a man would feel who had only ever had rags to wear if he was adopted into the royal family and given royal robes. Dry and barren wilderness that once had no beauty for the eye to behold and could barely sustain life, will not only become fields of rich colour with gentle flowing streams of fresh water, but will also sustain life abundant.

Lebanon: though never totally occupied it is included in God's promise; it is a snowclad mountain range extending 100 miles along the Syrian coast with peaks reaching 10,200 above Sea Level. The melting snow creates great rivers including the Jordan River that meanders through Palestine to the Dead Sea. Writers of biblical poetry speak at length on the motion of Lebanon's famous cedar trees; their massive branches; their fragrance and on their height as a symbol of dignity and pride and on their growth and resistance to decay as a symbol of endurance.

Lebanon's isolated crags, supported watch towers and refuge-points and came to symbolize the exalted status of Judah's royal house.

The psalmists' speaks of the greatness of the Creator who both plants the cedars and shatters them by His voice. The Lebanon's were also famous for choice-wine the lion and the leopard.

Isaiah makes an amazing statement concerning Lebanon: Lebanon was not only famous for its cedar trees, but for the multitude of its animals, including the lion and the leopard, yet the LORD says: -

- Lebanon would not suffice for fuel, nor are its beasts enough for a burnt offering. (Isaiah 40:16).

Even all the blood of Lebanon's most glorious animals would not be enough for burnt offerings. There was only one blood type that had the right DNA to cleanse us and make us whiter than snow in the eyes of God and it was not in an animal, but a man whose name was Jesus.

Carmel: (means garden) it is a village allotted to the tribe of Judah and a prominent Mountain range in Israel that juts out into the Mediterranean Sea. It is west of the Sea of Galilee and forms the best natural harbor south of Beirut. South of Carmel is the fruitful valley of Sharon and north east of it the Kishon River flows through the Plain of Esdraelon.

Carmel is often used as a symbol of beauty and fruitfulness, because of its lush tree cover, but its withering trees became symbolic of destruction and desolation. At Carmel Elijah stood against 850 heathen prophets and defeated them (1 King 18) and it was visited by Elisha. (2 Kings 2:25) (2 Kings 4:25).

Sharon: is the coastal plain between Joppa and Mount Carmel, a place legendary in ancient times for its fertility, pasturage and beauty, its suburbs and pasture lands were possessed by the tribe of Gad. Figuratively Sharon is used as a symbol of man's state of fruitfulness and glory and of man's eternal state-of peace for evermore.

Some interpret this chapter as referring to the following four periods of history: -

1. The flourishing state of Hezekiah's kingdom in the latter part of his reign.
2. Israel's time of peace after they returned from their seventy year captivity in Babylon and the Temple was built and true faith restored.
3. To the Gospel age and the flourishing of believing Jews and Gentiles in the Kingdom of God.
4. To the future return of Christ in glory when the fullness of the Gentiles will be brought in and all Israel will be saved.

Though the verses may fit the latter days of Hezekiah and the period after Israel's return from Babylon in the scope of the whole chapter and when viewed spiritually and symbolically they best fit the Gospel age and when viewed literally beautifully fit the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to gather the faithful to himself and establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

This study for this reason will focus on both the spiritual and literal application of the verses as we travel through the chapter.

The spiritual view: (v1-2) by the wilderness is meant the Gentile world without God pictured as a barren and dry desert, but through the influence of the Gospel and the grace of God it blossoms into a most pleasant and fruitful garden that multitudes of converts to the true faith are being raised up to God in.

Viewing the Gentile world as a desert and wilderness before the Gospel came into it is very apt since the Gentiles were totally void of the knowledge of God. Even the Jews at this time viewed themselves as the holy race with God and the Gentiles as the unclean race without God. However when the Gospel came it brought abundant joy to all (Jews and Gentiles) who received it and in every place that it was received what was once dry and barren became fruitful and flourishing.

The prophetic statement "They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God (v2) was certainly true for those who saw Jesus during his ministry on earth, through his miracles and the wonders he did and the compassion and mercy he displayed he manifested the glory of His heavenly Father on earth. But it is also true for those who have not literally seen Christ since they see and behold him by faith.

The literal view: (v1-2) the armies of Assyria had not only laid the entire land of the ten tribes of Israel in Samaria waste and taken all its inhabitants captive but had also destroyed all the fortified cities of Judah and Babylon had destroyed the city of Jerusalem and taken all its inhabitants captive. Observers of that time have said that the Hebrew nation was as good as annihilated and that almost all other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist.

Had Israel not been God's children it is almost certain that they would have ceased to exist as a nation, but the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built. The land of Israel was barren and despised, like a wilderness, but now Isaiah predicts it will abundantly flourish and be exceedingly fruitful.

Though these introductory verses maybe seen as a picture of the land of Israel flourishing in the latter days of Hezekiah and the glorious period of peace and prosperity that God blessed Israel with after they returned from their seventy year captivity in Babylon and rebuilt the Temple and returned to the true faith in the scope of the whole chapter a far bigger picture emerges of a time so glorious it surpasses all previous time in the history of the earth. These introductory words are a picture of the future beauty of the chosen land of Israel flourishing once more on earth as the garden and paradise of God.

These introductory verses are a fitting type of the future garden and paradise of God that is yet to come when Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth. The blossoming meadow flower presents the idea of beauty and of fields of lush grass abundant with fresh water in contrast to the barrenness and desolation of the desert while the land rejoicing presents the idea of multitudes rejoicing. The beauty of the field and the multitudes rejoicing signify the following two periods: -

1. Multitudes rejoicing because of the abundant flourishing of the Gospel in all nations worldwide.
2. Multitudes rejoicing because the universal Kingdom of God after the destruction of the antichrist system has been established on earth.

The Blind shall See and the Tongue of the Mute shall Sing for Joy.

Isaiah 35:3-7 ----- ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

These verses are spoken to those who are suffering at the time of Isaiah, they are words of comfort and encouragement to those who are fearful of their powerful enemies to instead being anxious to be strong, because God will bring judgment upon their enemies and save them. Then those who were spiritually blind and deaf to the word of God and cripple by their rebellion and sin will take in the word of God as dry sand drinks up water and be filled with such great joy that they will want to sing and rejoice.

This prophecy speaks of better times to come and therefore gives hope to the faithful. It can be applied to the latter days of Hezekiah and the captives return from Babylon to their own land, but the perfect fulfilment came when Jesus after being water baptised entered into his ministry on earth.

He even referred to this very passage. When John the Baptist heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, if he is the one who is to come, or should they look for another? And Jesus said: -

- Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. (Matt. 11:4-5).

Jesus leaves it to John to draw the conclusion in answer to his inquiry, "Are you the one who is to come?" Since there are no prophets that performed such miracles the answer to John's question was and obvious, "yes." Through his ministry and his death and resurrection he completely destroyed the power and control the spiritually blind, prideful and self-righteous religious leaders had over the people by introducing a new and living way of being forgiven our sins and united to God the Father independent of the controlling legalistic religious system the chief priests Pharisees and scribes taught and independent of strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

This new and living way is the way of grace. At the time of the chief priests Pharisees and scribes it would be right and proper to refer to God's Kingdom as a spiritually dry and barren wilderness, it is to this wilderness that the Gospel of grace brought such abundant life that it flowed out to all nations on earth and still is.

There shall be a Highway called the Way of Holiness for the Redeemed.

Isaiah 35:8-10 ----- ⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Highway: comes from the Hebrew word (*macluw*) it literally means to mound up, cast up, dam up and raise up and figuratively to extol and exalt (self). In the context of these verses it carries the idea of a highway that is distinct from the common paths. In Isaiah forty-nine the LORD says: -

- I will make all my mountains a road, and my highways shall be raised up. (Isa. 49:11).

The idea is that there would be easy and uninterrupted access to their-own land. However the primary focus contained within the prophecy refers to the highway spoken of in the following verses: -

- A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain." (Isaiah 40:3-4).

And to the messenger spoken of in this verse: -

- Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. (Malachi 3:1).

The highway and the way are not to be taken as two different ways, but for one and the same way which is the way of Jesus he is, the way, the truth, and the life and the only way to God to forgiveness, to salvation and to eternal life there is no other way. (John 14:6). The Gentile world was a desert with no highway to God, or to heaven, but this all changed amongst the Gentile nations when the Gospel was taken to them and the way to God was made clear.

When the knowledge of the truth and will of God is made very plain and clear to all people it is like raising up a spiritual highway amongst the people and the nations that once had no light and the way to God seemed impossible to find.

This highway is the way of the cross which was raised up from the ground for all the world to see. The meaning is that when those who were in spiritually dry places walk on this highway they will clearly know the way, the truth, and the life and when they reach the end of the road they will enter into life eternal.

It is the highway of the King of kings which is common to all his followers whether they are kings or their subjects, nobles or lowly, rich or poor, male or female, Jew or Gentile all the faithful may walk on this highway. It is the way of doing right and what is good it is the more excellent way. On this highway Christ the King and Saviour leads his people in the way of righteousness; truth, love, compassion, justice, grace and forgiveness in their public life and their private life.

It is a highway filled with acts of charity and kindness it is the way of holy worship, and a holy lifestyles. The way of integrity, honesty and doing what is right and good. On this highway is joy and rejoicing fellowship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ and everyone who belongs to his Kingdom. It is a highway raised up by God's sovereign grace above the mire of sin and a road filled with God's favour and a way in which all (Jews and Gentiles) should be invited to walk.

The weak and the blind, the deaf and the lame, the poor and the broken will be found walking upon this highway. It is, the way that leads to perfect holiness and eternal happiness in heaven those who walk on this highway will hear the voice of the Lord behind them, saying, "This is the way walk ye in it," none but those who hear his voice walk this highway.

It is not the way to the earthly temple made with bricks and mortar by the hands of man and filled with formal ceremonial rites and religious customs and traditions, but the way to the eternal Temple, not made with human hands that God is building in Christ. For further information concerning this Temple see the title: "The Commonwealth of Israel," (at the end of this chapter).

The unclean shall not pass over it: (v8) nothing that corrupts, pollutes or that contaminates and defiles will be found on this highway for it is a highway of God that separates those who walk upon it from the sinful ways of the world. It is certainly true that all mankind is unclean by nature, but some are cleansed by the grace of God and blood of Christ, but even though justified and forgiven they are not free from sin and the pollution of it.

The Psalmist understood that there is a limitation to all perfection: -

- I have seen a limit to all perfection, but your commandment is exceedingly broad. (Psalm 119:96).

In the book of Hebrews it is written: -

- Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? (Hebrews 7:11).

The author of Hebrews understood that no one could attain to the perfection of the law by self-effort no matter how hard they tried. Not because the law has a flaw, but because we do The Bible calls this flaw sin. The apostle John understood this truth when he said: -

- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10).

King David knew God's Law (the Ten Commandments) and loved it to the max it was the treasure of his life and though he declared that it is perfect, he also states, "He has seen a limit to all its perfection." The limit is not in God's Law, it is the perfect will of God the limit that David speaks of is sin dwelling in our inward fallen human nature.

The apostle Paul said: -

- I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. (Gal. 2:21).

Christ did not surrender his life to the bloodstained cross of Calvary so that we could attain to the perfect standard of God's Law and His perfect Holiness, but because we couldn't. If any of us could attain to the glorious state of living a lifestyle free of sin Christ died for no reason. It is true God keeps all the faithful in Christ by his laws and His word, but it is also equally true that He keeps them by His love and His grace.

The idea is that the intent and desire dwells in the heart and mind to do those things that honour God and bring a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not because the law demands it, but the Holy Spirit and the love of God dwelling in their heart desires to attain to do those things that brings honour to the good name of the heavenly Father and a good testimony to their King, Saviour and Redeemer.

- Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 21:27).

Even if they are fools, they shall not go astray: (v8) the word fools comes from the Hebrew word ('eviy/) it literally means perverse and figuratively carries the idea of being silly and foolish. In this context it refers to the following: -

- Those who are unlearned and who do not know their way. (Eccles. 10:15).
- Those who are destitute of understanding and education.
- Those who are faithful, but the world regards as fools.
- Those who have been foolish in their unregenerate state.
- Those who are dull of mind and do not have good wisdom.
- Those who lack knowledge of the Gospel and the ways of God.

During the Old and New Testament most relied on the priests, the scribes and the religious leaders to teach them the ways of God, but since Jesus death and resurrection and the introduction of the Gospel of grace all can understand the way to God and to eternal salvation. No one needs to be a scholar, or have a high IQ or even have an education all can understand the simple message of the bloodstained cross of Calvary and the Gospel of grace.

They shall not go astray: (v8) whoever walks upon the highway of God will not go astray, this is because God, will be walking in the way with them and be their companion and guide along the way whether they are learned or not, sharp of mind or dull of mind, the way will be made plain and straight, that no traveller with a right heart attitude will mistake it.

The way to God will be clearly made known it is so unlike all other paths, that there will be no danger of mistaking it. It shall be a safe way; nothing can rob the travellers who walk on this highway from their salvation in Christ and their eternal destination in glory. The way of salvation through the bloodstained cross of Calvary is so plain, that no one, no matter how ignorant or unlearned, need err. Jesus himself always represented the way to life as such that even the most simple and unlearned might find it, he said: -

- The poor have good news preached to them. (Matt. 11:5).
- I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children." (Matt. 11:25).
- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. (Luke 4:18).

- Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. (Luke 6:20).

And Paul wrote: -

- Consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, (1 Cor. 1:26-28).

On this highway God will lead and guide them as He did when He brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and led them through the wilderness and into the Promised Land. It is a highway by which pilgrims of all nations may journey to the mountain of the Lord's House spoken of in the following vision of Isaiah: -

- It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, ³and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:2-22). (This entire chapter is about the millennium age).

At the end of this highway is the heavenly Jerusalem into which there enters nothing that defiles.

- Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 21:27).

Isaiah has seen in his vision the blind, the deaf and the lame cured, the things in the body of flesh that sin has destroyed being restored. He has seen that all this miraculous change has come from the raising up of a highway that leads to God and that only the righteous can travel. Christ by his coming prepared this highway of holiness so that all pilgrims will who follow it will find their way home.

No lion or ravenous beast will walk upon the highway of holiness: (v9) the lion is an animal of fierce strength that devours its prey without mercy as are ravenous beasts. The idea is that nothing will harm or hurt those who walk on this highway. It should be mentioned that this highway is not a symbol of the church built of bricks and mortar by the hands of man and filled with formal ceremonially rites and legalistic religious customs and traditions, since many of these are certainly not free of those who bring hurt and harm to others.

Behind their walls can be found false teachers and prideful hypocritical leaders who instead of leading their followers in the ways of faith and trusting in Christ and God's grace, lead them in the ways of trusting in in self-effort to attain to righteousness by adhering to religious works and holy days.

The highway of holiness refers to the spiritual temple that God is building in Christ that at this present time dwells in the heart and mind of the faithful worldwide and because of this we cannot know for certain who is saved and who is not. This is because some maybe able to deceive us by their outward religious appearance and holy speech, however they cannot deceive Christ, he knows his sheep.

The Scriptures teach that we are not to judge another's man's servant, meaning we are not to judge who is saved and who is not, that judgment belongs to Christ and him only. Certainly we should judge outward behaviour and deal with it accordingly since corrupt behaviour has the potential to corrupt others, but judging a person's salvation is to be left to the Lord.

The ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion: (10) the language here can be applied to those God rescued from the seventy year captivity in Babylon and who return to Zion in triumphant joy singing songs of praise and were restored to their own land and established true worship to the LORD their God. But the following images are far too magnificent and wonderful to refer to the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the land of Judah.

They far better fit for the following two periods of history: -

1. The Gospel by which all sinners are ransomed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and that delivers them from the guilt and condemnation of the law and the judgment and wrath of God.
2. To the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to destroy the antichrist and his kingdom and establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign.

The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce (Isaiah 65:17-25).

All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

In Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

The great prophet Isaiah wrote: -

- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done.

Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

When it is kept in mind that around the time Isaiah is speaking these amazing prophecies the ten tribes of Israel had suffered the fierce Assyrian invasions and Judah and Jerusalem had suffered the cruel Babylonian invasions and that had they not been God's children their nation was so entirely laid to waste of Hebrew inhabitants that it would most likely not exist today.

Observers of history have said that Israel as a nation was annihilated, and indeed, the other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist. But the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built.

The glorious picture presented in this prophecy would have inspired hope that their nation would rise again and lift the focus of their mind from their present suffering and sorrowful circumstances to the LORD'S promise of far higher things to come.

With singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: (10) this can be applied to the captives that returned to their beloved city Jerusalem, the appearing of Jesus, the Gospel and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory since all these events would bring overwhelming joy. The expression, "joy upon their heads," most likely carries the idea of joy lighting up their countenance in such brightness that their whole body expressed joy.

- Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them." (Psalm 126:2).

It would be spoken of as being on the head, because it is joy from above, meaning the joy stems from knowing God and not from worldly things. Joy of the redeemed is one of the first emotions; joy of redemption, and of the pardoning of sin; joy in view of the hopes of eternal life, and of the everlasting favour of God it is a perpetual and unfading joy. The outward imagery used in this prophecy probably stems from the processions of the Israelites marching up to the Temple singing psalms and spiritual songs as they travelled to their festival feast days.

Come to Zion with songs: songs filled with joy and of gratitude for redemption, justification, pardoning of sin and songs of thanksgiving for the love of God, the covenant of grace and the everlasting righteousness of Christ and for a salvation that can never be taken away. When the last trumpet sounds and the angel of the LORD awakens the redeemed from their dusty beds and their body puts on: -

- The imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality and the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory," comes to pass (1 Corinthians 15:54).

And they appear before God in Zion above they will enter into His joy which will never end, there will be nothing to interrupt this joy and happiness throughout all eternity. For there will be no more sin and unbelief, or any other corruption of nature; no more darkness and fear; no more of any of Satan's temptations; no more distresses, inward or outward and no more sighing within for God Himself will wipe away all tears of sorrow. Isaiah's prophetic words: -

- He will swallow up death forever; and the LORD God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. (Isaiah 25:8)

Find their fulfilment at the throne of God: -

- The Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (Rev. 7:17).

The Commonwealth of Israel.

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ.

This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said: -

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles).

In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world. The practical application of what this means to those who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

The Glory of the Spiritual Temple God is Building in Christ.

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity.

When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ.

God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in.

It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building, (taken from the beautiful writings of a faithful, but unknown brother in Christ).

Peter wrote: -

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when: -

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

End.