

# GOD IS IN CONTROL

## ISAIAH CHAPTERS 10-12

One look around at our world today and we can see unfairness, injustice, and poverty all over the place. “The rich get richer and the poor get poorer” and no one seems to do anything about it. You hear people comment, “If there is a God, why doesn’t He do something about it?” Well, there is a God and He definitely will do something about it. God works according to His timing, not ours. Let’s look at this next section in Isaiah to get a clearer idea of that.

### Isaiah 10:1-34

*1 Destruction is certain for the unjust judges, for those who issue unfair laws.*

*2 They deprive the poor, the widows, and the orphans of justice. Yes, they rob widows and fatherless children!*

*3 What will you do when I send desolation upon you from a distant land? To whom will you turn for help? Where will your treasures be safe?*

*4 I will not help you. You will stumble along as prisoners or lie among the dead. But even then the Lord’s anger will not be satisfied. His fist is still poised to strike.*

*5 “Destruction is certain for Assyria, the whip of my anger. Its military power is a club in my hand.*

*6 Assyria will enslave my people, who are a godless nation. It will plunder them, trampling them like dirt beneath its feet.*

*7 But the king of Assyria will not know that it is I who sent him. He will merely think he is attacking my people as part of his plan to conquer the world.*

*8 He will say, ‘Each of my princes will soon be a king, ruling a conquered land.*

*9 We will destroy Calno just as we did Carchemish. Hamath will fall before us as Arpad did. And we will destroy Samaria just as we did Damascus.*

*10 Yes, we have finished off many a kingdom whose gods were far greater than those in Jerusalem and Samaria.*

*11 So when we have defeated Samaria and her gods, we will destroy Jerusalem with hers.’ ”*

*12 After the Lord has used the king of Assyria to accomplish his purposes in Jerusalem, he will turn against the king of Assyria and punish him—for he is proud and arrogant.*

*13 He boasts, “By my own power and wisdom I have won these wars. By my own strength I have captured many lands, destroyed their kings, and carried off their treasures.*

*14 By my greatness I have robbed their nests of riches and gathered up*

*kingdoms as a farmer gathers eggs. No one can even flap a wing against me or utter a peep of protest.”*

**Isaiah then poses the question:**

*15 Can the ax boast greater power than the person who uses it? Is the saw greater than the person who saws? Can a whip strike unless a hand is moving it? Can a cane walk by itself?*

*16 Listen now, king of Assyria! Because of all your evil boasting, the Lord, the Lord Almighty, will send a plague among your proud troops, and a flaming fire will ignite your glory.*

*17 The Lord, the Light of Israel and the Holy One, will be a flaming fire that will destroy them. In a single night he will burn those thorns and briars, the Assyrians.*

*18 Assyria’s vast army is like a glorious forest, yet it will be destroyed. The Lord will completely destroy Assyria’s warriors, and they will waste away like sick people in a plague.*

*19 Only a few from all that mighty army will survive—so few that a child could count them!*

*20 Then at last those left in Israel and Judah will trust the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. They will no longer depend on the Assyrians, who would destroy them.*

*21 **A remnant** of them will return to the Mighty God.*

*22 But though the people of Israel are as numerous as the sand on the seashore, only a few of them will return at that time. The Lord has rightly decided to destroy his people.*

*23 Yes, the Lord, the Lord Almighty, has already decided to consume them.*

*24 So this is what the Lord, the Lord Almighty, says: “My people in Jerusalem, do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they oppress you just as the Egyptians did long ago.*

*25 It will not last very long. In a little while my anger against you will end, and then my anger will rise up to destroy them.”*

*26 The Lord Almighty will beat them with his whip, as he did when Gideon triumphed over the Midianites at the rock of Oreb, or when the Lord’s staff was raised to drown the Egyptian army in the sea.*

*27 In that day the Lord will end the bondage of his people. He will break the yoke of slavery and lift it from their shoulders.*

*28 Look, the mighty armies of Assyria are coming! They are now at Aiath, now at Migron. They are storing some of their equipment at Micmash.*

*29 They are crossing the pass and are staying overnight at Geba. Fear strikes the city of Ramah. All the people of Gibeah—the city of Saul—are running for their lives.*

*30 Well may you scream in terror, you people of Gallim! Shout out a warning to Laishah, for the mighty army comes. Poor Anathoth, what a fate is yours!*

*31 There go the people of Madmenah, all fleeing. And the citizens of Gebim are preparing to run.*

*32 But the enemy stops at Nob for the rest of that day. He shakes his fist at Mount Zion in Jerusalem.*

*33 But look! The Lord, the Lord Almighty, will chop down the mighty tree! He will destroy all that vast army of Assyria—officers and high officials alike.*

*34 The Mighty One will cut down the enemy as an ax cuts down the forest trees in Lebanon.*

## **Chapter 10    The problem**

### Isaiah 10:1-6

*1 Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes,  
2 to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans your prey!*

*3 What will you do on the day of punishment, in the calamity that will come from far away? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth,*

*4 so as not to crouch among the prisoners or fall among the slain? For all this his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still.*

*5 Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger—the club in their hands is my fury!*

*6 Against a godless nation I send him, and against the people of my wrath I command him, to take spoil and seize plunder, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.*

In verses one and two we see the gross injustices going on in Judah, injustice that God must judge. The leaders of the children of Israel have become self-serving. They are oppressing the poor, the widows and the fatherless. They have passed laws that are unjust and they make unfair legal decisions. The effect of these decisions is to deprive the needy of justice and take away the rights of someone just because they are poor. These leaders are becoming rich because of gouging and stealing and defrauding people who are in no position to defend themselves.

God, when setting up the laws for the children of Israel, had set up measures to prevent this from happening (Exodus 22:22-27). He had also set severe penalties for taking advantage of the poor and widows and orphans. God had told the leaders and the wealthy people what they were and were not to do to provide for the needs of the hard-working, but poor, person and for the needs of widows and their fatherless children. So the leaders were breaking the law of God. Now, keep in mind that God has no objection to people being wealthy as long as they put Him first and are generous toward those who are less fortunate.

So God asks these leaders where they are going to turn and to whom will they run when God begins to punish them for these unjust actions. God then spells out through Isaiah

exactly what is going to happen to them.

Isaiah 10:7-12:

*7 But this is not what he intends, nor does he have this in mind; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few.*

*8 For he says: "Are not my commanders all kings?"*

*9 Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus?"*

*10 As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of the idols whose images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria,*

*11 shall I not do to Jerusalem and her idols what I have done to Samaria and her images?"*

*12 When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride.*

Sennacherib, the leader of Assyria, didn't realize he was being used by God to punish Judah. In his arrogance he felt he would sweep through Judah on his way to conquering other nations. Verse 9 lists some of the cities that already had fallen before Assyria. Verses 10 and 11 compare idolatrous kingdoms like Syria with Israel and Judah. Even in the eyes of an outsider like the king of Assyria, there was supposed to be a distinction between Israel's religion and that of her neighbors. Yet Israel and Judah were both idolatrous as well and the Assyrians thought they would capture the city of Jerusalem as easily as they had Israel and the rest of Judah. However, God's temple was in Jerusalem and he was not yet ready to allow that to be destroyed.

In time Sennacherib would descend on the land of Judah like a Tsunami, his army rolling over everything before it until it was destroyed by pestilence (a contagious epidemic disease)<sup>1</sup> in one night while attacking Jerusalem. This is the same type of enemy that in the last days will attempt to bring Israel under control, only to be destroyed by Jesus who will then establish His thousand year reign upon the earth.

Isaiah 10:13-19:

*13 For he (Sennacherib) says: "By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding; I have removed the boundaries of peoples, and have plundered their treasures; like a bull I have brought down those who sat on thrones.*

*14 My hand has found, like a nest, the wealth of the peoples; and as one gathers eggs that have been forsaken, so I have gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved a wing, or opened its mouth, or chirped."*

*15 Shall the ax vaunt itself over the one who wields it, or the saw magnify itself against the one who handles it? As if a rod should raise the one who lifts it up, or as if a staff should lift the one who is not wood!*

*16 Therefore the Sovereign, the Lord of hosts, will send wasting sickness among his stout warriors, and under his glory a burning will be kindled,*

<sup>1</sup> See Isaiah 37:36.

*like the burning of fire.*

*17 The light of Israel will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame; and it will burn and devour his thorns and briars in one day.*

*18 The glory of his forest and his fruitful land the Lord will destroy, both soul and body, and it will be as when an invalid wastes away.*

*19 The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down.*

Not understanding how God was using him, the Assyrian leader puffed himself up as if he himself had won all these victories and accomplished all of this on his own wisdom and strength. He is calling himself wise and powerful because he had invaded the people and robbed their treasures. He had robbed and oppressed the nations, including Israel and Judah. To him all people were like eggs in the nests of birds that were helpless before his picking. But God cautions the leader of the Assyrians not to feel arrogant and proud about his victory because it is God's doing not his. And it is always a very dangerous thing to take credit or glory to oneself that really belongs to God.

Not knowing God and how he was being used by God as one would use an ax to cut down trees in a forest, Sennacherib boasted as if all the power and might were his. In reality God was simply using him to punish Israel and Judah. Therefore, beginning in verse 16, God says that he will punish Assyria in the same manner he punished all the other nations. After the Lord is all through with the Assyrian army, there will be so few left that a child could count the number and write it down. The *burning* referred to in verse 16, may refer to a fever burning like a fire. We will discuss this battle further in Isaiah 37. The boasts of the king of Assyria in Isaiah 37:24,25, are similar to those we encounter here in chapter 10. However, in chapter 37 there is a reference to a sudden catastrophe that sent the Assyrians hightailing it back home to Nineveh. Then there is this verse in Isaiah 37:36:

*36 Then the angel of the Lord set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies.*

Is this the plague predicted in Isaiah 10:16? What do you think? I believe it is. But it could also be a reference to what will happen to Israel's enemies in the end times.

Isaiah 10:20-23:

*20 On that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean on the one who struck them, but will lean on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.*

*21 A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.*

*22 For though your people Israel **were like the sand of the sea**, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness.*

*23 For the Lord God of hosts will make a full end, as decreed, in all the earth.*

In spite of judgment on **Israel**, a **remnant** will return to the land and trust in (**rely on**) **the LORD**, not on Assyria. While pagan empires would have their day and pass away, the Lord declared, the weak and despised people of God were to live on down through history. By divine discipline, as we see in these verses, they would be taught to trust in the Lord alone for their salvation. Again the hope of Israel is here placed in the remnant of true believers who would return from captivity. No matter how small a group they might be, after the judgments of God had befallen the entire unfaithful nation, the future would lie with the small remnant of people who were faithful.<sup>2</sup>

The phrase “*On that day*” often refers to the last days when the Lord will punish the wicked and set up His righteous kingdom (Isaiah. 4:2). However, here it seems to refer to the more immediate judgment on the Northern Kingdom by Assyria (10:27) and the return of a remnant from that empire. Though Israel had many people “*like the sand of the sea*” (Gen. 22:17; 32:12; 2 Sam. 17:11), only a few would return. Destruction, though overwhelming, would be fair (righteous) and would be on the whole land, both Israel and Judah. But things will also be the same in the “Last Days” just before Jesus returns. When the judgments of God are being poured out upon the earth in the dark days of the Great Tribulation, a remnant of Jews at that time will turn to the Lord in repentance and faith. These few will prove the greatness of His mercy and the unfailing nature of His promises. They will no longer rely for help on foreign powers, but will find the only protection they need in God. We need to remember that the Bible tells us that not all people who live in Israel or who are descendants of Abraham are Israel (Romans 9:6). The true Israel is those who are saved and who have faith in God and the work of His Son, Jesus.

The great majority, “*like the sand of the sea,*” in verse 22 will not believe and will not be saved. But a remnant will believe and be acknowledged by God as His people. This remnant will be the true Israel in that day. Finally, the enemy will be totally destroyed. No part of the earth will ever again be overrun by the king of Assyria, and in the end times no part of the earth will ever be overrun again by anyone.

Isaiah 10:24-27:

*24 Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: O my people, who live in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they beat you with a rod and lift up their staff against you as the Egyptians did.*

*25 For in a very little while my indignation will come to an end, and my anger will be directed to their destruction.*

*26 The Lord of hosts will wield a whip against them, as when he struck Midian at the rock of Oreb; his staff will be over the sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt.*

*27 On that day his burden will be removed from your shoulder, and his yoke will be destroyed from your neck. He has gone up from Rimmon.*

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<sup>2</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. 1962. The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament . Moody Press: Chicago

The outcome is that Israel and Judah will learn never again to depend on some foreign power for their aid, but to rely only on the mighty hand of God. God also tells His people not to fear the Assyrians because God is also going to cut them down. God will remove the yoke of the burden of the foreign invaders from the necks of His people and they will be freed from the oppression of the Assyrians. And to underscore to them that God can and will do this, He reminds them of victories in the past. He reminds them of how Gideon defeated the huge Midianite army with only 300 soldiers, because God did it (Judges 7). He reminds them of how He drowned the Egyptian army in the Red Sea when they were pursuing the children of Israel (Exodus 14:21-31).

The thought in verses 27-32 seems to be that the threat of defeat for Judah will approach the very hills surrounding Jerusalem, but at the last moment will fall apart. Verse 27 predicts this in general terms and the next five verses give the details.

This approaching army is understood to be the Assyrians led by Sennacherib in the year 701 BC (Isaiah 36:1). We have seen in each previous chapter, scattered among the prophecies of judgment, promises of hope. We will see the climax of those promises in chapters 11 and 12.

Isaiah 10:28-34:

*28 he has come to Aiath; he has passed through Migron, at Michmash he stores his baggage;*

*29 they have crossed over the pass, at Geba they lodge for the night; Ramah trembles, Gibeah of Saul has fled.*

*30 Cry aloud, O daughter Gallim! Listen, O Laishah! Answer her, O Anathoth!*

*31 Madmenah is in flight, the inhabitants of Gebim flee for safety.*

*32 This very day he will halt at Nob, he will shake his fist at the mount of daughter Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.*

*33 Look, the Sovereign, the Lord of hosts, will lop the boughs with terrifying power; the tallest trees will be cut down, and the lofty will be brought low.*

*34 He will hack down the thickets of the forest with an ax, and Lebanon with its majestic trees will fall.*

The route the Assyrian invaders would take in trying to defeat Judah in 701 BC was from the northern boundary of Judah at Aiath (another name for Ai), about eight miles north of Jerusalem, southward to Nob, about two miles north of Jerusalem. Assyria would not succeed in its plan to take Jerusalem. God likens the Assyrians to a forest of tall trees, and Himself to a lumberjack who chops down the trees with an axe. Isaiah had already reminded the people that they need not worry about the Assyrian aggression because God was on their side (verses 24-27). Even Lebanon, known for its thick forests of cedar trees, would fall before God. Certainly, then Assyria should not think it could escape.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An exposition of the Scriptures*. Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

The fate of Assyria is described as the destruction of a great forest of majestic trees. God will take an axe and cut down the powerful leaders of an empire that had survived for centuries and had spread all over the world. Even her most magnificent and precious achievements, Her “*cedars of Lebanon*,” will be destroyed. As we read in verses 16-19 there will be no remnant for Assyria.

We see here a great lesson of faith, even for today. It is not true that the side with the greatest armies wins. God stands ready to protect and make victorious all who put their confidence in Him and who rely, not upon the power of humankind, but upon His power and unchanging love for those who trust and have faith in Him.

### Isaiah Chapter 11

#### Isaiah 11:1-16:

*1 Out of the stump of David's family will grow a shoot—yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.*

*2 And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on **HIM**—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.*

*3 He will delight in obeying the Lord. He will never judge by appearance, false evidence, or hearsay.*

*4 He will defend the poor and the exploited. He will rule against the wicked and destroy them with the breath of his mouth.*

*5 He will be clothed with fairness and truth.*

*6 In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard and the goat will be at peace. Calves and yearlings will be safe among lions, and a little child will lead them all.*

*7 The cattle will graze among bears. Cubs and calves will lie down together. And lions will eat grass as the livestock do.*

*8 Babies will crawl safely among poisonous snakes. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes and pull it out unharmed.*

*9 Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain. And as the waters fill the sea, so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord.*

*10 In that day the heir to David's throne will be a banner of salvation to all the world. The nations will rally to him, for the land where he lives will be a glorious place.*

*11 In that day the Lord will bring back a remnant of his people for the second time, returning them to the land of Israel from Assyria, Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt, Ethiopia, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath, and all the distant coastlands.*

*12 He will raise a flag among the nations for Israel to rally around. He will gather the scattered people of Judah from the ends of the earth.*

*13 Then at last the jealousy between Israel and Judah will end. They will not fight against each other anymore.*

*14 They will join forces to swoop down on Philistia to the west. Together they will attack and plunder the nations to the east. They will occupy all the lands of Edom, Moab, and Ammon.*

*15 The Lord will make a dry path through the Red Sea. He will wave his hand over the Euphrates River, sending a mighty wind to divide it into seven streams that can easily be crossed.*

*16 He will make a highway from Assyria for the remnant there, just as he did for Israel long ago when they returned from Egypt.*

## **Chapter 11    The promise**

The beginning of this chapter has a lot of familiar statements in it and it describes the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. It also emphasizes to us the truth that God has a plan for our here and now, but He also has a wonderful plan for our future.

After Assyria is destroyed and Israel is delivered from all her enemies, we have the peaceful reign of the One who is the “*shoot ... out of the stump of Jesse*“, the *branch* of the Lord who is to bring all things in subjection to God and rule with the iron rod of righteousness.

### Isaiah 11:1,2:

*1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*

*2 The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.*

Here is a wonderful description of Jesus Christ and His ministry. It is a fulfillment of God’s promise to David (2 Samuel 7:16) that a descendant of David will rule over his kingdom (Isaiah 9:7) forever. The one sign of life in what was left of Judah, the one city that survived the worldwide destruction of Assyria, the one tree still standing was Jerusalem. A *shoot* is a new growth on a healthy tree. This *shoot* or *branch* is a new king or *Messiah*, Son of David, who will come on the scene bringing wisdom and understanding. He will come directly from the line of David and will fulfill God’s promises in the Davidic Covenant.<sup>6</sup>

Christ’s character and work are described in verse two. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on this “*Branch*“, the Messiah, that is, the Holy Spirit would empower Him for His work which would be characterized by “*wisdom . . . understanding . . . counsel . . . power . . . knowledge, and the fear of the Lord.*”

### Isaiah 11:3-5:

*3 His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear;*

<sup>6</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B. & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: an exposition of the Scriptures*. Victor Books: Wheaton IL

*4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.*

*5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.*

In the language of Proverbs, “*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.*” (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10)

We have here the vision of an ideal king whose strength lies, not in physical or military force, but in persuasion and wise decisions. This King will succeed where others have failed, in protecting the interests of the poor and vulnerable members of society. In modern terminology, He will exercise “*affirmative action*” in favor of all those who need help.

Probably the most encouraging thing for the people of Judah to hear in the time of Isaiah was how verse 4 describes the work of the One who will come. He will judge the poor with righteousness. He will make fair decisions for the afflicted and needy. He will slay the wicked.

#### Isaiah 11:6-9

*6 The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.*

*7 The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*

*8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den.*

*9 They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*

The most wonderful description of peace occurs in verses 6-9. Can you imagine a wolf dwelling peacefully with the lamb when previously he would have devoured it? Or a young lion and the calf it would have attacked sleeping side by side? Would you consider letting a young child lead this lion cub, or playing in a snake’s den without fear? Can you imagine an infant laying next to a cobra’s hole with no concern for his safety? Won’t it be wonderful when there is no hint of hurt or destruction among all of God’s creatures! Such will be the time when Jesus Christ reigns on earth during the Millennium, the thousand years of peace that is yet to come.

Here we see a restoration of peace between humankind and nature, a peace that existed in the very beginning in the Garden of Eden. This is paradise regained. There is a lot of imagery in these verses referring to social, moral, and political truths. The wolf usually refers to fierceness and oppression while a lamb can represent helplessness. The main point of this prophecy is about a new age in which old enemies are forgotten, when the mighty will live peacefully with the weak, when those that take advantage of the poor and

needy will change their habits, and those who are vulnerable will no longer fear danger. Verse 9 sums it up. There will be no more ill treatment or corruption. This is the vision of a new world characterized by justice, righteousness, and peace, a world ruled by an ideal King, the Messiah, Son of David, and a world in which people ***“will be full of the knowledge of the lord as the waters cover the sea.”***

Isaiah 11:10-16

*10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.*

*11 On that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that is left of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.*

*12 He will raise a signal for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*

*13 The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, the hostility of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not be hostile towards Ephraim.*

*14 But they shall swoop down on the backs of the Philistines in the west, together they shall plunder the people of the east. They shall put forth their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them.*

*15 And the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt; and will wave his hand over the River with his scorching wind; and will split it into seven channels, and make a way to cross on foot;*

*16 so there shall be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that is left of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.*

Israel will have a special place in the kingdom because of God's promises: the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15:18-21; 17:7-8; 22:17-18), the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel. 7:16), and the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:33-34). But people in other nations will also benefit from the kingdom. The Messiah, the Root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1), will be a means of bringing nations together (Zechariah 14:9,16). Jesus Himself made the same point that many people from outside Israel will have a part in God's kingdom (Luke 13:29). God had promised Abraham that through his line all peoples on the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3).

In verses 11-16, Isaiah spoke of the Lord's gathering the people of Israel and Judah from all over the world. He compared it to a second "*Exodus*," like the release from Egypt about 700 years earlier. That first Exodus was one of Israel's most significant events for in only three months after that God gave the Mosaic Covenant, thus marking the beginning of Israel as a nation.

The remnant will be drawn by God from the north (Hamath), south (Egypt), east

(Assyria, Elam) and west (coastlands of the sea); from the four quarters of the earth. Both Israel and Judah will be restored as one nation (Jeremiah 31:31-34). This was important as the Northern Kingdom would go off into captivity, and Judahites in Isaiah's day might have thought it unlikely that both parts of the nation would ever be united.

"*On that day*" the people are gathered from all parts of the world and brought back to Israel. Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom) will not be jealous of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) and the South will have no hostilities toward the North. Reunited they (Israel and Judah) will occupy the land and defeat their enemies. Philistia refers to the southwestern edge of Israel along the Mediterranean Sea. People to the east may be those in northern Arabia (Job 1:3) and beyond. Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites were south and east of Israel. In the kingdom period Israel will no longer be bothered by these or other enemies (Obadiah 19).

Verses 15 and 16 indicate that when Israel returns to her land at the beginning of the Millennium, God will prepare the way for her. The Gulf of Suez will be dried up to enable Israelites to return from Egypt and Cush, and the Euphrates River will be divided into shallow canals so that the people can return to Israel from the east. This drying of the waters will be reminiscent of the first Exodus when Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry land (Exodus 14:21-22). The return from Assyria, perhaps representative of all places from which the remnant would come, will be like Israel's "*exit*" from Egypt. Isaiah did not know when this new Exodus would take place; he may have thought it would occur soon.<sup>3</sup> But we now know it will be in the end times.

## ***Chapter 12 The Praise***

### Isaiah 12:1-6, NAS

*1 Then you will say on that day, "I will give thanks to Thee, O LORD; for although Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou dost comfort me.*

*2 "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the LORD God IS my strength and song, and He has become my salvation."*

*3 Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.*

*4 And in that day you will say, "Give thanks to the LORD, call on His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; make them remember that His name is exalted."*

*5 Praise the LORD in song, for He has done excellent things; let this be known throughout the earth.*

*6 Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.*

Chapter 12 stresses that when the remnant is re-gathered in the land they will rejoice.

<sup>3</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. 1983-c1985. The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures . Victor Books: Wheaton, IL

After God has done these great things to deliver His people, they will praise Him with a mighty voice. We read this joyous psalm or song of thanksgiving and praise and it is a model for how we should respond when God has done a mighty work in our lives. In verses 1-3 God is praised because His anger has been turned away. Israel has been comforted, and the **LORD** is the source of strength, salvation, and song. Salvation is mentioned at the beginning and end of verse 2. Israel's "*salvation*" will be more than spiritual peace of mind and deliverance; it will also include prosperity. To draw water from the wells of salvation pictures eternal life and living according to God's principles, thus participating with joy in the blessings He will provide.

The remnant will thank the LORD and they will call on each other to let the world know what God has done. God's name (His revealed character) is to be exalted (vindicated) before the world, so that people everywhere will realize that He fulfills His promises. And people will sing to Him because of His glorious deeds.

The **remnant** also, will remind themselves of the greatness of God, the Holy One of Israel. Being reassured that God is among them, they will be joyful. Chapter 12 is a fitting climax to the contrast between the fall of the Assyrian Empire, which was threatening Judah in Isaiah's day, and the rise of God's glorious kingdom, which will certainly come. **EVENTUALLY ALL THE WORLD WILL KNOW OF GOD'S TRUTH.**

This pattern found in chapters 10 through 12 certainly describes what was going on in Judah, but there are also parallels to what is going on in our lives today. All of us have problems at one time or another. Some of those problems are the result of injustice. Some of us may be the leaders that God will have to judge. But probably more of us can identify with the needy and the poor who are taken advantage of, who are robbed and treated unfairly by the legal system. If we put our faith in God and seek to trust and follow Him, then He will fight for us. He will at some point intervene. We can trust in God that His justice will prevail in the long run. We can trust His promises to us. It is up to us to study His Word, the Bible, carefully so that we are aware of the promises God makes. It is important to recognize also that many of God's promises are two sided. That means, that He promises to do something but also expects us to do something. For instance,

Psalm 37:4, NAS

*Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

Acts 16:31, NAS

*"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household."*

John 15:7, NAS

*"If you abide in Me [Jesus], and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.*

Many of God's promises have contingency clauses: Delight in Him, believe in Jesus, let God's Word abide in you, then you will have eternal life, answered prayer, and the

desires of your heart.

In response to God doing His wonderful works in our lives, our hearts are filled with gratitude and praise. It is good and appropriate to express that praise to Him, through song or prayer or in some other way.

So, where are you today? Are you overwhelmed with problems, needing God to act on your behalf? Then ask for His help. Are you in the process of receiving God's promise? Rejoice in it and wait while He does His complete work. Are you needing to express your praise and thanksgiving to Him? Say, "Hallelujah!"