

Isaiah Chapters 11-12 - John Karmelich

Title: Does it benefit us now to be lectured on a glorious eternity?

Chapter 11's a break from Isaiah's main theme of "Here's how we're messing up badly!" Most of Isaiah is a lecture on that topic!" Chapter 11 on the other hand give us clues what life will be like when Jesus rules over the earth! Of course, that's a big motivation to live as God desires! I realize we all deal with problems, and it's hard to think about a perfect future, where we don't need to worry about anything for all of eternity! Chapter 11 teaches God will judge all people in an all-knowing ability. It gives us clues what life will be like then. I'm also covering Chapter 12 which is a short psalm to praise God for doing all that to help us appreciate the benefit of spending eternity with Him!

Of course I'll get into details in a second. What I'd like all of us to consider is why does Isaiah state this positive eternal future stuff after all his complaints about why Israel is blowing it? An obvious answer is God wants to show us He keeps His word despite how badly we can act at times! So, if God is going to do all that anyway, why bother using our lives to make a difference for Him? For starters, that's why He created us in the first place, to use our lives for His glory. To state one of my favorite biblical facts: "Without God, we can't! Without us, God won't!" The idea is whether we like it or not God decided to work through people who have dedicated their lives to serve Him! Passages like this remind us that it's worth it! Yes, we know that as believers but rarely spend much time thinking about that because we're so focused on the problem of the moment. Okay then time to discuss the Christian eternal future:

Bottom line these two chapters don't contain a lot of verses, but they "pack a punch" of life when God's literally rules the earth from Israel. You may think, "I'll deal with that then, as I've got plenty of things to worry about now!" God wants us to realize is whatever our issues of the moment are it won't last for eternity. God will LITERALLY reign forever. Won't we eventually get bored? No, not because of the scenery, but because we'll be able to communicate directly with God! He has a wonderful plan for our eternity. The reason Isaiah states all this is so we can realize no matter what we're dealing with "God is large and in charge!" as the saying goes.

As we read about the implications for eternity, it should cause us to be grateful. That's why Chapter 12 is a short psalm to say in effect, "Thank God for doing all of this for us, despite all of the tough things I must deal with at the moment!" As we go through tough times, Romans 8:28 applies which tells us all things (ALL MEANS ALL) work for God for those He called (us)! Bottom line: don't worry about the things we're dealing with now! Just make the best decisions we can, and trust God is guiding our lives for His glory!

Enough of all that time for details: When one is studying prophecy one has to keep in mind God works in patterns. That simply means there is usually a short-term fulfillment to validate the speaker is truly a spokesperson for God and a longer-term fulfillment that is a key point. In the previous chapter Isaiah's stating why the Israelites were kicked out of their land (disobedience, yes that should scare us), and the fact they will return to the land as they did roughly 600BC from captivity. Only a small percentage of Israelites chose that path, so it's obviously a double fulfillment as will be more obvious as we study the text of Chapter 11. The first thing Chapter 11 says is "a new branch will grow from a dead tree". That is a metaphor for the fact the Israelites were soon to be kicked out the land God had given them, but in the future the Israelites will return to be governed by the Messiah (Jesus)! Just as a tree comes back to life when a new branch grows, so the Messiah will rule over a resurrected Israel after Babylon etc.

Then we get a reference to the Holy Spirit. In Revelation Chapter 1, Verses 4-5 says "The seven spirits that are before His throne". No there are not seven Holy Spirits! It literally ties to Chapter 11 Verse 2, (in Isaiah) as there are seven descriptions given of the Holy Spirit. The first is Him, and the other 6 are aspects of what the Spirit does! The point is when Jesus comes to rule the world, He won't judge based on what He sees or hears, but He will have full godly knowledge to judge perfectly!

Here's a quick question to ponder, why doesn't the Old Testament ever bluntly say, none of us are good enough to please God based on our efforts, so Jesus will do miracles to prove who He is, then He'll pay for our sins? In Chapter 55, we will get some blunt clues about His suffering. The emphasis here on a "Second Coming" is to give hope to a nation about to be taken into captivity. It's also a reminder for all of us that by accepting that sacrifice we get to enjoy His plan to rule the world one day and be a part of what designed, as God's ultimate goal is for mankind!

Meanwhile we left Isaiah describing Jesus ruling then. Verse 5 describes the fact He will rule the world in a way that's perfect. In fact, Paul uses Verse 5 when describing how we're to trust in God as we deal with battling demonic forces in Ephesians Chapter 6. The point is we don't defeat such forces by using our strength but His power (the Spirit) working through us!

After a few verses (1-5) focusing on Jesus Second Coming, we get a few on life then! Isaiah focuses on changes to the animal kingdom then. Short version is no more predator creatures. I figured God works out predator specie numbers another way. All the animals then will be vegetarians, (like the Garden of Eden)! The text also mentions children exist then! That means life goes on after Jesus rules! (Verse 8). Verse 9 then says the whole world will be aware of God which makes a lot of sense, if all those things change at that time!

Verse 11 is key to me. If you know your basic Israel history. The Assyrian Empire conquered "North" Israel (there were two kingdoms at Isaiah's time.) The Babylonians conquered "South" and also wiped out the Assyrian Empire. Later the Persians (think Iran) conquered the Babylonians. The Persian king let the Israelites go home! Again, only a small number chose to do that, but Israelites from all over that empire went back to the land of Israel. Verse 11 says: When God allows Israel to gather a second time, that will lead to His Second Coming! That started in 1948. My simple point is there's nothing else that is going to occur according to God's timetable, before the church era ends, and all that Revelation "bad stuff" occurs prior to His return! The rest of Chapter 11 is in effect a commentary on Verse 11. We see references to the fact there's no more northern or southern kingdom, just Israel! As I love to state, they are the only country in history to become an independent country again after being conquered/scattered as that happened in 1948! The text names other traditional enemies of Israel in Isaiah's day (Philistines, Assyria, Egypt) will not be a threat to Israel. Egypt did try to destroy Israel in modern times, but Egypt lost! Those other nations are long gone! My point is Israel wins due to God's unconditional promise to them, just as Christians win for their trust in Jesus fully paying for all their sins past present and future!

That leads to Chapter 12. A short 6 verse Psalm praising God for doing all this! He's praising God for not being permanently angry with the Israelites, just as He will never be permanently angry with us for our sins! My point is God's promises to Israel and to us about our salvation are both non-conditional! I should also point out Jesus said the only unforgivable sin (called "blasphemy of the Holy Spirit") is the lifetime denial that Jesus is God! That's why people are sent to hell forever, because they refuse to trust that God Himself was willing to fully pay for all our sins. I realize we know that, but the great lessons taught here is about the eternal rewards all of us get for trusting in His eternal unconditional promise of

salvation and the fact God WILL rule the world one day forever from Israel. In the meantime, all God's asking of us is we use our lives as a witness for Him!

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on one of the links below. It is still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for you reading this. The rest of this email is links to questions you may have. If you're new here, you're always welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again for reading this!

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