**Canada’s National Bible Hour - Prophetic Series from the Prophets - #1**

By Dr. Fred H. Hartman February 12, 2017

Today we will begin an extensive series covering some of the major prophecies of Isaiah. Many of these are not taught in detail. Some speakers do not cover them as at times they are difficult to understand and take too much study time. Since they are part of the inspired Word of God, and we are called to preach the whole counsel of God, they need to be explained so God’s people can better understand the whole Bible.

Today, it is our plan look at Isaiah two and eleven together, for they are parallel passages. The first thing we should note is that Isaiah was written some 750 years before the first coming of Christ. We must remember some of his prophecies were fulfilled with God’s dealing with Israel and the nations surrounding her. Some were fulfilled in the first coming of Christ, but many are yet to be fulfilled. Today, we will look at two of his prophecies that have yet to be fulfilled.

In chapter two, verses one to five, we note they follow a stinging indictment by God of the nation of Israel for her sinful practices found in chapter one. He introduces us to something that will be a hallmark of the entire book of Isaiah. In spite of her sin, there will come a day when God’s judgment will be lifted when a remnant of that nation will finally turn to the Lord. At that time, instead of being encompassed about by her enemies, she will be lifted up by God to a leading position in the world. It is also interesting to note that in Micah chapter four we have almost the very same words that are recorded in Isaiah two, one through five.

In verse two of chapter two, Isaiah speaks of the mountain of the Lord’s house being established. This is clearly speaking of where the temple was in Isaiah’s day, and according to Ezekiel 40 to 43 the place where the huge millennial temple will be built in the future. When these events take place, that temple will be exalted and people from all over the world will come there to worship the Lord.

We also learn here that people will come to be taught by the Lord Himself, and will desire to walk in His ways. The world will know that from the temple in Jerusalem they can learn how to be obedient to the commands of the Lord. Without going into detail, we can clearly see that this has never happened before and is not taking place at the present time. Therefore, the events described in this passage must take place in the future.

In verse four we note some drastic changes that make this a very special time. We read. *“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”*

There are two distinct things we can learn from this verse. First of all, Jesus Christ will be present upon the earth to be the judge. There will be no appeals court or even a supreme court. His judgment will settle any and all issues between both people and nations. Because of this, we learn the second thing that will separate the millennium from any other time period the earth has ever known. There will be no war or fighting, period. The machinery of war will be turned into farm implements to provide the necessary food for the world.

In light of this prophecy, Isaiah challenges his readers how they should be obedient to the commands of the Lord now, while looking ahead to that future day. When we examine these things, we know that Isaiah is not speaking of our day, but a future one. Our world is full of wars and rumors of wars as well as disputes between many people. Isaiah is looking forward to the kingdom that was promised to the patriarchs in the early chapters of the Bible. That will be a day of blessing when the King of Kings will rule over the earth for a thousand years.

Now, as we change gears and turn our attention to Isaiah eleven, we must consider the context in which it was written. Assyria was a very powerful, but wicked Middle Eastern power at that time. They would invade Israel and take the ten northern tribes into captivity. They would conquer all of the kingdom of Judah with the exception of Jerusalem. That city would be spared when the angel of the Lord would slay 185,000 Assyrian troops in one night.

Chapter ten gives the prophecy of how God would destroy Assyria. The Lord had allowed his heathen nation to defeat the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel because the Jewish people had turned from God to heathen idols. But then Assyria overstepped the bounds of cruelty to the Jewish people and the Lord promised to destroy them.

In Isaiah eleven, a remnant of God’s people would still be alive, and a shoot coming from the stem of Jesse, the father of David, would one day arise to be the ruler. Undoubtedly, this would be the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant given in II Samuel seven, verses 12, 13 and 16. *“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shall sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for name, and I will establish his kingdom …… And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee, thy throne shall be established forever.”* This shoot, or branch that would come through the line of David is none other than Messiah, Jesus. Here He is promised to come, take the throne and rule over the kingdom forever.

In verses three through five of Isaiah eleven we learn of the character of the Messiah. First, we note that the Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him. His ministry in the kingdom age will be characterized by wisdom, understanding, counsel and might or power. He will have full knowledge and operate in the fear of the Lord. This is most fascinating to me, for it shows the great contrast between the Messiah and the spiritual leaders of Isaiah’s day, who were not the least concerned about following the Word of God and obeying Him.

As the world ruler, the Messiah will not judge as an ordinary judge, for he will not be swayed by any human viewpoint, for He will have all knowledge. He will judge with perfect righteousness and judgment. Furthermore, the needy and the poor will not be oppressed. These will benefit from His righteous judgment, but the wicked will be slain. His reign will be characterized by righteousness and faithfulness.

Beginning in verse six we learn a little bit about what life will be like during the reign of the Messiah in this kingdom He will establish. We will first consider three things. The curse will be lifted from the earth, there will be peace and harmony and the wild animals will become domesticated.

We read, *“The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. And they shall not hurt nor 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 11:6-9).*

When I look at these verses and realize the implications involved in the removal of the curse, I am reminded of what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:18-23. *“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject unto vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstftruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”*

Both Isaiah eleven and Romans eight, though they use different terms, are speaking about the same thing. Just as we who know the Lord are looking forward to the day when we will receive a new body, the animal creation is awaiting a day when the curse is removed as well as their ferocity. This will take place when the thousand year reign of Christ begins.

Let me explain this from a little different perspective. According to First Thessalonians chapter four, when the trumpet sounds, the believers from the church age, both those dead and those alive will be taken up into heaven to be with Christ. We will be given our glorified bodies. We will be with Him during that awful seven year tribulation period that will befall the earth. At the end of that time, Christ will return to the earth along with the armies in heaven. That would include us in our glorified bodies. There will also be Old Testament saints who will be resurrected, along with the martyrs of the tribulation. All of us will be in our glorified bodies.

There will also be a multitude of believers who will have made it through the tribulation who will live and go into the thousand year reign of Christ in their natural bodies. When Christ returns to the earth to rule and reign, the curse will be removed and the event recorded in the second and eleventh chapter of Isaiah will come to fruition. The temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. The people from all the nations of the earth will go there to worship the Lord and learn from the Messiah. Christ will judge the nations with a rod of iron, and there will be worldwide peace. Even the ferocity of the animals will be removed, and righteousness will cover the earth. This kingdom is the one promised to the patriarchs way back in the early days, even before the time of Moses.

It is very apparent that Israel will have a very special place during this kingdom age. The temple will be there. Christ will rule over the earth from Jerusalem. He will literally fulfill all the covenants God made with Israel. According to Isaiah chapter eleven verses ten and eleven, that one from Jesse, Jesus, will be the one that the nations seek. For the final time, the remaining Jewish people who have been scattered abroad, will come home at last.

What a contrast from what is happening in the world today. Most of the nations of this planet hate the nation of Israel and are doing all they can to destroy it. There are terror attacks on a regular basis – over 300 since October 2015. When they are attacked and Israel retaliates, the nations of the world condemn Israel for their aggression. Time and time again the UN votes against Israel. Iran claims they will not only destroy Israel, but will wipe every Jew off the face of the earth. They are developing weaponry that could fulfill their promises. The Arab nations want Israel gone. In the Middle East, the nation of Israel which has been in existence since 1948, is not even included on their maps.

With all of this, and much more than we could include here, the leaders of the world have forgotten one thing – the promises God has made to this nation. He will not let the Jewish people be wiped out. The reason: He has made covenant promises that He will keep, and it is for His name sake that He will fulfill them. God will not, and cannot fail.

I am convinced we can put all of this in perspective for today by looking at two brief passages in the book of Zechariah. In chapters twelve and fourteen, He describes a day *“when all the people of the earth be gathered together against it”* (Jerusalem) – 12:3b. Then in 14:1-3, we read, *“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.”*

These passages speak of that day when the entire world will come against that little city of Jerusalem to destroy it. They will take the city, but suddenly they will find that instead of fighting the Israeli Defense Forces, they will be fighting the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It does not take a rocket scientist to determine who will win that battle. Christ will Himself defeat this world coalition of forces. Victory will finally be His.

We know this battle will take place at the end of the tribulation, when Jesus returns to the earth, defeats the armies and then will establish the kingdom promised in Isaiah chapters two and eleven. In light of the events taking place in the world today, we are probably much closer to the rapture of the church than we might think. I leave you with this question. Since Jesus could come at any moment, are you ready to meet Him? Have you trusted Him as your Savior?