

Chapter 6

The Broader Context of Isaiah 7:14

The focus of the first great prophetic scheme he fixes in the seventh chapter, that of the other in the thirty-sixth and the thirty-seventh...The promises and threatenings of the seventh chapter are repeated, amplified, and varied, first with respect to Judah and Israel in chaps. viii.-xii....
--Joseph Addison Alexander

Review: Relevant Conclusions from Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 of this book laid much important groundwork for the study of Isaiah 7:14. Therefore, a summary of the conclusions drawn in those chapters is helpful at this point.

Chapter 1: "Introduction"

Some evangelical Christian scholars today question whether exegesis supports a direct prediction of a messianic figure in any passage of the Tanakh (Old Testament). However, other evangelicals and Orthodox Jewish scholars unite in affirming that a personal Messiah who will inaugurate the Messianic Age of righteousness on earth is indeed predicted in the Tanakh. Isaiah 11:1-10 is one example of this agreement.

Chapter 2: "Christian Hermeneutics"

Chapter 2 begins with an overview of traditional Christian hermeneutics and then relates how many of those principles have more recently been called into question. It concludes by listing six points that summarize the hermeneutical principles that are to guide the interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 in this book.

- The Bible in its entirety is the result of supernatural divine revelation from God to the biblical authors and is inerrant.
- A biblical text has one meaning (or sense) and only one meaning.
- The meaning known to and understood by the human author, and which he intended to convey in his text, is in fact the single divine meaning of that text and therefore the only meaning that has divine authority.
- The only valid method to determine the intent of the original human author is grammatical-historical exegesis.
- The entire Book of Isaiah was written by the eighth-century prophet, Isaiah, and is not the redaction of multiple sources over several centuries.
- The New Testament citation of Isaiah 7:14 should not be used to guide in any way the application of the grammatical-historical method of exegesis of this text in the Old Testament or to influence the

conclusions drawn therefrom.

Chapter 3: "Jewish Hermeneutics"

The following two conclusions were reached.

First, ever since Ezra there has been an approach in Jewish circles that sought to discover the literal, grammatical meaning of the biblical text. The *middoth* of both Rabbis Hillel and Ishmael in general encouraged and provided rules for this approach. Those rules eventually culminated in the methods used by the great medieval commentators, Rashi, Abenezra, and David Kimchi, as they sought to determine this literal meaning, which came to be called by Rashi, the *peshat*. The methods used by these commentators were essential the same grammatical-historical approach used in Christian circles to determine the literal sense of Scripture intended by the human author. It is this message that he received by revelation from God.

Second, it is perhaps a step further to assert that the *peshat* is the **only** meaning that has divine authority. On this point, more Jewish scholars perhaps will dissent than Christian scholars, but there are those in both circles who will make such an assertion. Nevertheless, it is the underlying assumption that governs the interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 developed and taken in this book. The only meaning that has divine authority is the meaning Isaiah intended to convey when he spoke to Ahaz.

Chapter 4: "Chronology of Ahaz and Hezekiah"

Several conclusions relevant to the interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 were reached in Chapter 4 regarding the dates of the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah.

- At the age of 13, Ahaz becomes coregent in 743/742 with his father Jotham.
- At the age of 20, Ahaz usurps the throne in 736/735 while Jotham still lived.
- At the age of 12, Hezekiah becomes coregent in 729/728 with his father Ahaz.
- Thus, Hezekiah was born 741/740.

These dates are certainly not universally accepted. That the twenty-year-old Ahaz assumed the throne in 736/735 and began his 16-year reign mentioned in 2 Kings 16:1-2 is only one of three possible post-Thiele harmonizations of all the biblical data without attributing error to the present Masoretic text. It is the view I take in this book. However, the question of paramount importance is when Hezekiah was born, since he is one of the candidates for the "son" in Isaiah 7:14.

The fall of Damascus and the death of both Rezin and Pekah were in 732, and a child being about two years old in 732 would have been born around 734. There is no known harmonization that places the birth of Hezekiah at or about 734, the year Isaiah was most likely sent to Ahaz and two years before the fall of Damascus. The results for the birth of Hezekiah calculated by the advocates of the three harmonizations are 751, 741/740, and 739. Therefore, Hezekiah was at least five years old when Isaiah predicted the birth of Immanuel.

Chapter 5: "The Syro-Ephraimite War"

The following conclusions were summarized in Chapter 5.

- In early 734 (or possibly late 735) Rezin and Pekah took the lead in forming a coalition of all the southern powers to withstand any future campaign of Tiglath-pileser.

- Also in 734, when Ahaz refused to join the coalition, the two armies of Rezin and Pekah planned to attack Judah.
- When Ahaz heard about this plan, still early in 734, he decided his only hope is to appeal to Tiglath-pileser to save him.
- Isaiah then comes to Ahaz and gives him the reassurance of the Lord that the goal of Rezin and Pekah to replace Ahaz on the throne would not come to pass.
- The attack came and two major battles were fought, followed by a siege on Jerusalem. This also took place in 734.
- At some point during the siege, late 734 or early 733, Ahaz seeks the help of Tiglath-pileser.
- With the arrival of the Assyrian king in the Syro-Palestinian region, Rezin and Pekah withdraw and return home to engage Tiglath-pileser.

To this it should be added that upon receiving the appeal and tribute from Ahaz, Tiglath-pileser began his campaign against Syria in 733 and that Damascus fell in 732.

The Structure of the Book of Isaiah: The Major Divisions

Scholars have enumerated the major divisions of the Book of Isaiah in a number of different ways. Gleason Archer divides the book into eight major divisions:¹

- I. Volume of rebuke and promise (1-6)
- II. Volume of Immanuel (7-12)
- III. God's judgment--burdens upon the nations (13-23)
- IV. First volume of general judgment and promise (24-27)
- V. Volume of woe upon the unbelievers of Israel (28-33)
- VI. Second volume of general judgment and promise (34-35)
- VII. Volume of Hezekiah (36-39)
- VIII. Volume of comfort (40-66)

Seeing fewer major divisions, E. J. Young divides the book as follows:²

- I. The crisis and the Messiah (1-12)
- II. The theocracy and the nations (13-27)³
- III. True deliverance is found not in Egypt but in the Lord (28-35)
- IV. The connecting bridge between chapters 1-35 and 40-66 (36-39)
- V. The salvation and future blessing of the true Israel of God (40-66)

Perhaps the best working division of Isaiah is from George Robinson and Ronald Harrison in *The International*

1 Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), pp. 326-28.

2 Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, 3 vols., (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972), III:11-13.

3 Note that there is a misprint in all three volumes of Young's commentary: Roman numeral II is given as 13-39 even though Roman numeral III is given as 28-35.

Standard Bible Encyclopedia. They see six major divisions:⁴

- I. Prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem (1-12)
- II. Oracles of judgment and salvation (13-23)
- III. The Lord's world-judgment in the redemption of Israel (24-27)
- IV. A cycle of prophetic warnings against alliance with Egypt (28-35)
- V. History, prophecy, and song intermingled (36-39)
- VI. Prophecies of comfort and salvation and of the future glory awaiting Israel (40-66)

Concerning the division of Isaiah most important for the study of verse 7:14, note the similarities here.

- Both Young and Robinson consider chapters 1-12 the first major division of the book.
- Archer considers 1-6 and 7-12 the first two major divisions of the book.

The entry "Isaiah" in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* also provides an outline.⁵ However, this article, as many other articles in this encyclopedia, is divided into sections with different authors. The major divisions of the book of Isaiah presented by these authors are not listed here because they are based on the critical view of two "Isaias." However, Harold Ginsberg in his section, "First Isaiah," presents the first major division of the book as chapters 1-33, which he subdivides into two sections, 1-12 and 13-33.⁶

There would seem, therefore, to be general agreement among Christian and Jewish scholars that Isaiah 1-12 does represent a well-defined group of related chapters.

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What, then, are the subdivisions within chapters 1-12? Archer does offer a twofold division of these chapters, but as noted he considers 1-6 and 7-12 to be major divisions, not subdivisions of a major division. However, this does, of course, recognize 7-12 as a definable group of related chapters. Robinson and Young suggest the following subdivisions for 1-12:

- Robinson subdivides 1-12 into 1-6 and 7-12.
- Young subdivides 1-12 into three sections with 6-12 as the third of the three.

So among these three scholars, there is only one disagreement about the size of the division containing verse 7:14: Young includes chapter 6 (6-12), while Robinson and Archer take the division to be 7-12. Young entitles section 6-12, "Judah's True Hope: The Messianic King." However, chapter 6, consisting of Isaiah's vision of the Lord in the Temple and Isaiah's mission, has little to do with the theme of the Messiah. Therefore, it is best to take the subdivision containing verse 7:14 to be chapters 7-12, as per Robinson and Archer. According to Ronald

4 George L. Robinson and Ronald K. Harrison, "Isaiah," *ISBE*, II:887. Note that Robinson was the author of this article in *Old ISBE*; it was simply revised and updated by Harrison. This sixfold division of Isaiah, however, is the same in both versions of the article. John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), p. 54, proposes ten major divisions: 1-6, 7-12, 13-23, 24-27, 28-35, 36-39, 40-48, 49-55, 56-59, 60-66. However, many of these divisions are subdivisions in the larger sections proposed by Archer, Young, and Robertson.

5 The Orthodox commentary by Rabbi Nosson Scherman, *Isaiah*, in *The ArtScroll Series: The Later Prophets with a Commentary Anthologized from the Rabbinic Writings*, gen. ed. Rabbi Nosson Scherman (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 2013), offers no outlines of either the book as a whole or the individual chapters. Rabbi Scherman is also the general editor of *The Stone Edition* of the Tanakh. Although it does have introductions to every book in the Tanakh as well as Rabbinic comments throughout as study aids, it also has no structural analyses or outlines.

6 Harold Lousis Ginsberg, "Isaiah," *EncJudaica*, IX:49, 55, section "First Isaiah."

Youngblood, this subdivision is often called "The Book of Immanuel,"⁷ similar to Archer's title, "Volume of Immanuel." Of course, this title is used primarily by Christian scholars.

Ginsberg has an interesting way to subdivide 1-12, calling it "The Diary":

The Diary, Chapters 1-12 may be likened to a triptych with a narrow inner panel, chapter 6, and two broad outer panels, chapters 1-5 and 7-12, each of which is divided (horizontally or vertically, according to the readers preference) into two fields.⁸

He subdivides panel three, 7-12, into field A, 7-9,⁹ and field B, 10-12.¹⁰ Field A he entitles "The Arameo-Ephraimite Attempt to Depose the House of David."

As a working hypothesis, I take chapters 7-12 to be the broader context of Isaiah 7:14.

The Common Themes Through Chapters 7-12

Chapter 7

Verse 1 is a summary statement of the Syro-Ephraimite War. Then verse 2 backs up in time to the point when Ahaz ("the house of David") is told of the Syro-Ephraimite alliance and their plans to invade Judah. In verses 3-9 the Lord directs Isaiah to take his son Shear-jashub¹¹ and assure Ahaz that he need not fear these two kings ("stubs of smoldering firebrands"¹²). Their plans to invade Judah and make "the son of Tabeel" the new king "shall not stand nor shall it come to pass."

The Lord then offers Ahaz the opportunity to ask for a sign verifying the truth of this message, but with a pious pretext Ahaz refuses (verses 10-12). Isaiah, however, is not fooled and tells Ahaz that the Lord himself will give Ahaz a sign. This sign would include a "child" to be born who would be named "Immanuel" (verse 13-14). The early years of this child are used as a measure of time before a specific predicted event will occur--"the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken" (verse 16). The Lord also told Ahaz that he would use the king of Assyria to punish him and Judah for putting faith in Tiglath-pileser rather than the Lord (verse 17-20). Productive, plowed fields would become pastures, and fruitful vines would become "briers and thorns" due to Assyrian depopulation and devastation of the land of Judah (verses 21-25).

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 refers to the same confrontation with Syria and Israel and the involvement of Tiglath-pileser. Verses 1-4 predict that Damascus and Samaria will fall to Assyria. These verses also make reference to a son soon to be

7 Ronald F. Youngblood, "Immanuel," *ISBE*, II:806. It is interesting to note that further down in this article, Youngblood states that "'The Book of Immanuel' abounds with interpretive difficulties" (p. 807). As discussed in Chapter 1, Isaiah 7:14 takes first place among those difficulties.

8 Ginsberg, "Isaiah," section "First Isaiah," IX:49.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 54.

11 The Targum of Jonathan does not take Shear-jashub to be Isaiah's son and paraphrases verse 3 as follows: "Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and the rest of thy disciples, who have not sinned, and who are turned away from sin, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, which is by the way of the field of the spreading of the fullers..." (*The Chaldee Paraphrase on the Prophet Isaiah*, trans. C. W. H. Pauli [London: London Society's House, 1871], p. 22). I have found no one who follows the Targum on this point. Radak does take the reference to be Isaiah's son and argues that the name symbolizes that the remnant of Judah will return to their land after the Babylonian exile (cited by Scherman, *Isaiah*, p. 59).

12 "They are merely the smoking ends of sticks where a bonfire has been" (Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, p, 200).

born to Isaiah, Maher-shalal-hash-baz. Like the child in 7:16, his early years are used as a measure of time before these predicted events will occur. But because Judah is rejecting the Lord and relying on Assyria, its land will also be overrun by the Assyrians (verses 5-8), as had also been predicted in 7:17-25. Making a direct reference to chapter 7, Judah is here called the land of "Immanuel," referring to the boy in 7:14. This would argue that 7:10 to 8:10 "constitutes a unit dealing with the Immanuel theme."¹³ However, no human effort would be able to frustrate the divine plan of mercy because "God is with us," an application of the meaning of the boy's name (verses 9-10).

In verses 11-17 the people are exhorted to fear only the Lord, but many from both Israel and Judah will stumble over the "rock."

In verse 18 Isaiah and both of his sons are said to be for "signs and wonders." According to Gleason Archer, these two symbolically-named sons "stand as testimonies to what God has solemnly sworn to do to Israel and on behalf of Israel."¹⁴ In what way, then, are Isaiah's sons "signs and wonders"?

- Shear-jashub ("a remnant will return"): there are many interpretations among the commentators of Shear-jashub's name.¹⁵ However, when Isaiah was instructed to bring this boy with him to meet Ahaz (verse 7:3), the name Shear-jashub was probably to serve as a sign of hope to Ahaz. It might have signified that Judah would not be destroyed entirely, either by Damascus and Samaria or by the subsequent devastation at the hand of Tiglath-pileser himself; instead, a remnant would be delivered. Perhaps better is the view that Syria and Israel would be defeated and that only a remnant would return to their own land.¹⁶
- Maher-shalal-hash-baz ("swift is the booty, speedy is the prey"): signified primarily the soon and quick defeat of Damascus and Samaria by Tiglath-pileser.¹⁷

In verse 18 Isaiah also includes himself among the "signs and wonders." Franz Delitzsch suggests that Isaiah's name (which means "Yahweh is salvation") "was an assurance that all the future would issue from Jehovah's salvation, and end in the same."¹⁸

However, by stumbling over the "rock," both houses of Israel will be driven into gloom and darkness (19-22).

13 Ibid., p. 220.

14 Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *Isaiah*, vol. 2 in *The Biblical Expositor*, 3 vols., gen. ed. Carl F. H. Henry (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Co., 1960), p. 136.

15 See "Verse 3-7," in the section "The Lord's Word of Assurance to Ahaz: 7:1-9" of Chapter 8.

16 This suggestion for Shear-jashub is taken from Gary V. Smith, "Shear-jashub," *ISBE*, IV:456. Again, see the more detailed discussion to which reference was made in footnote 15.

17 This suggestion for Maher-shalal-hash-baz is taken from both *Old ISBE* and *ISBE*. Also, J. Skinner, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapters I-XXXIX* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1896), p. 64, writes, "It is a prophecy of the speedy overthrow of Ephraim and Syria by the king of Assyria." Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, p. 224, suggests that the symbolism of the name might have a secondary import: "Judah, delighting over the spoliation of her enemies, learns to her horror that Maher-shalal-hash-baz applies to her as well as them." As discussed at some length in Chapter 8, after Tiglath-pileser defeats Syria and Israel, he enters Judah as the beginning of the Lord's punishment on her for calling upon Assyrian help. Concerning verse 18 in particular, Young, *The Book of Isaiah*, I:316-17, points out that there are actually three interpretations for the phrase "I and the children whom the LORD has given me" in verse 18. (1) Isaiah and his two sons, (2) Isaiah and his disciples, and (3) the Messiah and his spiritual seed. I accept view (1); other advocates include Rabbi David Kimchi (Radak), Wilhelm (William) Gesenius, Heinrich Ewald, A. Barnes, Franz Delitzsch, et al. Rashi and John Calvin accept view (2), and E. Henderson, John Gill, J. A. Alexander, et al., advocate view (3). The chief argument for (3) is the citation of this verse in Heb. 2:13, but it would be difficult to explain how "signs and symbols" could be applied to the Messiah's spiritual seed. The argument for view (1) is stated succinctly by Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, p. 236: "The mention of *signs and symbols* makes it likely that he [Isaiah] is thinking of Shear-jashub and Maher-shalal-hash-baz [rather than his disciples, as per Calvin]. Their very existence, as well as the strangely evocative names he had felt led to give them, was testimony of God's working among his people" (emphasis original; brackets added).

18 F. Delitzsch, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, 2 vols., in vol. 7 in *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 10 vols., C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975; original publication date 1877), I:239.

Verse 9:1 in Christian translations is probably better connected with the ending verses of chapter 8, as in the Masoretic text, where it is 8:23.¹⁹ Verse 23, then, states there will be an end to the gloom and anguish. It also identifies the region in Israel that will have experienced the worst darkness, gloom, and anguish: the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, both west of the Jordan and known as Galilee. It was devastated by Tiglath-pileser and annexed to the Assyrian Empire in 732 (2 Kgs. 15:29).²⁰ But in the future, the Lord will make this "Galilee of the Gentiles" glorious. How this will come about is the subject of the first part of chapter 9.

Chapter 9

Verses 1-2 (2-3 in Christian translations) predict that those people who had walked in darkness will see a great light. The nation will be multiplied and will experience great gladness. Two reasons for this change are then given, the first in verses 3-4 and then the second in verses 5-6, both beginning with the conjunction כִּי (*kî*), *because* or *for*.²¹ Verses 3-4 relate God's activity in breaking the yoke of foreign oppression and putting an end to war. But that activity is itself the result of something else: the birth of a child who will assume the government and reign on David's throne, establishing his kingdom with justice and righteousness, both then and forever.

So far, then, chapters 7, 8, and 9 all announce the birth of a child. Whether they all refer to the same child remains to be determined, and much discussion is given to this question in the remaining chapters. However, comparing what the three accounts say about the origin of the three children, the father and mother of Maher-shalal-hash-baz are clearly identified: it was Isaiah and his wife, called in this account "the prophetess." By contrast, no parentage for the child in either 7:14 or 9:5 is identified. Those two passages seem to purposely leave that information out in order to create an aura of mystery about the child. This *prima facie* might indicate that they are the same child. But much more evidence would be needed before drawing such a conclusion. Historically, of course, there have been those who take the child in both 7:14 and 9:5 to be Hezekiah, while others take the child in both texts to be the Messiah.

The child in chapter 9, verses 5-6, is a descendant of David with a rather spectacular description and future:

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.²²

However, there is much debate about the correct translation and interpretation of the descriptions or "names" in verse 5. There is even debate as to whether there are four names or five, specifically whether "wonderful" and "counselor" are to be taken together to form a single name or separately as two names.²³ The center of the debate, however, is on the question of which names apply to the child and which to God himself. Each name

19 The chapter division between chapters 8 and 9 in modern editions of the Masoretic Text (*MT*), such as *Biblia Hebraica*, differs from the Vulgate, Christian translations, and the *Jewish Bible 1917*. Verse "9:1" in these three translations is verse "8:23" in the *MT*, making it the last verse of chapter 8 in the *MT*. The three other modern Jewish translations (*Jewish Bible 1985*, *Jerusalem Bible*, and *Stone Edition*) follow the *MT*. Put another way, verse "9:1" in the *MT* is verse "9:2" in Christian translations. Unless indicated otherwise, the Hebrew division is used here.

20 Archer, *Isaiah*, p. 136. Also Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, p. 239: This Galilee of the Gentiles "had always been something of a melting pot...But the area was destined to see an even more intense mixing after 735, for this was the first part of Israel to be stripped away by Tiglath-pileser, with its inhabitants resettled in Mesopotamia and new settlers from that area brought in. The humbling of Israel was begun."

21 The conjunction כִּי can also mean *that* or *when* (*BDB*, p. 471), but the meaning *for* or *because* in these two verses seems to enjoy universal agreement (e.g., Alexander, Delitzsch, Oswalt, Young, Rashi, *Jewish Bible*, *Stone Edition*, *Jerusalem Bible*, *KJV*, *NASB*, *NIV*).

22 Isa. 9:5-6 (Eng., 9:6-7), *NASB*.

says something about the nature of the individual to whom it applies. Much discussion is given to this point in Chapter 7.

Beginning with verse 7 in Chapter 9, the focus returns to the present period, viz., Damascus, Samaria, and Assyria. However, there is another bad chapter break between chapters 9 and 10.²⁴ Verses 9:7 through 10:4 form a coherent section and depict the boasting of Samaria and the consequent judgment and captivity proud Israel will soon experience at the hand of the Lord. It consists of "an artistic poem composed of four strophes" that describe four calamities the Lord will bring upon Israel,²⁵ each strophe ending in the same refrain--

In *spite of* all this, His anger does not turn away
And His hand is still stretched out.²⁶

Chapter 10

The focus now shifts to Assyria in verses 5-23. Assyria was the rod of God's anger but was herself guilty of arrogant and boastful pride, believing all her conquests were by her own greatness and mighty power. For this God would punish Assyria, while a remnant of Israel will be preserved and will return to the land. In fact, verse 21 states that "the remnant of Jacob will return to the mighty God." "Mighty God" in this verse, אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר ('ē/ *gibbōr*), is the same expression as name two (or three) in 9:5. Due to the use of the divine name (the Tetragrammaton, יהוה),²⁷ together with the expression, "the Holy One of Israel" in verse 20, there is no doubt that Isaiah used אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר in verse 21 to refer to the God of Jacob. What about 9:5? It would seem unlikely that Isaiah would use in so near a context, and one that deals with the same general subjects, the same expression in 9:5 with a meaning different from what he intended in 10:21. Thus it becomes a critically important exegetical question as to whether or not this name applies to the "child" in 9:5.

Verses 24-34 assure Judah that they should not fear Assyria. The Lord will bring an end to their oppression just as he did to the Egyptian oppression long ago.

Chapter 11

Rabbi J. H. Hertz, late Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, called Isaiah 11 "the greatest and most famous of all the Messianic prophecies."²⁸ Verses 1-10 describe the Messiah as a "Shoot" or "Branch" that comes out of the stump of Jesse, thus, as agreed by all, of the house of David, as is the child in 9:6. The Spirit of the Lord will be upon him, he will rule with justice and righteousness, and peace will characterize his reign over the whole world.

Verses 11-16 describe the return of the remnant of both Israel and Judah, all twelve tribes scattered over the whole world, to *Eretz Yisrael*. Verse 11 is quite significant:

23 Delitzsch, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, I:251-52, argues that פְּלֵאָה and יוֹעֵץ are to be taken as two separate names, "A Wonder" and "Counselor." The KJV also takes these words as two separate names: "Wonderful, Counselor..." However, Oswald, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, p. 247, takes these two words as a single name--"Wonderful Counselor" or "Wonder of a Counselor." It seems most modern translations, both Christian (e.g., *NASB, NIV*) and Jewish (e.g., *Stone Edition, Jewish Bible*) translate them as a single name.

24 Nevertheless, the verse numbers in chapters 10, 11, and 12 are the same in all translations.

25 Robinson and Harrison, "Isaiah," II:887.

26 *NASB*, 9:11, 16, 20, 10:4.

27 Rendered "LORD" (all capital letters) in the *Jerusalem Bible* and almost all Christian translations and "HaShem" ("The Name") in the *Stone Edition*.

28 J. H. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, 2nd ed. (London: Soncino Press, 1981), p. 1023.

Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people...²⁹

Gleason Archer writes,

...it is made as clear as Hebrew can express it that the Lord will "a second time" (in contrast to the first restoration after the fall of Babylon) regather the Hebrew people from every geographical region...to which they have been scattered, so as to assemble them in the Land of Promise.³⁰

Rabbi Hertz agrees that this "second" regathering is the final ingathering at the time of the Messiah:

Intimately bound up with the Jewish Messianic hope is the thought of **פסח לעתיד**, the Passover of the future. It will be a new redemption and a new Exodus, this time an exodus of the Jewish people from the lands of their dispersion and an ingathering into the Holy Land. "The Lord will set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain from Assyria and from Egypt, etc." (XI, 11).³¹

It is to be noted, then, that this "second" gathering of the Jewish nation back to the land of Israel is *Messianic*, and that once there, the Messiah will reign over them and the rest of the world.

Chapter 12

It is clear that chapter 12 is a continuation of the section that began with 11:1. Note the repetition of the phrase, "in that day," is used to tie the sequence together in 11:10, 11, 12:1, and 4. Chapter 12 is a song of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for the salvation of his people, the inhabitants of Zion, "for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

Chapter 12 is indeed a fitting conclusion to chapters 7-11. Throughout these chapters there has been the recurring appeal to Judah to put aside her fears of the nations threatening them and place their full and complete trust in God, who is supreme over all the nations of the world and utterly trustworthy. But even though they are refusing to place their trust in him and thus experience defeat and punishment, they are not destroyed completely. The Lord has and will continue to preserve a remnant. This remnant will eventually return in its entirety to the land promised them as an everlasting possession³² under the reign of the Messiah. They will trust God and sing that he has become their salvation.

Conclusion

Ronald Youngblood makes a most important comment relevant to the interpretation of Isaiah 7:14:

The Immanuel of Isa. 7:14 cannot be separated, ultimately, from the child/son whose story is embedded in 9:1-7 (MT 8:23-9:6) or the Branch/Root described in 11:1-10.³³

Clearly, these three passages, or more specifically, three individuals, play the central role in section 7-12, which

29 NASB.

30 Archer, *Isaiah*, p. 139.

31 Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, p. 1023. Rabbi Hertz takes the first ingathering into the Holy Land to be the Exodus (p. 1025), while Dr. Archer, as stated in the above citation, takes it to be the partial return from the Babylonian captivity. Either might be correct. In favor of Egypt is the fact that both regatherings would encompass the entire living nation. In favor of the Babylonian captivity is the fact that both regatherings are described as the return of a "remnant."

32 Gen. 17:7-8; 48:4; Ps. 105:8-11.

33 Youngblood, "Immanuel," II:807.

forms the broader context of Isaiah 7:14. Isaiah presents:

- The sign of the child named Immanuel (chapter 7)
- The child "born" and "given to us," who will reign on David's throne forever (chapter 9)
- The Branch, acknowledged by all Christian and Jewish scholars to be the Messiah (chapter 11)

As a first step to see whether these three individuals are in any way connected, the passage 9:5-6 is examined in some depth in the next chapter.