

Isaiah Chapter 4, Hebrew Text with Translation and Footnotes

In the Midst of Jerusalem's / Judah's Darkness,

There is Vibrant Hope for the Future:

A Fruitful Branch (Messiah?) Is Coming--

and There Will Be a New Exodus!

4:2¹ בְּיוֹם הַהוּא

¹There are two end-notes for **chapter 4**: “Occurrences of the Noun צֶמַח, “Branch” or “Sprout” in the **Hebrew Bible**,” and “Daniel’s Prayer of Confession in the Midst of Exile, **Daniel 9:4-19**.”

Slotki calls **verses 2-6** “A further description of the Messianic age (compare **2:2-4**) and the happy state of the survivors of the storm in which all the wicked have been swept away. The land will be purified and the glory of the Lord manifest, while His Divine protection will ensure safety and eternal peace...

“The argument for the assignment of this passage to a later writer on the grounds of style and its pronounced apocalyptic character is not convincing. Isaiah’s prophecies provide many parallels with the ideas here expressed.” (Pp. 20-21) See our end-note 6 on **chapter 2** for 63 visions of hope in the **Book of Isaiah**.

Gray entitles **4:2-6** “Judah and Jerusalem after the Judgment,” and comments that “After Yahweh, by means of an exterminating judgment (**verse 4**) which will allow a few to escape (**verses 2b, 3**), has cleansed Jerusalem from moral filth and bloodstains (**verse 4**), a time will come when the land of Israel will be clothed again with verdure and will produce crops, which will make the Jewish survivors from the judgment and their land glorious in the eyes of the nations (**verse 2**). Zion will again become a city of sacred convocations (**verse 5**); the entire community will be holy (**verse 3**); and Yahweh will visibly manifest His presence in the same way as at the exodus—in cloud by day and flaming brightness by night (**verse 5**); and He will protect His city and people from all manner of misfortune and disaster (**verse 6**).” (P. 77)

It is noticeable that Gray, although a Christian commentator, sees no evidence of the Messiah, or Jesus Christ in this passage, whereas others, both Jews and Christians, consider this passage a genuine prediction of the coming of the Messiah.

Motyer entitles **4:2-6** “The new Jerusalem,” and comments that “We have been led to this point by the momentum of the coming ‘day of the Lord’: its existence (**2:12**), its effects (**2:17, 20**) and its infliction (**3:18; 4:1**). And now once again the same words! The mind recoils in dread. But contrary to all expectation there follows a message about glory and survival (**verse 2**), holiness and life (**verse 3**), cleansing (**verse 4**), new creation and Divine indwelling (**verse 5**) and an open shelter (**verse 6**). How truly surprising is the saving work of the Lord! How contrary to expectation and desert!...

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“Here is a double vision (**verses 2-4, verses 5-6**) of Zion with new people, cleansed personally and socially...and with a religious life over which the Lord presides and within which He is intimately at one with His people.” (P. 64)

Ortlund entitles **4:2-6** “Hope,” and states that it further develops “the bright hope of **2:2-4** ...Isaiah reveals the worthy leadership and enduring beauty that God intends to provide for His people...The branch of the Lord is the Messiah.” (P. 1247)

Oswalt entitles **4:2-6** “Israel Restored,” and comments that “With this segment the prophet brings to a close the subsection beginning at **2:1**. He started with an announcement of Israel’s destiny as the people of God, through whom God’s law could be made known to an expectant world (**2:1-5**). But that vision stood in direct contrast to the present condition of Israel. In essence she was reduced to Judah and Jerusalem, and even Judah, instead of teaching the world, was being taught by the world. They were learning dependence on human greatness for their life. But Isaiah shows in a series of stunning contrasts how such dependence does not exalt but rather humiliates (**2:6-4:1**).

“...The climactic contrast appears in **3:16-4:1** where Jerusalem is compared to haughty Judean ladies who will be reduced to abject misery by the coming exile. But does this predicted destruction mean that God will give up on Israel, that, in fact, her destiny will become unreachable?...

“**4:2-6** answers this question in the negative. God will not give up on His people. In fact, the coming fires of the exile will only serve to make His people more what God has always wanted them to be (**verse 4**). The prophet reinforces his assertion of the redeemed Israel’s essential unity with her past by the large number of allusions to the exodus (**verses 5, 6**). They will not lose their royal priesthood (**Exodus 19:6**) because of coming judgment. In truth, they will find it (compare **Malachi 3:3, 4**).” (Pp. 144-45)

We note that Oswalt, a confessing Christian, does not claim that this passage is Messianic.

Watts entitles **4:2-6** “Yahweh’s Branch,” and comments that “The passage is the third ‘day of the Lord’ passage in the chapter, the only positive one.” It can be outlined as follows:

- I. In that day, Yahweh’s plants will flourish in Israel.
- II. Jerusalem’s remnant will be holy, since she will have been purged.
- III. Yahweh will create a shelter and sign of His presence in Zion.

...The sequence of tenses is a textbook example of imperfect, perfect with waw [‘conversive’] and substantive clauses. The time view is future, set by the opening

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phrase.” (P. 49) Again we note that Watts, also a confessing Christian, does not claim that this passage is Messianic.

Alexander is very explicit in claiming the passage to be Messianic. He states that **4:2-6** “contains a prophecy of Christ and of the future condition of the Church. The Prophet here recurs to the theme with which the prophecy opened (**chapter 2:1-4**), but with this distinction that instead of dwelling on the influence exerted by the church upon the world, he here exhibits its internal condition under the reign of the Messiah.

“He first presents to view the person by whose agency the church is to be brought into a glorious and happy state, and who is here described as a partaker both of the Divine and human nature, **verse 2**. He then describes the character of those who are predestined to share in the promised exaltation, **verse 3**. He then shows the necessity, implied in these promises, of previous purification from the defilement described in the foregoing chapters, **verse 4**. When this purification is effected, God will manifest His presence gloriously throughout His church, **verse 5**. To these promises of purity and honor he now adds one of protection and security, with which the prophecy concludes, **verse 6**.

“It is commonly agreed that this prediction has been only partially fulfilled and that its complete fulfilment is to be expected, not in the literal mount Zion or Jerusalem, but in those various assemblies or societies of true believers, which now possess in common the privileges once exclusively enjoyed by the Holy City and the chosen race of which it was the center and metropolis.” (Pp. 121-22)

Alexander states that in **verse 2**, “having foretold a general destruction, [Isaiah] now intimates that some should escape it, and be rendered glorious and happy by the presence and favor of the Son of God, Who is at the same time the Son of man.”

He translates the verse as follows: ‘In that day (after this destruction) *shall the Branch* (or Offspring) of [Jehovah] be for honor and for glory, and the fruit of the earth for sublimity and beauty, to the escaped of Israel’...meaning those who should survive these judgments.” (P. 122)

He adds that “As צֶמַח, [**tsemach**, ‘branch’] in its physical and proper sense, means growth, vegetation, or that which grows and vegetates...it is here explained...as synonymous with fruit of the earth, but in its lowest sense, that of vegetable products or abundant harvests...

“To this interpretation...it may be objected, first that such a subject is wholly incongruous with the predicates applied to it, honorable, glorious, sublime, and beautiful; secondly, that this explanation of צֶמַח is precluded by the addition of the name [Jehovah], a difficulty aggravated by the parallelism, which requires the relation

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between *branch* and [*Jehovah*] to be the same as that between *fruit* and *earth*, and as the last phrase means the offspring of the earth, so the first must mean the offspring of [*Jehovah*], an expression which can only be applied to persons.” (P. 122)

Do you agree that such predicates as are given to “branch” could only apply to a person, not to a physical growth or vegetation? And do you agree that YHWH’s “branch” can only be applied to persons, not to vegetative growth?

We think Alexander is too dogmatic in this, wanting to bolster his interpretation that the “branch” can only be a person, and that person, Jesus Christ, both human and Divine, Son of Man and Son of God. What do you think?

Alexander goes on to state that in the other passages in the **Hebrew Bible** where פְּרִי occurs, it is abundantly clear that this is a name applied to the coming Davidic king, the Messiah. See footnote 6 and end-note 2, where all occurrences of this noun in the **Hebrew Bible** are given.

What do you think? Has Alexander proven his point? We agree with him that in the other passages where פְּרִי / branch occurs it is used of the Davidic king, the Messiah—but do not think that this passage in **Isaiah 4:2-6** is nearly as clear-cut as he interprets it, using the terms Son of God and Son of man, and identifying the “assemblies” as the later (Christian) churches.

Translations of **verse 2** vary:

King James, “In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.”

Tanakh, “In that day, The radiance of the LORD Will lend beauty and glory, And the splendor of the land *Will give* dignity and majesty, To the survivors of Israel.”

New Revised Standard, “On that day the branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel.”

New International, “In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel.”

New Jerusalem, “That day, Yahweh's seedling will turn to beauty and glory, what the earth brings forth will turn to the pride and ornament of Israel's survivors.”

Rahlf's, τῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἐπιλάμψει ὁ θεὸς ἐν βουλήνῃ μετὰ δόξης ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τοῦ ὑψῶσαι καὶ δοξάσαι τὸ καταλειφθὲν τοῦ Ἰσραηλ “But then on that day the God will shine forth in counsel, with glorious radiance upon the earth, to exalt and to glorify the remnant of Israel.”

Kaiser, “On that day, what Yahweh causes to shoot up shall be beauty and glory, and the fruit of the land shall be pride and adornment for the escaped of Israel.”

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יְהִיָּה צִמַּח יְהוָה לְצַבִּי וּלְכַבֹּד
וּפְרֵי הָאָרֶץ לְגֵאֹן וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת

On that day²

YHWH's branch / sprout³, ¹ will be for beauty⁴ and for glory;⁵

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None of these translations, except for **New International**, take the verse as a clear prediction of the Messiah, and even its translation only becomes clear in later usages of “branch.”

Kaiser comments that “Yahweh’s last word to His people is not judgment but His saving will; indeed, judgment is the means of realizing His saving will...Yahweh brings His saving work to completion through His purifying judgment.” (Pp. 84-85) Yes, in **Isaiah 4:2-6**; but the last word in the **Book of Isaiah**, is one of judgment: **Isaiah 66:24**,

And they will go out, and they will look on (the) corpses of the men,
the ones transgressing against Me—
because their worm will not die,
and their fire will not be quenched;
and they will be an abhorrence to all flesh.

²Oswalt comments that the phrase **בְּיוֹם הַהוּא**, “On that day,” provides “a direct connection between this segment and what preceded it (**2:12, 17; 3:7, 18; 4:1**). But the relationship is one of contrast. In those references the coming day was one of retribution and judgment, when the false hopes and complacency of the Judeans would be swept away. Yet God’s final purpose is not destruction. If it was true that God’s coming day would not merely vindicate the people, neither would it annihilate them. Rather, God’s coming day would only be complete when cleansing and restoration had taken place...Thus, this segment forms a necessary counterpoise and conclusion to the prophecies which preceded it.” (Pp. 145-46)

Gray states that the phrase “in that day” does not mean “the day that is mentioned in **4:1, 3:18**, but a time determined by what follows, to wit, after the judgment.” (P. 78)

³Gray, also a Christian commentator, translates by “the vegetation of Yahweh,” and says that it means “all that Yahweh will cause to grow out of the soil...In order to emphasize the point that Yahweh will be the Source of the future fertility, the writer employs **צִמַּח יְהוָה** [his ‘vegetation of Yahweh’] as an alternative to the more usual phrases **צִמַּח הָאָרֶץ** [‘vegetation of the ground’], **צִמַּח הַשָּׂדֶה** [‘vegetation of the field’]...**צִמַּח** means not *branch*...but whatever grows or shoots forth from the ground,

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whether herbage...or trees... Metaphorically it is used as a term for him who should re-establish the Davidic monarchy (**Jeremiah 23:3; 33:15, Zechariah 3:3; 6:12**), and it has often been given a Messianic sense in this passage; but this is inconsistent with the parallel *the fruit of the ground*...

“The land of promise was a fruitful land (**Deuteronomy 8:7-10**, compare **28:1-14**), but from the first, promise was accompanied by a warning: if the people neglected Yahweh the fertility of the goodly land was to be destroyed, or neutralized, by war, depopulation, continuous drought, bad seasons; see **Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28**, especially **verses 22-24, 33, 38-40**, and compare **Malachi 3:7-13**. The people had neglected Yahweh; the threats had been carried out, harvests were yielding little, and what this poem promises is a restoration of the natural fertility of the land to those that escape and remain (**verse 3**), after the cleansing, exterminating judgment (**verse 4**); the fertility and fruitfulness of their land is to be the pride and glory of the community that survives, making it enviable in the eyes of the nations.” (P. 78)

What do you think? Do you agree with Gray? Why? Why not?

Watts states that “The interpretation of the passage has traditionally been based on the understanding of the **צֶמַח יְהוָה**, ‘branch of Yahweh.’” **Rahlf**s translates by ‘the God will shine forth,’ apparently reading **צַחַח** or **צַמַח** in the sense of the Aramaic **צַמַח** meaning ‘brightness.’ The Greek translators Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotian read ‘rising of Lord.’ Latin Vulgate has *germen Domini* ‘sprout of the Lord,’ The Syriac translation has ‘appearance or glory of the Lord.’ The Aramaic Targum translates **מְשִׁיחָא דִּיהוּיָהּ**, [Messiah of YHWH] and understood it as a Messianic title.

“The Messianic interpretation of the passage [first found in the Aramaic Targum] continued in the Middle Ages (Kimchi) and is also represented in modern exegetes...

“The word **צֶמַח** ‘branch’ is used for the king of the time to come. **Jeremiah** has **צֶמַח צְדִיק**, ‘righteous branch’ (**23:5**), and **צֶמַח צְדָקָה**, [‘branch of righteousness’] (**33:15**). **Zechariah** has **עֶבְדִּי צֶמַח**, ‘My servant branch’ (**3:8**), and **אִישׁ צֶמַח**, ‘a man Branch his name’ (**6:12**)...None of these demonstrates a fixed messianic title...[Here, in **Isaiah 4:2**] the parallel is **פְּרִי הָאָרֶץ**, ‘fruit of the land.’ The words in context refer to Yahweh’s plans and purposes in their entirety.” (P. 49)

Oswalt comments that “Traditionally, beginning with the [Aramaic] Targum, *the Branch of the Lord* [**צֶמַח יְהוָה**, ‘branch of YHWH’] has been interpreted as referring

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to the Messiah (as it does elsewhere [but in fact this exact phrase occurs nowhere else in the **Hebrew Bible**]).” (P. 146)

Ortlund comments that the “Branch of the Lord’ is the Messiah (see **Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12**, and, using different words, **Isaiah 11:1**). He springs from the Lord, and his rule spreads over the world. His beginnings are unimpressive (**Isaiah 53:2** [which uses ‘root,’ not ‘branch’], but his triumph will be *beautiful and glorious*. *The fruit of the land* may also refer to the Messiah, with an emphasis on his human roots.” (P. 1247)

Isaiah 11:1,

And a branch (**choter**) will arise out of Jesse’s stump;

and a sprout (נֹצֵר) from his roots will bear fruit!

(Here the Hebrew noun is חֹטֵר rather than צֶמַח; the two nouns are synonyms; and נֹצֵר, “sprout” is another synonym.)

Isaiah 53:2, which is speaking about YHWH’s “servant”:

And he grew up like a sapling (כִּיּוֹנֵק, like the young plant, sapling) before him,

and like the root (וְכִשְׁרֵשׁ, and like the root, **shoresh**) from dry ground.

He has no attractiveness, and no splendor.

And we saw him, and (there was) no good looks (so that) we desired him.
(Both of these nouns are similar to “branch,” but not exactly synonyms.)

Motyer, very similarly to Ortlund, states that “*The Branch of the Lord*, is always elsewhere a title pointing to the Messiah in his kingly and priestly offices (**Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12** [see our end-note 2 for all occurrences of the noun in the **Hebrew Bible**]). In itself ‘branch’ is a ‘family tree’ metaphor. In **Jeremiah**, ‘the branch’ is ‘for David’ or (better) ‘of David’s.’ Only here do we have ‘the Lord’s branch.’ The Messiah springs from a dual ancestry as he belongs in the ‘family tree’ of both David and the Lord. The human side of his ancestry is taken over here by the metaphor *the fruit of the land* / ‘earth’ pointing to the Messiah as arising out of this created order (compare **11:1; 53:2**).” (P. 65)

The Jewish commentator, Slotki comments that in **verses 2-6** there is “A further description of the Messianic age (compare **2:2-4**) and the happy state of the survivors of the storm in which all the wicked have been swept away.” (P. 20)

Slotki translates **verse 2** by “In that day shall the growth of the Lord be beautiful and glorious,” and comments on “the growth of the Lord” that “Some take this literally:

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the land will yield rich produce. Others regard it as symbolic of the Messiah or the righteous who survived the day of wrath.” (P. 21)

What do you think? Do you interpret **Isaiah 4:2-6** as a “Messianic Prediction?”

⁴For this word **צְבִי**, “beauty,” compare:

Isaiah 28:1, where the beauty of Northern Israel is said to be withering:

Ah! (The) crown of majesty of Ephraim’s drunken ones,
and (the) withering blossom of its beauty’s honor
which (is) upon (the) head of a valley of rich fatness,
of those struck down by wine!

Isaiah 28:4-5,

- 4 And it will happen—(the) withering blossom of its beauty’s honor
which (is) upon (the) head of (the) valley of rich fatness,
like a first-ripe fig before summer,
which the one looking will see--
while it is still in his hand, he will swallow it!
- 5 In that day, YHWH of Armies will be
for a crown of honor and for a diadem of beauty
to His people’s remnant;

Jeremiah 3:19, where YHWH expresses what He desired for Israel, but she had rejected:

And I, I said, How I would place you among the children,
and I would give to you a land of delight
a beauty of beauties of nations!
And I said, you will call Me my Father,
and you would not turn from (following) after Me.

Ezekiel 20:6,

In that day I lifted My hand to them, (swearing)
to bring them forth from Egypt-land,
to a land which I would spy out for them--
(a land) flowing milk and honey--
it (is) a beauty, to all the lands! **Ezekiel 20:15**, closely similar.

Daniel 11:16, Daniel depicts a Northern kng, who will invade Israel,

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and the land's fruit,⁶
for exaltation and for beauty (synonym)
for Israel's⁷ escaped ones.⁸

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And the one coming will do according to his pleasure,
and there is no one standing before him.
And he will stand in the land of beauty,
and complete (destruction) in his hand.

Daniel 11:41a,

And he will come into the land of beauty...

Daniel 11:45,

And he will pitch / establish his tent of a palace between seas—
by Mountain of beauty of set-apartness.
And he will come to his end—
and there is no one helping him.

Watts comments that “The word is thus characteristic of the Holy Land and here describes the future fulfillment of God’s purpose for Israel in the land...That here the fruit of the land should be the subject of such praise is a contrast to the long, lean years of war and famine that Israel experienced.” (P. 50)

Motyer comments that “the middle words ‘glory’ and ‘pride’ / ‘dignity’ point to a great change. ‘Glory’ had been their destruction (2:10) and ‘pride’ (2:12; a related word) their ruin. Now the Divine glory dwells among them [see **verse 5**], they rightly pride themselves in Him and He imparts a true dignity to them.” (P. 65)

⁵Watts comments that “The grandeur of that time is pictured in the words **גְּאֹרָה** and **תְּפִאֲרָה**, ‘majesty’ and ‘glory’.” (P. 49)

⁶Here again Slotki comments that “This too may be taken literally or regarded as symbolizing the children of the righteous who will be the glory of the escaped remnant of Israel.” (P. 21)

⁷1QIs^a interpolates the phrase **וַיְהוּדָה**, “and Judah’s” at this point in the text.

⁸Isaiah insists that Divine judgment is coming on Judah and Jerusalem, and many will lose their lives or be carried away into Babylonian captivity. But there are those who will escape and return. For those escapees, YHWH promises the coming of a new day of great fertility in the land, or as some interpreters insist, the coming of

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“Branch / Sprout,” understood as the name of a Davidic king / Messiah, who will reign over them, and give them true beauty, glory, and exaltation.

Oswalt comments that “God will take away that honor (תְּפִאֲרֹת [our ‘beauty’]) which she created for herself (**Isaiah 3:18**) and give her a new source of honor and exaltation. Israel herself is not the sprout, but rather that which has come from her by God’s grace. When God gives her glory, then she will know her true greatness, the greatness which eluded her when she sought to produce that glory herself...

“The thought that the Messiah is the mediator of God’s glory is a prominent one in the **New Testament (Luke 2:32; 9:26, 32; John 1:14; 2:11; 11:4; 17:5, 22, 24; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Colossians 1:27; Hebrews 1:3).**” (Pp. 146-47)

The phrase here, פְּלִיטַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, “escaped remnant of Israel,” and the phrases that follow in **verse 3**, הַנִּשְׁאָר בְּצִיּוֹן וְהַנּוֹתָר בִּירוּשָׁלַם, “that which is left in Zion and that which is left remaining in Israel,” are all pointing to a “remnant” of people that survives the destruction of YHWH’s “day,” to become the nucleus of the future Israel of God. Even though YHWH brings destructive judgment upon His people because of their rebellion and disobedience, He preserves a remnant out of the judgment which He will use for His purposes in the world. Compare:

Isaiah 1:9.

Unless YHWH of Armies left remaining for us a survivor, like a few,
we were like Sodom, we were like Gomorrah!

Watts comments that “The promise is for פְּלִיטַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, “the surviving remnant of Israel.” The concern of the **Book of Isaiah** for the fate of the people from the Northern Kingdom which was noted in **1:3** and **2:5** is immensely strengthened in this verse. It will be observed at various intervals throughout the **book**. The theology of the **book** certainly builds on the understanding of Israel’s election...and struggles to put it into proper perspective in light of her experiences from the eighth to the fifth centuries.” (P. 50)

Kaiser comments on **verse 2** that “The poet of the description of salvation in **verse 2** regards Yahweh’s great day of judgment as being at the same time the decisive turning-point in the destiny of Israel. It puts an end to the time of injustice and thus the time of disaster. So Yahweh can reveal His full grace upon those Israelites who have escaped the last catastrophe. Then they will no longer boast of their own vain works and deeds, nor even of their empty pomp, but of the great works which God does in His creation and with which He visibly glorifies His name before all the world by testifying to His presence in Israel through the fertility of His land...

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“For in contrast to the messianic interpretation [in the Aramaic Targum]...the ‘shoot of Yahweh’ is not to be understood here as in **Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12**, as the King of the time of salvation from the house of David, nor even as the holy remnant of Israel, but in accordance with the parallel mention of the fruit of the land as quite simply whatever Yahweh makes to grow in the land. So here we find the expectation of the inexhaustible fertility of the land in the time of salvation which is also suggested in other eschatological prophecies.” (Pp. 85-86)

He is referring to **Psalms 72** and **Deuteronomy 28**.

Kaiser continues: “A life in a fertile land, life without guilt in sure protection, afforded and prepared by God Himself, in the community of the City of God—that is the expectation expressed here; it is something that might still be able to express our own hidden longings (compare **Revelation 21.3ff.**).” (Pp. 88-89)

⁹Oswalt comments on **verses 3-4** that “A nation which has become progressively more unlike God in His moral character will, in that day, become holy [our ‘set-apart’]. This is the purpose of judgment and of redemption, that the people should be like God. Indeed, this was the purpose of the exodus and the giving of the law. God’s desire is that we should be holy as He is holy (**Leviticus 19:2; 22:31-33**)...”

“But to be holy means also the manifesting of a distinctive character. The so-called ‘Holiness Code’ (**Leviticus 17-26**) stresses that it is through the cultivation of certain kinds of ethical behavior that persons demonstrate the holiness of God. Israel had increasingly failed to cultivate such behavior. More than that, she seems incapable of doing it. What should be done?”

“With the other prophets, Isaiah sees hope through the very punishment for sin. The fiery judgment would be a factor in the cleansing process. Although it would not be for many, still some would realize why the judgment had come upon them and would turn away from their sins which had brought the judgment.” (P. 147)

For the Divine promise of forgiveness following the punishment / exile, see:

Ezekiel 36:25-27,

- 25 And I will pour out upon you people clean waters,
and you will be clean from all your uncleannesses,
and from all your idols, I will cleanse you.
- 26 And I will give to you a new heart,
and a new spirit / Spirit I will give / place in your inward parts;
and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh,
and I will give / place for you a heart of flesh.

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27 And My Spirit I will give / place in your inward parts,
and I will make / create (you) so that you will walk in My statutes,
and My justice you will observe / keep and you will do / create!

Ezekiel 39:23-27,

23 And the nations will know that by their iniquity Israel's house went into exile,
because they acted faithlessly against Me,
and I hid my face from them,
and I gave / placed them in their enemies' hand,
and they fell by the sword, all of them.

24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I did to
them,
and I hid My face from them.

25 Therefore, in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:
Now I will return Jacob's captivity,
and I will have compassion (on) all Israel's house,
and I will be jealous for My set-apart name.

26 And they shall bear their reproach,
and all their unfaithfulness with which they acted faithlessly against Me,
when they return to their land in security,
and there is no one causing fear.

27 When I return them from the peoples,
and I gather them from their enemies' lands,
and I make them set-apart
in the sight of many nations.

For an example of a prayer of confession and request for forgiveness in the midst of the exile, see **Daniel 9:4-19**, Daniel's prayer, in our end-note 2. But it is to be noticed that these promises of forgiveness do not go beyond Isaiah's promise in **Isaiah 1:16-18**.

Oswalt adds that "In no sense is human salvation the result of human initiative. Rather, we are saved because we have responded to Divine initiative. But those who will not respond will not be saved." (P. 147)

So Oswalt says, much in line with Job's three friends and their doctrine of retribution which they claimed God had to be subject to. But the **Book of Job** teaches that God is free—He is not subject to our human theological conclusions, even if they are based on biblical teaching. He can forgive whoever and whenever He chooses; He can test His creatures as He thinks best—with terrifying harsh trials. He can respond to human initiative if He so chooses. We must be careful to not attempt to "put God in a box of our own creating," but humbly accept His will, just as Jesus did at the cross.

(continued...)

⁹(...continued)

Watts comments on **verse 3** that “The concept of the remnant is expanded to include the *remainder in Zion* and the *separated portion in Jerusalem*...For all its interest in Israel, the overriding concern of the **book** has to do with the people who will inhabit God’s city...

“This...group is described in **verse 3** as כָּל־הַכְּתוּב לַחַיִּים בִּירוּשָׁלַם, ‘everyone written for life in Jerusalem.’” Compare:

Psalms 69:29^{Heb} / 28^{Eng}, a psalm cursing opponents:

May they be blotted out from a scroll of (the) living / life;
and with righteous people may they not be written!

Daniel 12:1b,

and at that time, your people shall escape,
everyone that has been found written in the book.

Watts adds that being written for life “implies God’s protection and blessing. The remnant is the group chosen to participate in the life of God’s city.” (P. 50)

Motyer comments on **verse 3** that “This verse notes the fact that some are *left* [הַנִּשְׁאַר] and *remain* [הַנּוֹתָר] but does not explain it: after the calamity, there are some left over. With the word *holy* [our ‘set-apart’] we enter the theological realities behind this survival; those left are a group spiritually changed. The adjective is emphatic and the clause is singular: “Holy” shall be said to each’...In a way yet to be explained these survivors have each been made fit for the Divine presence. *Recorded among the living* / ‘written for / unto life’ reflects the concept of a Book of Destiny or, on a lower level, a register of citizens, known throughout the ancient world; likewise the Lord’s book is referred to throughout Scripture (for example, **Exodus 32:32-33** [**Psalms 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Malachi 3:16**; compare **Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3**]...

“To have survived the calamity is no accident but arises from an elective decision of the Lord, a Divine purpose expressed in the inscribing of the name in the book of life. Behind personal experience lies the predestinating mind of God.” (P. 65)

We sense in Motyer’s comments the longing to read Christian doctrine and Calvinist theology into the ancient biblical text, finding the two-fold nature of the Messiah (both human and Divine) and the doctrine of predestination here in **Isaiah 4:3** (as does Alexander). Compare his later explanation of the Holy Spirit as “the executive God-head” on p. 66.

(continued...)

⁹(...continued)

Isaiah says nothing like Motyer's statement that "survival of the calamity is no accident but arises from an elective decision of the Lord." What Isaiah says is quite different—the cleansing from sin is both what the people themselves must do (**Isaiah 1:16-18**) and what the Spirit of YHWH accomplishes (**Isaiah 2:4-6**).

Alexander comments on **verse 3** that "Having foretold the happiness and honor which the Son of God should one day confer upon His people, the Prophet now explains to whom the promise was intended to apply...They are described by their moral character, and by their eternal destination to this character and that which follows it." (P. 123)

Gray comments that "Those who will be found to have been *written for life* will consist of those who sought and feared Yahweh...who did good and not evil...and so avoided the exterminating judgment (**verse 4**), which destroys the wicked. To be written for life is to have one's name written in 'the book of Yahweh,' otherwise known as 'the book of life (or the living),' etc.; those whose names are written there live, those whose names have never been written there, or have been erased, die..."

"The idea of the book of Yahweh, or of life, has its parallel, if not indeed its origin, in Babylon: the God Nebo wrote on tables 'not only the fate of the world, but also that of individuals,' and there were 'tables of favor' and 'of good works.'"

Commentators are uncertain as to who is meant by those written in the book, and those with Augustinian / Calvinist views quickly speak of those foreordained, predetermined by God.

We think it is very obvious who Isaiah means. They are those who have responded to the Divine invitation found in **Isaiah 1:16-18**, who have washed themselves, removed their evil, ceased to do evil, learned to do good; who have sought justice, corrected oppression, cared for the orphan and the widow; who have entered into mutual dialogue with YHWH in honest conversation / dialogue / debate—and who, as a result, have experienced the Divine cleansing and forgiveness. They have become the "new Jerusalem," the "new Zion," a foretaste of YHWH's promised future. They are Isaiah's disciples, who have accepted his message, and who, by their very existence in the midst of sin-laden Israel, are "signs and portents" to Israel. Compare **Isaiah 8:16-18**,

- 16 Bind up a testimony;
 seal *torah* / teaching among my students.
- 17 And I will wait for the YHWH,
 the One hiding His face / appearance from Jacob's house;
 and I will wait for Him.
- 18 Look—I, and the children whom YHWH gave to me,
 for signs and for portents / wonders in Israel,

(continued...)

וְהִנּוּתָר בִּירוּשָׁלַם

קָדוֹשׁ יֹאמֵר לוֹ

כָּל-הַכְּתוּב לַחַיִּים בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

And it will happen, the remnant in Zion,
and that which is left in Jerusalem--
Set-apart! It will be said to it,
everyone that has been written for life¹⁰ in Jerusalem.¹¹

⁹(...continued)
from YHWH of Armies,
the One dwelling on Mount Zion.

These disciples of Isaiah are, we think, the “remnant in Zion,” “that which is left in Jerusalem,” those who “have been written for life in Jerusalem.” What do you think?

¹⁰Alexander comments that “As חַיִּים may be either a plural adjective [‘those living’] or abstract noun [‘life’], some understand the phrase to mean enrolled among the living...others enrolled to life...In either case the figure denotes not simply actual life, but destination to it.” (P. 123)

If our view, stated in the preceding footnote is correct, this is not a “predestination” by God alone, but a destiny that has been decided by those enrolled as they have heeded Isaiah’s teaching, and responded to the Divine invitation to new life and total forgiveness.

¹¹The question automatically arises, Who or what is this remnant that is left in Jerusalem, a remnant that is called “set-apart” or “holy”? Isaiah tells us that it is “everyone that has been written for life in Jerusalem.” Who is that?

Slotki says that the phrase “written unto life” means “specifically approval by Providence.” (P. 21) Other translations of the phrase are “written among the living,” “inscribed for life,” “recorded for life,” “recorded among the living,” “noted down to live” and οἱ γραφέντες εἰς ζωὴν, “the ones having been written for life.”

We think It is Isaiah and his disciples, along with any others, who have responded to the Divine commands and invitation of **Isaiah 1:16-18**, entering into mutual-reproof and debate with YHWH, and having been cleansed “whiter than the snow.” Who do you think Isaiah means?

4:4¹² אִם רָחַץ אֲדֹנָי אֶת צֹאת בְּנוֹת-צִיּוֹן

וְאֶת-דְּמֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם יְדִיחַ מִקְרָבָהּ

בְּרוּחַ מְשַׁפֵּט וּבְרוּחַ בַּעַר:

When¹³ my Lord cleansed¹⁴ Zion's daughters'¹⁵ filth,

¹²Alexander comments that **verse 4** “contains a previous condition of the promise in **verse 3**, which could not be fulfilled until the church was [the people of God were] purged from the pollution brought upon it by the sins of those luxurious women and of the people generally, a work which could be effected only by the convincing and avenging influences of the [flaming Spirit] Holy Spirit.” (P. 123)

We make insertions into Alexander’s statement, which reads too much like Isaiah is writing following the coming of Christ and the Christian Church, as we have seen in some of his other comments.

That purging was already at work in Isaiah’s time, as individuals in Israel chose to respond to his *torah* / teaching and received the Divine promise of total forgiveness. Such forgiveness did not begin with the coming of Christ and the Christian Church, but is certainly embodied and fulfilled in those who respond to the message and invitation of Christ. We think it is only an anti-Semitic reading of the **Hebrew Bible** that permits the understanding that Divine purging only began with Christ and his Church.

¹³Motyer explains that “the conditional particle **אִם** (‘if’) is used when an event is certain but its timing unknown.” He translates by “whenever.” (P. 66)

¹⁴The qal perfect **רָחַץ**, “He washed,” is translated as imperfect / future:

King James, “When the Lord shall have washed away...”

Tanakh, “When my Lord has washed away...”

New Revised Standard, “once the Lord has washed away...”

New International, “The Lord will wash away...”

New Jerusalem, “When the Lord has washed away...”

Rahlfs, ὅτι ἐκπλυνεῖ κύριος, “because Lord will wash out...”

But surely the tenses used by the biblical writers are intentional, and should be respected. If Isaiah is referring to a past cleansing, what can it be other than those in Jerusalem / Judah who have heard and responded to YHWH’s commands and invitation in **Isaiah 1:16-18**, “washing themselves”?

¹⁵Where our Hebrew text has “the filth of the daughters of Zion,” **Rahlfs** has “the filth of the sons and of the daughters of Zion.”

and Jerusalem's blood-guilts He will cleanse (synonym) from her midst,¹⁶
by a Spirit / spirit of justice,
and by a Spirit / spirit of burning--¹⁷

¹⁶Motyer comments that "a total dealing with sin is here in mind." (P. 66) We are reminded of YHWH's commands and promise to those who will enter into honest reasoning / debate / mutual reproof with Him in **Isaiah 1:16-18**,

- 16 Wash!
 Make yourselves clean!
 Remove your deeds of wickedness from before My eyes!
 Cease to do evil!
- 17 Learn to do good!
 Seek after justice!
 Pronounce blessed (?) **chamots**.
 Act as judges (who deliver the) orphan!
 Take up the cause of (the) widow!
- 1.18 Come now, and let us be reprov'd (by each other)!
 --says YHWH--
 if your missings-of-the-mark / sins will be like the scarlets,
 they will become white like (the) snow!
 If they will be made red like the scarlet-worm,
 they will become like the (white) wool!

Here, in **Isaiah 4:2-6**, Isaiah envisions just such a thing as both having happened (using the past tense) and as a future happening (using the future tense). But whereas the human responsibility for the cleansing ("self-cleansing") is prominent in **Isaiah 1:16-18**, here in **Isaiah 4:2-6** the Lord's work through the Spirit / spirit in cleansing is foremost—the Spirit / spirit of judging and burning. If Isaiah means the human spirit that in penitence enters into the type of self-cleansing envisioned in **Isaiah 1:16-18**, then we should understand him to mean the Lord's doing through human response to His commands and invitation. And, we add, this is not something limited to the future, but rather something that has already been entered into, at least by Isaiah and his followers, and all who have responded to Isaiah's preaching—an "incipient new Zion," that awaits a future, Divine fulfillment!

¹⁷We show in our translation that the Hebrew noun רִיחַ is ambiguous, capable of being understood as referring to the Divine Spirit, or to the human spirit, or even to the wind.

We appreciate Oswald's statement that "It is not possible to be dogmatic of the interpretation of 'spirit' in the phrase *a spirit of judgment and a spirit of burning*. Many commentators understand it to refer to the Spirit of Yahweh. Thus Calvin, arguing that the Spirit is known by what He does, suggests that the sense is of judgment and burning done by the Spirit. But others believe that a figurative use of 'wind' is intended.

(continued...)

¹⁷(...continued)

Here the allusion would be to the hot searing wind off the desert...or to the storm wind accompanying a Theophany...But it may be that neither of these is correct...[and that the intended meaning is] ‘through the process of burning and judgment.’” (P. 148)

Gray states that this language points to “that unseen power, the Spirit of Yahweh, which at other times is creative or life-giving (**Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:20**), will come into play, executing judgment on those who have filled Jerusalem with blood, and exterminating all evil-doers.” (P. 80)

Compare **Isaiah 1:27-28**,

- 27 Zion with justice will be ransomed,
and her returnees with righteousness;
28 and (the) crushing of rebels and sinners together,
and those forsaking YHWH will come to an end!

Amos 9:10,

They will die by the sword,
all those who have sinned among My people—
who are saying,
the evil will not draw near, or come upon us!

Deuteronomy 13:6^{Heb} / **5**^{Eng}

And that prophet, or that dreamer of the dream, shall be put to death;
because he spoke apostasy concerning YHWH your God,
the One bringing you forth from Egypt-land,
and the One ransoming you from a house of slaves,
(intending) to thrust you out from the road / way
which YHWH your God commanded you, to walk in it!
And you shall burn out the evil from your midst!

Matthew 3:11-12, where John the Immerser is quoted as saying concerning Jesus:

- 11 I indeed am immersing you people in water for repentance;
but then the one coming after me is stronger than me,
Whose sandals I am not qualified to unfasten.
He / that one will immerse you people in set-apart Spirit and in fire.
12 Whose winnowing-fork / shovel (is) in his hand,
and he will clean out his threshing-floor;
and he will gather his grain into the storehouse / barn,
but then the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

(continued...)

¹⁷(...continued)

We think it becomes clear that John the Immerser misunderstood Jesus' mission. What many people in John's day would have described as "chaff" were the very ones Jesus went to, with cleansing, healing, acceptance and forgiveness. Instead of burning them up, He forgave them and welcomed them. What do you think? Perhaps John's statement is correct, if he means the hypocritical Pharisees and Scribes—but Jesus reached out to them as well.

Watts comments on **verse 4** that "The basis for calling Jerusalem's new people קְדוֹשׁ 'holy' [our 'set-apart'] is expanded here. The necessary purge envisioned in **chapters 1** and **3** shall have already taken place. The idea of being a 'holy nation' was a part of Israel's heritage...Now it could finally become reality. It was a quality necessary for living in close proximity to the Divine Presence in Zion." (P. 50) See:

Exodus 19:6,

And you (plural) will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a set-apart nation.
 These (are) the words which you (singular, Moses) shall speak to Israel's children!

¹⁸Watts comments on **verses 5-6** that "The passage [4:2-6] closes with the pictures of Divine protection over the city: *cloud* and *fire* which will be both a *canopy* and a *booth* to protect from heat and storm."

He explains the entire passage, **4:2-6**, stating that it is "parallel to **2:2-4**," and "completes the cycle of speeches by a view of God's goal for Mt. Zion. It speaks of the future of Israel in plant-language, but of Zion in remnant-language. The remnant shall have been purged (compare **1:25**) of the sins pictured in **chapters 1** and **3** and may therefore be termed קְדוֹשׁ 'holy.' Zion's population will be fit for God's presence in the city.

"The pictures of cloud and fire over Jerusalem are reminiscent of the priestly narrative of the presence accompanying the desert pilgrimage toward the promised land...The undisturbed enjoyment of God's presence is reserved for the purged remnant. God's purpose points the fifth-century Jews to potential fulfillment in their own time, if and when the basic requirements of purge from false pride and the establishment of justice are fulfilled on their part...The passage builds on the assurance in **2:2-4** of God's purpose to dwell in Zion and judge the nations from His throne there. The role of His people in the city, be it only a remnant, is secure. This passage stresses God's action to ensure the safety and permanence of the city and its people." (P. 51) See:

Exodus 13:21-22,

(continued...)

וְעַל-מִקְרָאָהּ

עֲנֵן יוֹמָם

וְעֹשֶׁן יְנֵה אֵשׁ לְהַבִּיה לַיְלִיָּה

¹⁸(...continued)

- 21 And YHWH (was) going before them,
by day in a pillar of cloud, to guide them (in) the way;
and by night in a pillar of fire, to give light to them,
to walk / go by day and by night.
- 22 A pillar of the cloud did not depart by day,
and a pillar of the fire by night,
before the people. **Psalm 105:39**, similar.

We say, Isaiah (or his fifth century disciple if Watts is correct) is depicting a “new exodus”—one that has already begun with those who have accepted Isaiah’s teaching, with YHWH’s commands and invitation, and who have been totally cleansed.

Motyer comments on **verse 5** that “Awaiting the new people of **verses 3-4** there is the new-created Zion of **verses 5-6**...In this new creation there is Divine indwelling as Mount Zion and (literally) ‘its assemblies’...are marked as the Lord’s dwelling-place by the Divine standard flying there, a cloud...by day and a...flaming fire by night.” (P. 66)

Yes, but there is already prepared for the new Zion a ‘remnant,’ which we take to mean those who have already responded to YHWH’s commands and invitation with the promise of total cleansing.

Alexander, from his Christian standpoint, comments that “The church is not only to be purified by God’s judgments, and in that state of glory kept secure by His protection. The presence of God is here denoted by the ancient symbol of a fiery cloud, and is promised to the church in its whole extent and to its several assemblies, as distinguished from the one indivisible congregation, and its one exclusive place of meeting, under the old economy.” (P. 124)

Alexander is assuming that the noun מִקְרָאָהּ, “her assemblies,” means assemblies in different places (“in the ‘new economy’”); but it is much more likely that Isaiah means the many different assemblies which will occur in the one place, the “New Zion.”

He notes that “More than forty manuscripts and nearly fifty editions [of the **Hebrew Bible**] spell the noun מִקְרָאִיהָ [making it definite that the noun is plural], and almost all interpreters explain it as a plural.” (P. 125)

כִּי עַל-כָּל-כְּבוֹד

חֲפָה:

And YHWH will create¹⁹ over all Mountain Zion's established place,
and over her called assembly--²⁰
a cloud by day, and smoke and brightness of fire's flame by night--
because over all glory, a covering.²¹

¹⁹Where our Hebrew text reads the phrase **וַיִּבְרָא יְהוָה**, “and YHWH will create,” **Rahlf**s has the phrase “and He will come, and it will be.”

According to the Hebrew text, YHWH's creation did not end with His creation of the world as described in **Genesis 1-3**. He is still creating in the midst of human sinfulness and destructive judgments. The phrase **וַיִּבְרָא יְהוָה** is unambiguous—“And YHWH will create.”

²⁰Oswalt notes that “Commentators disagree over whether **מִקְרָאָה** designates ‘those who assemble’ or ‘places of assembly.’ The former is the most common meaning and there is no reason to deviate from it here.” (P. 144)

At any rate, Isaiah envisions the newly created Zion as being composed, not of lone-wolf individuals, but of those who unite with others in gatherings—whether for teaching, or for worship, or service.

²¹Oswalt notes that “The final phrase, ‘over all the glory will be a canopy,’ becomes less difficult to understand if it is seen to be a direct allusion to **Exodus 40:34**.” (P. 144)

34 And the cloud covered (the) tent of meeting,
and YHWH's glory filled the movable sanctuary.

He comments that in **verses 5-6** “Several images would be invoked in the hearers' minds by the allusions to the pillar of cloud and fire contained in these verses. First, they would help to establish a sense of continuity with the past and let the hearers know that the searing words recorded in **2:6-4:1** did not mean that God would abandon His ancient covenant...

“Second, they would reaffirm that God's ultimate intention was to share His presence...

(continued...)

²¹(...continued)

“Third, the cloud would speak to them of God’s care for them expressed through the protection and guidance afforded by the pillar.” (Pp. 148-49)

See **Numbers 9:15-17**,

- 15 And on (the) day of setting up the moveable sanctuary,
the cloud covered the moveable sanctuary
for a tent of the testimony;
and in the evening, it would be over the movable sanctuary,
like an appearance of fire, until the morning.
- 16 So it would be constantly--
the cloud would cover it,
and an appearance of fire by night.
- 17 And whenever / according to the cloud’s rising up from over the tent,
and afterwards Israel’s children would pull out.
And in a place where the cloud would dwell there,
there Israel’s children would encamp.

“The canopy of cloud and fire, so terrifying to God’s enemies, will be a source of comfort to the remnant. The same fire which purged them is now their protection and hope. In language reminiscent of **Psalms 91**, the author asserts that neither blinding sunlight nor driving rain can hurt God’s people...Thus the author is saying that there is nothing in the created universe which can harm those who belong to God.” (Pp. 148-49)

Motyer takes a different view, stating that “*Canopy* (כַּפֵּי) always denotes the ‘marriage chamber’...The glory here is either the Messiah...lovingly joined to his bride-people or the whole glorious Zion with its holy people...joined in the consummation of love with the Lord under the overshadowing tokens of His presence.” (P. 66)

The noun כַּפֵּי, “canopy,” occurs four times in the **Hebrew Bible**, at:

Isaiah 4:5 (here),

And YHWH will create over all Mountain Zion’s established place,
and over her called assemblies--
a cloud by day, and smoke and brightness of fire’s flame by night--
because over all glory, a covering. **Rahfs** has “it will be covered.”

Joel 2:16b,

Let a bridegroom go forth from his chamber,
and a bride from her bridal-chamber.

(continued...)

4:6 וְסִכָּה תְהִיָּה לְצִלְיֹמָם מִחֶרֶב

וְלִמְחֶסֶה וְלִמְסֻתוֹר מִזֶּרֶם וּמִמָּטָר:

And a booth²² will be for shade by day from (the) heat;

and for a refuge and a place of shelter from downpour and from rain.²³

²¹(...continued)

(It is what the bride leaves to go and be joined to her husband. **Rahfs** has “from the chamber of hers.”)

Psalm 19:6,

And it (the sun) (is) like a bridegroom, going forth from his chamber—
he will rejoice / exult like a mighty man to run a course.

(**Rahfs** has “from the chamber of his.”)

1 Chronicles 24:13, where it is the name of a male individual.

Motyer may be right, but the noun may only mean “covering,” referring to the protecting / guiding cloud and fire, with no marriage symbolism intended. See the next verse, where no marriage symbolism is involved, and where the synonym סִכָּה, “thicket / booth” occurs.

²²Slotki comments that the noun סִכָּה, translated in his **Bible** by “pavilion,” is “a noun applied to the festive booth in which Israelites were commanded to dwell during the Feast of Tabernacles.” (P. 21)

We take Isaiah’s language here to be meant symbolically of Divine protection in the midst of coming Divine judgments.

²³Motyer comments on **verse 6** that “Another feature of the new creation is accessible shelter. Throughout the passage Isaiah has used exodus imagery. Then the Lord camped among His people but was not directly available to them (**Exodus 29:42-46; 40:34-35**); His glory was too overwhelming. But now, in the full reality of the glory (**verses 2, 5**) there is open access into shelter. The very ordinariness of the needs enhances the idea of free access. The opposites (dry) heat and rain embrace every circumstance of life; storm (‘inundation’) and rain point to the extraordinary and the ordinary needs for shelter. For all needs alike there is shelter with the Lord.” (P. 66)

But is this the case? Was there no “open access” to the shelter of YHWH’s overshadowing cloud and fire during the exodus? The passage from **Exodus 29** assures the Israelites during the exodus of YHWH’s meeting with His people, and

(continued...)

²³(...continued)

dwelling among them, not at all implying that was not “directly available to them.” That the people availed themselves of Moses and the Levitical priests does not imply that they had no access into shelter.

Alexander comments that “The promise of refuge and protection is repeated or continued under the figure of a shelter from heat and rain, natural emblems for distress and danger.” (P. 125)

1. **Occurrences of the Noun צֶמַח, “Branch” or “Sprout” in the Hebrew Bible**

Isaiah 4:2,

On that day
YHWH’s branch / sprout
will be for beauty and for glory;
and the land’s fruit,
for exaltation and for beauty (synonym)
for Israel’s escaped ones.

Jeremiah 23:5-6,

- 5 Look—Days are coming—a saying of YHWH—
and I will raise up for David a rightly-related branch / sprout;
and a king will reign,
and he will prosper / deal wisely,
and he will do justice and right-relationship in the land!
(Here a future Davidic king is identified as a “rightly-related branch / sprout.”)
- 6 In his days, Judah will be saved / delivered,
and Israel will dwell securely.
And this is his name which He will call him:
YHWH (is) Our Righteousness! **Jeremiah 33:15-16** (closely similar)
(The rightly-related branch / sprout’s name is “YHWH (is) Our Right-relationship,”
apparently a play on the royal name “Zedekiah.”)

Ezekiel 16:7, in the allegory of YHWH’s daughter / bride / prostitute wife, Jerusalem,
He says:

And I gave you ten thousand (gifts),
like a sprout / branch of the field;
and you grew, and became tall,
and you came into ornaments of ornaments--
breasts became firm,
and (pubic?) hair grew abundantly--
and you (were) naked and bare.
(Here the noun “branch / sprout” is used in a simile, without reference to
someone’s name.)

Hosea 8:7,

Because they will sow (the) wind,
and they will reap a storm-wind!
Standing grain—it has no growth / sprout / branch,
it will not make flour;
Perhaps it will make--
foreigners will swallow it down!
(Here again the noun is used in a literal sense of the sprout / branch of a plant.)

Zechariah 3:8, where YHWH speaks to Joshua the high priest:

Listen now, Joshua the priest, the great one--
You and your friends who are sitting before you,
because they (are) men of a sign
because look at Me--
bringing My servant Branch / Sprout!
(Here, YHWH's coming servant's name is given--"Branch / Sprout.")

Zechariah 6:12-13, Zechariah is told to speak to Joshua the high priest:

- 12 And you shall speak to him, saying,
In this way YHWH of Armies spoke, saying,
Look--a man--Branch / Sprout (is) his name;
and under him it (the Jewish community?) will sprout / branch out,
and he will build YHWH's temple.
- 13 And he will build YHWH's temple,
and he will bear splendor,
and he will sit, and will reign upon his throne;
and (the) counsel of peace will be between (the) two of them.
(In Judah's future, YHWH's servant "Branch / Sprout" will be instrumental in building the temple, and will reign over Israel alongside the high priest, peacefully. This is indeed a "Messianic" text--but in its historical setting, refers to the hopes of the returnees from Babylonian captivity for a Davidic monarch who would be more than simply a Persian governor as was Zerubbabel. Such a hope was not fulfilled in nationalist Israel, but was constantly pushed out further into the future. Christianity saw this hope fulfilled in Jesus, the descendant of David, who acts as both a royal and priestly Messiah, and is the embodiment of YHWH's righteousness and salvation.)

2. Daniel's Prayer of Confession in the Midst of Exile, Daniel 9:4-19

4 וַאֲתַפְּלִלָּה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי

וַאֲתוֹדֶה

וְאָמַרְהָ אֲנֵא אֲדֹנָי

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא

שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד לְאֹהֲבָיו

וְלִשְׁמֵרֵי מִצְוֹתָיו:

And I prayed to the YHWH, my God,

and I confessed;

and I was saying, Ah now,

the El / God the great One and the fearsome One,

Who keeps the covenant and the steadfast love for the ones loving Him,

and for those keeping His commandments--

5 חַטָּאנוּ וְעִוְינוּ

(וְהִרְשַׁעְנוּ) [הִרְשַׁעְנוּ] וּמְרִדְנוּ

וְסוֹר מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ:

We missed-the-mark, and we did wrong;

we were wicked, and we rebelled;

and turning away from Your commandments and from Your judicial decisions!

6 וְלֹא שָׁמַעְנוּ אֶל-עֲבָדֶיךָ הַנְּבִיאִים

אֲשֶׁר דִּבְרוּ בְּשִׁמְךָ

אֶל-מַלְכֵינוּ שְׂרֵינֹו וְאֲבֹתֵינוּ

וְאֵל כָּל-עַם הָאָרֶץ:

And we did not listen to Your servants the spokespersons / prophets,

who spoke in Your name
to our kings, our princes / officials and our fathers,
and to every people of the land.

7 לַיְהוָה אֲדֹנָי הַצְדָּקָה

וְלָנוּ בִשְׁתַּת הַפָּנִים

כִּי־זֶה הַיּוֹם

לְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה וְלִישׁוּבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם וְלְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל

הַקְּרֹבִים וְהַרְחֻקִים בְּכָל־הָאָרְצוֹת

אֲשֶׁר הִדְחַתְתֶּם שֵׁם

בְּמַעַלְמֵי אֲשֶׁר מַעַלְוֵי־בְדִי:

To You, my Lord, belongs the right-relationship,

and to us, shame of face,

like (it is) this day--

for (every) man of Judah, and for inhabitants of Jerusalem, and for all

Israel--

those near and those far away,

in all the lands where You banished them

for their faithless acts with which they acted faithlessly against You.

8 יְהוָה לָנוּ בִשְׁתַּת הַפָּנִים

לְמַלְכֵינוּ לְשָׂרֵינוּ וְלְאֲבֹתֵינוּ

אֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ לָךְ:

YHWH, shame of face belongs to us,

to our kings, to our princes / officials, and to our fathers,

who missed-the-mark / sinned against You.

9 לְאֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַרְחֵמִים וְהַסְּלִיחוּת

כִּי מִרְדָּנוּ בּוֹ:

The compassions and the forgivenesses belong to the Lord of mine, our God—
because we rebelled against Him.

10 וְלֹא שָׁמַעְנוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

לֵלֶכֶת בְּתוֹרָתוֹ

אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְפָנֵינוּ

בְּיַד עֲבָדָיו הַנְּבִיאִים:

And we did not listen to YHWH our God's voice,
to walk by His teachings,
which He gave before us,
by (the) hand of His servants the spokespersons / prophets.

11 וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל עִבְרוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתְךָ

וְסוֹר לְבַלְתִּי שְׁמוּעַ בְּקִלְךָ

וַתִּתֶּךָ עָלֵינוּ הָאֵלֶּה וְהַשְּׁבָעָה

אֲשֶׁר כְּתוּבָה בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עֲבַד־הָאֱלֹהִים

כִּי חָטְאנוּ לּוֹ:

And all Israel passed over Your teaching,
and turned aside so as to not listen to Your voice;
and the curse and the sworn oath was poured out upon us
which is written in Moses, the servant of God's teaching / law—
because we sinned against Him.

12 וַיִּקַּם אֶת־[דְּבָרָיו] (דְּבָרָיו)

אֲשֶׁר־דָּבַר עָלֵינוּ וְעַל שְׁפָטֵינוּ אֲשֶׁר שְׁפָטוּנוּ

לְהַבִּיא עָלֵינוּ רָעָה גְדֹלָה

אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נַעֲשִׂתָהּ תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם

כַּאֲשֶׁר נַעֲשִׂתָהּ בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

And He caused his word to stand
which he spoke against us,
and against our judges who judged us--
to bring upon us great evil,
which was not done beneath all the heavens,
just as was done in Jerusalem.

13 כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה

אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת בָּאָה עָלֵינוּ

וְלֹא־חָלֵינוּ אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

לְשׁוּב מִעֲוֹנוֹנוּ וְלְהַשְׁכִּיל בְּאֱמֻנָתְךָ:

Just as it has been written in Moses' teaching / law,
all this evil came against us,
and we did not entreat YHWH our God's face,
to turn from our our iniquities,
and to be made wise by your true faithfulness.

14 וַיִּשְׁקֹד יְהוָה עַל־הָרָעָה

וַיָּבִיאהָ עָלֵינוּ

כִּי־צַדִּיק יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

עַל־כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה

וְלֹא שָׁמַעְנוּ בְּקִלּוֹ:

And YHWH watched over the evil,
and He brought it against us;
because YHWH our God (is) rightly-related,
in all his deeds which He did—

and we did not listen to His voice.

15 וַעֲתָהּ | אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתָ אֶת-עַמְּךָ
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה
וַתַּעַשׂ-לְךָ שֵׁם כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה
חַטָּאנוּ רָשַׁענוּ:

And now, my Lord, our God,

Who brought Your people

out from Egypt-land with a mighty hand,

and You made for Yourself a name, like (it is) this day--

We sinned; we did evil.

16 אֲדֹנָי כָּכָל-צְדָקֹתֶיךָ
יֹשֵׁב-נָא אַפְּךָ וְחַמָּתֶיךָ
מֵעִירֶיךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם הַר-קֹדֶשׁ
כִּי בַחַטָּאֵינוּ וּבַעֲוֹנוֹת אֲבֹתֵינוּ
יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעַמְּךָ לְחַרְפָּה לְכֹל-סְבִיבֵיתֵינוּ:

My Lord, according to all Your right-relationship,

turn now Your anger and Your rage

from Your city Jerusalem, Mountain of Your set-apartness;

because by our sins and by our fathers' iniquities,

Jerusalem and Your people (are) for reproach to all surrounding us.

17 וַעֲתָהּ | שָׁמַע אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶל-תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּךָ
וְאֶל-תַּחֲנוּנָיו
וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ עַל-מִקְדָּשְׁךָ הַשָּׁמַיִם

לְמַעַן אֲדַנִּי:

And now, listen our God to Your servant's prayer
and to his pleas for mercy!

18 הַטָּה אֱלֹהֵי אֲזַנְךָ וּשְׁמָעֵ

(פְּקָחָהּ) [פְּקָחָהּ] עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה שְׁמֹמֹתֵינוּ

וְהָעִיר אֲשֶׁר־נִקְרָא שְׁמֶךָ עָלֶיהָ

כִּי לֹא עַל־צַדִּיקֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מִפִּילִים תַּחֲנוּנֵינוּ לִפְנֶיךָ

כִּי עַל־רַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים:

Incline, my God, Your ear, and hear;

open Your eyes, and see our desolations,
and the City which called Your name upon itself;
because not over our right-relationships (are) we laying down our
supplications for favor before You,
but because of Your many compassions.

19 אֲדַנִּי שְׁמָעָה

אֲדַנִּי סְלַחָה

אֲדַנִּי הַקְשִׁיבָה

וַעֲשֵׂה

אֶל־תֵּאָחֵר לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהֵי

כִּי־שְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא עַל־עִירְךָ

וְעַל־עַמְּךָ:

My Lord, Hear!

My Lord, Forgive!

My Lord, Give attention!

And Act!

Do not delay for Your sake, my God!

Because Your name is called over Your City,
and over Your people!