

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 11

This chapter is a prophecy of the Messiah, and gives an account of his descent, as man; of his qualifications for his office, as a Judge and King; of his performance of it; of the peaceableness of his kingdom; of the spread of it among the Gentiles, by the preaching of the Gospel; and of the last and general conversion of the Jews. His original and descent from David the son of Jesse, under the titles of a rod and branch, is described as mean and obscure, expressed by stem and roots, (^{2310E}Isaiah 11:1) his gifts and qualifications for his work, in general and particular, (^{2310D}Isaiah 11:2) the performance of it, both with respect to good men and bad men, in the fear of the Lord, with all equity, righteousness, and readiness, (^{2310B}Isaiah 11:3-5) the peaceableness of his kingdom is figuratively expressed, by the agreement of savage and tame creatures, the former becoming the latter, and so losing their malignant and hurtful nature, through the efficacy of the Gospel, spreading the knowledge of Christ all over the world, (^{2310A}Isaiah 11:6-9) particularly among the Gentiles, comparable to those savage creatures, who, upon the exhibition of Christ in the Gospel; should seek to him, and find rest in him, (²³¹⁰Isaiah 11:10) which will be followed or accompanied with a collection of the Jews out of all lands, and the conversion of them, which will be brought about by the power and grace of God, all impediments being by him removed out of the way; the consequences of which will be, peace among themselves, and obedience among the Gentiles, (^{2311B}Isaiah 11:11-16).

Ver. 1. *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, &c.]* By which is meant, not Hezekiah, as R. Moses^{f208} the priest, and others, since he was now born, and must be at least ten or twelve years of age; but the Messiah, as both the text and context show, and as is owned by many Jewish writers^{f209}, ancient and modern: and he is called a “rod”, either because of his unpromising appearance, arising “out of the stem of Jesse”; from him, in the line of David, when that family was like a tree cut down, and its stump only left in the ground, which was the case when Jesus was born of it: Jesse’s family was at first but a mean and obscure one; it became

very illustrious in David's time, and in some following reigns; from the Babylonish captivity, till the time of Christ, it was very low; and at the birth of Christ was low indeed, his supposed father being a carpenter, and his real mother Mary a poor virgin, dwelling at Nazareth; and it seemed very unlikely, under these circumstances, that he should be the King Messiah, and be so great as was foretold he should; and have that power, authority, and wisdom he had; and do such mighty works as he did; and especially be the author of eternal salvation; and bring forth such fruits, and be the cause of such blessings of grace, as he was: or else because of his kingly power and majesty, the rod or branch being put for a sceptre, and so a symbol of that; to which the Targum agrees, paraphrasing the words thus,

“and a King shall come forth from the sons of Jesse:”

and the sense is, that though Jesse's or David's family should be brought so very low as to be as the stem or stump of a tree, without a body, branches, leaves, and fruit; yet from thence should arise a mighty King, even the King Messiah, who is spoken of by so many august names and titles, (²³⁰⁶Isaiah 9:6) and this is observed for the comfort of the people of Israel, when distressed by the Assyrians, as in the preceding chapter (²³⁰⁸Isaiah 10:1-34); when those high ones, comparable to the loftiest cedars in Lebanon, and to the tallest trees in the forest, should be hewn down, a rod should come out of Jesse's stem, which should rise higher, and spread more than ever they did:

and a branch shall grow out of his roots; the roots of Jesse, out of his family, compared to the stump of a tree; meaning either his ancestors, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Boaz, and Obed; or his posterity, as David, Joseph, and Mary; and so the Targum,

“and the Messiah shall be anointed (or exalted) from his children's children.”

The branch is a well known name of the Messiah; (see Gill on “²³⁰⁹Isaiah 4:2”) the word Netzer, here used, is the name of the city of Nazareth^{f210}; which perhaps was so called, from the trees, plants, and grass, which grew here; and so our Lord's dwelling here fulfilled a prophecy, that he should be called a Nazarene; or an inhabitant of Netzer, (⁴⁰²³Matthew 2:23). The Jews^{f211} speak of one Ben Netzer, who they say was a robber, took cities, and reigned over them, and became the head of robbers; and make^{f212} him to be the little horn in (²³⁰⁸Daniel 7:8) and wickedly and maliciously say^{f213}

he was Jesus; and yet, under all this wickedness, they tacitly own that Jesus of Nazareth is the Netzer this prophecy speaks of; the design of which is to show the meanness of Christ's descent as man, and that he should be as a root out of a dry ground, (~~251D~~ Isaiah 53:2) or rather as a rod and branch out of a dry root.

Ver. 2. *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,* &c.] The rod and branch, the King Messiah, so qualifying him for his office, and the discharge of it. This shows that Christ's kingdom is of a spiritual nature, and administered in a spiritual manner, for which he was abundantly furnished by the "Spirit of the Lord" resting on him; by whom is meant the third Person in the Trinity, so called, not because created by him, for not any created spirit is meant, but because he proceeded from him; he is the one Jehovah with him, a divine Person, truly God, yet distinct both from the Father and the Son; so that here is a clear proof of the trinity of Persons. Christ was filled with the Spirit from the womb, and he descended and rested upon him at his baptism; he was anointed with him to be Prophet, Priest, and King, and received his gifts and graces from him without measure, which abide with him, and are designed in the following words:

the spirit of wisdom and understanding; which appeared in his disputation with the doctors; in his answers to the ensnaring questions of the Scribes and Pharisees; in the whole of his ministry; and in his conduct at his apprehension, trial, condemnation, and death; as also in the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding he imparted to his disciples, and does more or less to all his people:

the spirit of counsel and might; of "counsel", which fitted him to be the wonderful Counsellor, and qualified him to give suitable and proper advice to the sons of men; and of "might" or "power", to preach the Gospel with authority; do miracles in the confirmation of it; bear the sins of his people, and the punishment due to them; obtain eternal redemption for them; and engage with all their enemies and conquer them:

the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; and so as man had the "knowledge" of God the Father; of his mind and will; of the Scriptures, and things contained therein; of the law and Gospel; all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were hid in him, which he communicates to his saints; and "of the fear of the Lord", and so had a reverence of him, a strict regard to his will, and always did the things which pleased him; (see ~~381D~~ Hebrews 5:7)

this verse is also applied to the Messiah, both by ancient and modern Jews^{f214}.

Ver. 3. *And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, &c.]* Or “cause him to smell the fear of the Lord”^{f215}; that is, to discern in whom it was: this is one effect of the Spirit’s resting upon him, and particularly as the spirit of understanding, and of the fear of the Lord, whereby he has a quick and sharp discerning of it; not merely of the grace of fear, so as to know what that is, and what the exercise of it; or so as to make it the rule of his actions, though all this is true; but so as to discern where and in whom it was, and was not; he could distinguish between him that feared God and him that feared him not; he knew Nathanael to be an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile, (^{<B147>}John 1:47) and the Scribes and Pharisees to be hypocrites, (^{<B218>}Matthew 22:18). As the Jews^{f216} understand this passage of the Messiah, and of his quick smell, as the word used signifies, or of his discerning of good and bad men, they make this to be a rule of judging the Messiah by; and accordingly made use of it with one that set up himself for the Messiah, and took the name of Barcochab, the son of a star, referring to (^{<B347>}Numbers 24:17) and tried him whether he could discern a good man from a bad man; and because he could not, they rejected him as a false Messiah, and called him Barcoziba, the son of a lie^{f217}: compare with this (^{<B173>}Luke 7:39) where it may be seen the same notion obtained among the Jews in Christ’s time:

and, he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes; or according to the outward appearance, the external guise of sanctity and religion men might put on; as the Scribes and Pharisees were outwardly righteous before men, but not to Christ, who knew their hearts; they seemed to be somewhat to others, but nothing to him, because he judged not by appearances to the eyes:

neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; he needed no testimony of men, for he knew what was in men; nor did he regard the words of men, the boastings of a Pharisee, any more than his outward actions; nor would he reprove or condemn, nor will he, upon a human testimony.

Ver. 4. *But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, &c.]* The poor sinner, that is sensible of his spiritual poverty, and comes and acknowledges his sins and transgressions, and prays for pardoning grace and mercy, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness; such Christ justifies with his own righteousness, acquits and discharges them from all sin and

condemnation, as also protects and defends them against all their enemies and oppressors:

and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; that is, shall take the part of the meek, the lowly, and the humble, who are under a sense of their sins and unworthiness, apply to him for grace, righteousness, pardon, and eternal life; and for their sakes reprove wicked men that would distress and crush them; and in a just and equitable manner, in a way of righteous retaliation, render tribulation to them that trouble them:

and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth: that is, either he shall smite the consciences of earthly and unregenerate men, by the ministration of his word, the rod of his strength, so that they shall be convinced of sin, and humbled for it, and be brought to repentance towards God, and faith in himself; or he shall smite the nations of the earth, the antichristian states, and destroy them, (^{<6915>}Revelation 19:15,21)

and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked; either by the words of his mouth, as before; (see ^{<2005>}Hosea 6:5) so that they become dead men in their own apprehensions, have no hope of life and salvation by their own works, see themselves dead in law, and liable to eternal death and damnation; or this is to be understood of the destruction of the wicked at the last day, by a sentence of condemnation pronounced upon them by Christ; and particularly of antichrist, the wicked and lawless one, the man of sin and son of perdition, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming, (^{<5004>}2 Thessalonians 2:4,8) in which place the apostle seems to have respect to this; nor is the Targum foreign from the sense given, which is

“he shall smite the sinners of the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the speech of his lips he shall slay the wicked Armillus.”

Armillus seems to be a name hammered out of Romulus, and designs the Romish antichrist; for elsewhere the Jews expressly say, that Armillus is he whom the nations call antichrist^{f218}; by whom they suppose that Messiah, the son of Joseph shall be slain, and afterwards he himself shall be slain by Messiah the son of David; or it is the same with *ερημολαος*, a destroyer of the people, a name that well agrees with antichrist; (see ^{<6118>}Revelation 11:18). This whole, verse is applied to the Messiah, both by ancient and modern Jews^{f219}.

Ver. 5. *And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, &c.*] He shall be adorned with it, strengthened by it, and ready at all times to perform it; he loved righteousness, and did acts of righteousness throughout the whole course of his life; and, by his active and passive obedience, wrought out an everlasting righteousness for his people; he is a King that reigns in righteousness, righteousness is the sceptre of his kingdom; all his administrations of government are righteous; just and true are all his ways:

and faithfulness the girdle of his reins; he was faithful to God, that appointed him as King and Head of the church; faithful as a Prophet, in declaring his mind and will; and is a faithful High Priest, as well as a merciful one. The Targum, interprets this of righteous and faithful men, thus,

“and the righteous shall be round about him, and they that work (the work) of faith shall draw nigh unto him;”

but it is said of a single person, of the Messiah only, to whom it properly belongs.

Ver. 6. *And the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, &c.*] This, and the three following verses (²³¹⁰⁷Isaiah 11:7-9), describe the peaceableness of the Messiah's kingdom; and which the Targum introduces in this manner,

“in the days of the Messiah of Israel, peace shall be multiplied in the earth.”

The wild and tame creatures shall agree together, and the former shall become the latter; which is not to be understood literally of the savage creatures, as if they should lose their nature, and be restored, as it is said, to their paradisiacal estate, which is supposed to be the time of the restitution of all things; but figuratively of men, comparable to wild creatures, who through the power of divine grace, accompanying the word preached, shall become tame, mild, meek, and humble; such who have been as ravenous wolves, have worried Christ's sheep, made havoc of them, breathing out slaughter and threatenings against them, as did Saul, through converting grace, become as gentle and harmless as lambs, and take up their residence in Christ's fold, and dwell with, yea, some of them even feed, Christ's lambs and sheep, as the above mentioned person:

and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; such who are like the leopard, for the fierceness of his nature, and the variety of his spots; who can no

more change their hearts and their actions, than that creature can change its nature and its spots; are so wrought upon by the power of divine grace, as to drop their rage against the saints, alter their course of life, and attend on the word and ordinances, lie down beside the shepherds' tents, where the church feeds her kids, or young converts:

and the calf and the young lion and the fating together; either dwell and feed together, or lie down together, or walk together, since it follows:

and a little child shall lead them; become through the grace of God so tractable, that they shall be led, guided, and governed by the ministers of the Gospel, Christ's babes and sucklings, to whom he reveals the great things of his Gospel, and out of whose mouths he ordains praise. Bohlius^{f220} interprets this little child of Christ himself, by whom they should be led and directed, (see ^{<2016>}Isaiah 9:6) and the following passages are referred to the times of the Messiah by the Jewish writers^{f221}; and Maimonides^{f222} in particular observes, that they are not to be understood literally, as if the custom and order of things in the world would cease, or that things would be renewed as at the creation, but in a parabolical and enigmatical sense; and interprets them of the Israelites dwelling safely among the wicked of the nations of the world, comparable to the wild beasts of the field.

(This verse may apply to the future state when all things will be restored to their original state before man fell. By Adam's sin, death and bloodshed were introduced into the creation. (^{<452>}Romans 5:12). In the final state these will be removed and the wild nature of animals become tame. Editor.)

Ver. 7. *And the cow and the bear shall feed*, &c.] That is, together, in one church state, at one table, or in one pasture, upon the wholesome food of the Gospel, the salutary doctrines of Christ; who though before of different dispositions, the one tame and gentle, useful and profitable, dispensing the milk of the divine word, and gracious experience; the other cruel and voracious, barbarous and inhuman, worrying the lambs and sheep of Christ; but now of the same nature, and having no ill will to one another, and being without fear of each other:

their young ones shall lie down together; those like the calf and the young bear, shall lie in the green pastures of Gospel ordinances, and do no injury,

the latter to the former, being of one mind, and agreeing in doctrine and practice:

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; kings shall be nursing fathers to the church, and feed on the same Gospel provisions; and there shall be a great agreement between them who were before comparable to lions for their strength, power, and cruelty, and ministers of the Gospel, who are compared to oxen, for their strength and laboriousness, (~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 9:9,10) “straw” here denotes true doctrine, though elsewhere false, (see ~~402~~ 1 Corinthians 3:12).

Ver. 8. *And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, &c.*] Without fear or danger:

and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’s den; and suffer no damage: the meaning is explained in the next words, and to be understood of regenerate persons, both of new born babes, or just born, and all such who are weaned from their own righteousness, and live by faith on Christ, who shall not be hurt by the poison of false teachers, nor by the force of violent persecutors, now no more,

Ver. 9. *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, &c.*] In the Church, so called, in allusion to the holy hill of Zion; in the latter day, after the destruction of antichrist, there will be no more persecution of the saints; they will be no more injured nor harassed by wicked men, comparable to the above mentioned creatures, either for their cruelty or cunning; the reason follows:

for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea: full of the Gospel, the means of conveying the knowledge of Christ, and of God in Christ, of his person and office, of his grace and righteousness, of peace, pardon, life, and salvation by him. The phrase denotes the abundance and depth of the knowledge of divine things, and the large spread of the Gospel, and the multitude of persons that shall be blessed with it, and a profound knowledge of it; so that there will be none to molest, disturb, and distress the people of God, (see ~~304~~ Habakkuk 2:14) this has had some appearance of accomplishment at several times; as at the first times of the Gospel, when the sound of it, by the apostles, went into all the earth, and diffused the savour of the knowledge of Christ in every place; and in the times of Constantine, when Paganism was abolished, and the whole empire became Christian, persecution ceased, and peace ensued,

as before described; and at the Reformation, when whole nations embraced the Gospel of Christ; but the full accomplishment of it is yet to come, when the angel shall fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to all men, and the earth shall be lightened with his glory; when men shall run to and fro, and knowledge be increased, and all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. This passage is applied to the times of the Messiah by the Jews, ancient and modern^{f223}.

Ver. 10. *And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, &c.]* The Messiah, so called, either with respect to his human nature, who was to spring from Jesse; so the Targum,

“and there shall be at that time a son of the sons of Jesse;”

who, when incarnate, was like a root under ground, hidden to men, as to the glory of his person, and the fulness of his grace, and was mean, abject, and contemptible in their view; or rather with respect to his divine nature, just as he is called “the root and offspring of David”, (~~485~~ Revelation 5:5 22:16) the former as God, the latter as man; and so the phrase may denote his eternity, being before Jesse, or any other man or creature whatever; and his being the Creator and preserver of all, of Jesse, and of all others; and, as Mediator, he is the root from whom Jesse, and all the elect of God, are; they have their being in him; they are rooted and grounded in him; and are bore by him as the branches by the root; and they have their life and nourishment, their fruitfulness, holiness, and perseverance therein from him. This is understood of the Messiah, by ancient and modern Jews^{f224}:

which shall stand for an ensign of the people; in the ministration of the Gospel, for the gathering of the people of God to him, to enlist in his service, and fight under his banner, where they may be sure of victory; an ensign set up, a banner displayed, is for the gathering of soldiers together; it is a sign of preparation for war, and an encouragement to it; and is sometimes done when victory is obtained, (see ~~2385~~ Isaiah 5:26 ~~2419~~ Jeremiah 4:19-21 50:2) and is a direction where soldiers should stand, when they should march, and who they should follow, as well as it serves to distinguish one company from another; and of all this use is the preaching of Christ and his Gospel:

to it shall the Gentiles seek; that is, to Christ, signified by the root of Jesse, and set up for an ensign of the people; being sought out by him in redemption and calling, and being sensible of their need of him, and that

there is something valuable in him, having had a manifestation of him to them; and therefore seek to him, not out of curiosity, nor with worldly views, nor in the last, but in the first place, and chiefly; not hypocritically, but sincerely, and with their whole hearts; not carelessly, but diligently and constantly; not partially, but for everything they want; principally for the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, for eternal glory and happiness, and for a justifying righteousness, as the title to it: or to him shall they “betake themselves”^{f225}, (see ^{<6115>}Deuteronomy 12:5) as to an ensign, standard bearer, captain-general, leader and commander of the people; or as to a stronghold, for protection from enemies; or as to a city of refuge, to secure from avenging justice and wrath to come; and, under a sense of danger and ruin, to one that is able to save; and for help to one that is mighty; or him “shall” they “consult”^{f226}; or seek to him for advice and counsel, (see ^{<2189>}Isaiah 8:19) who is a most proper person to be consulted on all occasions, he being the wonderful Counsellor, (^{<2306>}Isaiah 9:6). This is a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and which had its accomplishment, in part, in the first times of the Gospel, and will be completely fulfilled in the last days:

and his rest shall be glorious; either that which Christ gives to those that seek unto him, and which is both a spiritual rest here, from the burden and guilt of sin, and the tyrannical power of it; from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law; from a sense of divine wrath; and a rest in afflictions, though not from them; and an eternal rest hereafter, a “rest in glory”^{f227}; as the words may be rendered here; it will be a glorious one, the bodies of the saints at death rest in the grave, and their souls in the arms of Jesus; and after the resurrection, body and soul will rest together from sin and Satan, from unbelief, doubts, and fears, and from all enemies; or else this rest is what Christ himself enjoys. Some understand it of his death, which, though ignominious in itself, yet glorious in its consequences; a glorious display of the condescension and love of Christ was made in it; and glorious things have been effected by it: others, of his grave, which was an honourable man’s; his grave was made with the rich; though perhaps better of his rest in glory; when he had done his work, and sat down at the right hand of God, he was crowned with glory and honour; or rather it may design his church, which is his rest, (^{<4213>}Psalms 132:13,14) which is glorious, with his righteousness, grace, and presence, and being put in order by him, as an army with banners; and especially it will be, when all the glorious things spoken of it shall be fulfilled.

Ver. 11. *And it shall come to pass in that day,* &c.] Before spoken of, and which includes the whole Gospel dispensation:

[that] the Lord shall set his hand again the second time; which refers to a first, in which the Lord exerted his power in the recovery of his people out of the hands of their enemies; and that was the deliverance of them out of Egypt, and which was typical of the deliverance of the Lord's people in the times of Christ; and it is usual with the Jews^{f228} to call Moses the first redeemer, and the Messiah the latter; wherefore this "second time" refers to the times of the Messiah, and not to the time of the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; for that, as Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi observe, was not a perfect redemption; only Judah and Benjamin returned, not the ten tribes, and so did not answer to the first time, when all Israel came out of Egypt; and much less can it be understood of the return of those, in the times of Hezekiah, carried captive by Tilgathpilneser and Shalmaneser: or the first and second time may be distinguished thus; the first time may intend the calling of a large number, both of Jews and Gentiles, through the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles; and the second time the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, in the latter day; or the first time may respect the calling of the Gentiles, and the second the gathering in of the Jews: or both may intend later times; the first time, the reformation from Popery; the second time, deliverance from Babylon, or the antichristian yoke, under which all nations will again be brought, before the destruction of the man of sin:

to recover the remnant of his people; or to "obtain", or to "possess"^{f229}; for this is not to be understood of the recovery or redemption of them by the price of Christ's blood, but of the calling and conversion of them, when the Lord claims them, possesses and enjoys them, as his own; and as they are but a remnant whom God has chosen for his people, and Christ has redeemed by his blood, so they are no other that are called; though here they may be called a remnant, or what remains, with respect to those who have been called already:

which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt; Egypt, and other places following, being joined with Assyria, show that this cannot be understood of the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; but designs the several places where Christ would have a people in Gospel times, and who would be found out, and called by grace; some of which already have been, as in Babylon and Egypt, (~~4153~~ 1 Peter 5:13 ~~4420~~ Acts 2:10) and others will be

hereafter, according to the prophecies, (^{<1883>}Psalm 68:31) (^{<1870>}Psalm 87:4 ^{<2398>}Isaiah 19:18-25) and as Assyria and Egypt are now in the hands of the Turks, it may design the call and conversion of many in those parts, when the Turkish empire shall be destroyed; or else the deliverance of God's people from the tyranny of the Romish antichrist, called Egypt and Babylon, at the time of his ruin:

from Pathros; by which some understand Parthia, as Manasseh ben Israel^{f230}, and Calvin thinks it probable; many of this country were converted in the first times of the Gospel; the Apostle John's first epistle is called by the ancients the Epistle to the Parthians, (see ^{<400>}Acts 2:9) and very likely there will be more of them in the latter day: others think Arabia Petraea is intended; it seems to be a part of Egypt last mentioned, as appears from (^{<294>}Ezekiel 29:14) and is mentioned with some cities in Egypt, (^{<240>}Jeremiah 44:1,15) and had its name very likely from Pathrusim, a son of Mizraim, (^{<0104>}Genesis 10:14). Thebais is here meant, the extreme part of Egypt, next to Ethiopia, which is designed by what fellows, according to Sir John Marsham^{f231}, and Bochart^{f232}, and Vitringa after them:

and from Cush; or Ethiopia; from whence some have been called, (see ^{<482>}Acts 8:27) and others will, according to prophecy, (^{<1883>}Psalm 68:31 87:4) and in part of this country now live the Abyssines, who profess Christianity: or rather Arabia, (see ^{<817>}Galatians 1:17). The Targum renders it,

“from India:”

and from Elam; a province in Persia, (^{<208>}Daniel 8:2) the inhabitants of this place are called Elamites, (^{<400>}Acts 2:9) some of these heard the apostles speak the wonderful things of God in their own language, and were converted:

and from Shinar; in Chaldea, in the plain of which the tower of Babel was built, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:10 11:2) wherefore the Targum renders it,

“from Babylon:”

and from Hamath; meaning either Antiochia, as some, or Cilicia, as others. Cocceius says it is a country which lies towards the Mediterranean sea, over against Cyprus, above Mount Libanus, where now is Tripoli:

and from the islands of the sea; or of the west; the European islands, particularly England, Ireland, and Scotland, and others. Aben Ezra refers this prophecy to the times of the Messiah, and so does Manasseh ben Israel.

Ver. 12. *And he shall set up an ensign for the nations*, &c.] For the gathering of them, for the calling of the Gentiles, that is, the Lord would do it; he who before is said to set his hand a second time to recover his people, whether among Jews or Gentiles; this he has done in the ministration of the Gospel, in which Christ is lifted up and held forth as the only Saviour of lost sinners, the sole author and glorious Captain of salvation, for them to flee to, and lay hold on; and this he still does, and will continue to do, until all his people are gathered in from the several parts of the world:

and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel; so those of his people among the ten tribes, that were scattered about in various countries, when the Gospel was preached throughout the world by the apostles, were called by it, and gathered into Gospel churches among the Gentiles, of whom the first churches of Christ consisted; and so it will be in the latter day, when all Israel shall be saved:

and gather together the dispersed of Judah; the Jews, scattered about like lost sheep, among each of the nations of the world; some of which were looked up, and found out, and brought into the sheepfold, in the first times of Christianity; and others will be in the latter day:

even from the four corners of the earth: which shows that this cannot intend the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, which was only from one corner of the earth; The Targum is,

“from the four winds of the earth;”

a phrase the same with that in (~~Gen~~ Revelation 7:1).

Ver. 13. *The envy also of Ephraim shall depart*, &c.] With which it envied Judah, on account of the kingdom of the house of David, and the temple being in that tribe; not that this is the thing intended, only alluded to; the meaning is, that whatever envy or jealousy subsisted in the Gentile against the Jew, or in the Jew against the Gentile, should be no more, when gathered into one Gospel church state; or whatever of this kind has appeared in one Christian church, or denomination among Christians,

against another, shall cease, when the Gospel in its power and purity shall more generally take place, and the earth shall be filled with it:

and the adversaries of Judah, or of God's professing people, *shall be cut off*; and be no more, as the Turks and Papists:

Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim; this is repeated for the confirmation of it; and the sense is, that all animosities, contentions, and discords, shall cease among the people of God, and there shall be entire peace and harmony among them. Jarchi interprets this of the two Messiahs, Messiah ben Joseph, and Messiah ben Judah, the Jews dream of.

Ver. 14. *But they shall flee upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west*, &c.] That is, Ephraim and Judah, who shall not only agree among themselves, but cheerfully join together against the common enemy: "they shall flee with the shoulder", as some render the words; with joint consent, as the phrase is used in (~~380~~Hosea 6:9) (~~380~~Zephaniah 3:9) and so the Targum,

"and they shall be joined together in one shoulder, to smite the Philistines;"

the Septuagint version is, "they shall flee in the ships of strangers"; and so Abarbinel interprets it of the ships of the Philistines, Genoese, and Venetians, that shall bring the Israelites from the west to the east, and carry them in ships by sea. The Philistines were the sworn enemies of the Israelites, and lay to the west of the land of Israel, and when the Gospel was sent into all the world, it began to be preached in the parts of Palestine, whereby many were converted, and embraced it, as foretold they should, (~~380~~Psalm 87:4) and flying upon their shoulders, as it denotes the conquest of them, and their subjection to the Gospel, so the swiftness of the apostles in carrying it to them, when they had a commission to do it, who were all of them Jews, of one tribe or another; and these may also design the enemies of the people of God now, the antichristian states, some of which will fall off from Popery, receive the Gospel, hate the whore, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; which will be brought about by the preaching of the Gospel by its ministers, who will fly in the midst of heaven, and upon the shoulders of the Romish antichrist, and proclaim the fall of Babylon, and call upon, the Lord's people to come out of it, (~~646~~Revelation 14:6-8 17:16 18:4):

they shall spoil them of the east together; the Syrians and Arabians, who lay east of Judea; perhaps the Turks are meant, and the destruction of the Ottoman empire, whereby way will be made for the kings and kingdoms of the east to know, receive, and profess the Gospel of Christ, (^{<6612>}Revelation 16:12)

they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; or “there shall be a sending out of their hand”; that is, they shall stretch out their hand, and lay hold on these people, and bring them into subjection to them; which is to be understood of the sending out of the Gospel, by the hands of the ministers of it, into those countries where the Moabites and Edomites formerly dwelt; and thereby bringing them into subjection to Christ and his churches:

and the children of Ammon shall obey them; that have the rule in the house of God, submitting to the laws and ordinances of Christ.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea,* &c.] Which Kimchi and Abarbinel interpret of the Egyptian river Sichor, or the Nile; others of a bay of the Egyptian sea, so called because in the form of a tongue; the destroying of it designs the drying of it up, so that people might pass over it dry shod; the allusion is to the drying up of the Red Sea, when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and passed through it, as on dry land; and it intends the destruction of Egypt itself, not literally by the Romans, in the times of Augustus Caesar, as Jerom thinks, who interprets the “strong wind”, in the following clause, of them; but figuratively, the destruction of Rome, which is spiritually called Egypt, (^{<6618>}Revelation 11:8) and the utter destruction of it, by an anathema, and with a curse, from the Lord himself; as the word **μῦρj h** here used signifies; and which will take place upon the battle at Armageddon, (^{<6616>}Revelation 16:16,19) which has its name from the word in the text:

and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river; in allusion to Moses’s stretching out his hand over the Red sea, and the Lord’s causing it to go back with a strong east wind, (^{<0242>}Exodus 14:21). Some understand this of the river Nile as before, and that because of what follows; but Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of the river Euphrates, which is commonly understood in Scripture when “the river”, without any explication, is made mention of; and so the Targum,

“and the Lord shall dry up the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and shall lift up the stroke of his strength upon Euphrates, by the word of his prophets;”

and this designs the destruction of the Turks, or the Ottoman empire, which is signified by the drying up of the river Euphrates, (~~662~~ Revelation 16:12) where it is thought by some there is an allusion to the words here:

and shall smite it in the seven streams; which have made some think the river Nile is meant, because that had its seven streams, or gates, as Juvenal calls ^{f233} them, or mouths, by which the sea issued into it; which are called ^{f234} the Canopic or Heracleotic, the Bolbitine or Bolbitic, the Sebennitic, the Phatnitic, the Mendesian, the Tanitic or Saitic, and the Pelusian or Bubastic, from the cities Canopus and Heracleum, Bolbitine, Sebennytus, Phatnus, Mendes, Tanis or Sais, Pelusium, and Bubastus, built on the shore of these entrances; but it may be observed, that the river Euphrates was drained by seven ditches or rivulets by Cyrus, when Babylon was taken, by which means his soldiers entered the city dry shod, to which the allusion may be here; and it may denote the entire destruction of the Turkish empire, in all its branches; for “seven”, as Kimchi observes, may signify a multitude, even the many kingdoms, people, and nations, under that jurisdiction:

and make [men] go over dryshod; or “with shoes”, with them on, there being no need to pluck them off, the river and its streams being dried up; by the “men” are meant the “kings of the east”, of which (see Gill on ~~662~~ Revelation 16:12”) all these phrases denote the removal of all impediments out of the way of God’s people in those parts, in coming over to the Christian religion, and their embracing and professing that.

Ver. 16. *And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, &c.*] That is, through the river; that being dried up, and all hindrances and obstacles being removed, the way will be clear for multitudes to walk in without interruption, like a large common, highway, or causeway; so the Mahometan, Pagan, and Papal kingdoms being destroyed, and with them each of their religions, the way of truth, righteousness, and holiness, will be manifest to the remnant of the Lord’s people; who will be at this time in those parts, in which they will be directed to walk, and will walk, and not err, (see ~~238~~ Isaiah 35:8):

which shall be left from Assyria; the Septuagint and Arabic versions read, “which is left in Egypt”; and designs the remnant, according to the election of grace, that shall be in any of the antichristian countries, either Mahometan or Papal; rather the former seems intended, who shall at this time be brought to the knowledge of Christ, and to walk in his ways:

like as it was to Israel in that day that he came up out of the land of Egypt; that is, as there was a highway made through the Red Sea, in which Israel passed, as on dry land, when they came out of Egypt, and went through the wilderness to Canaan’s land.