

# CHAPTER 32

## INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH 32

This chapter contains a prophecy of the Messiah; for, however applicable it may be to Hezekiah, as a type of Christ, it only has its full accomplishment in him, and in his times; who is described as a righteous King, and as having just princes ruling under him, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:1) and as a very great blessing, protection, and comfort to his subjects, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:2) when follows a prediction of great light and knowledge that should be in his days, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:3,4) and of the vileness, hypocrisy, and covetousness of the Jews in his times, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:5-8) and of the destruction of their country, because of their sins, of which they seemed greatly insensible, and were unconcerned about it, and are therefore called upon to lament it, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:9-14) which should continue until there would be a very great effusion of the Spirit, as should make the world, comparable to a wilderness, fruitful in grace and good works; the consequence of which is great prosperity, peace, and safety, to the saints, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:15-18) and destruction to their enemies, particularly the city of Rome, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:19) and the chapter is concluded with the happiness of the Gospel ministration, and the success of it, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 32:20).

**Ver. 1.** *Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, &c.*] Not Hezekiah, as the Jewish writers; at least only as a type, as some writers interpret it; rather Christ himself, who is “King” not only of the whole world, and of the kings of it in general, but in particular is King of saints; and who “reigns” now in and over his church and people, being set as King by his Father over his holy hill of Zion, and, being exalted at his right hand, is made and declared Lord and Christ; and where he does and will reign until all enemies are put under his feet, and ere long will reign gloriously before his ancients in Jerusalem, (<sup>2310</sup>Isaiah 24:23) and his reign is “in righteousness”; in a righteous manner, according to the rules of justice and equity: all his laws are just; his ways and methods of administration are right; his sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness: righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins:

*and princes shall rule in judgment:* the ministers of the Gospel, pastors of churches, who are set over them in the Lord, and have the rule over them; and who rule well, and in judgment, when they rule according to the word of God; when they preach the Gospel, and administer ordinances, and do all the business of Christ's house, according to the instructions, laws, and rules he has given.

**Ver. 2.** *And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, &c.]* Or, "that man"; the King Messiah before mentioned; who had agreed to become man, was promised and prophesied of as such, had often appeared in a human form, was to be incarnate, and now is; though he is not a mere man; were he, he could not be what is here said of him, "as a hiding place, and covert from the wind and tempest", of his Father's wrath, raised by sin; and which all men are deserving of, and on whom it must fall, unless secured from it by Christ; who has bore it in the room and stead of his people, has turned it away, and delivered them from it, and all the effects of it, so that nothing of it comes upon them; he has endured the whole force of the storm himself; and his righteousness, blood, sacrifice, and intercession, screen his people from it: he also hides and covers them from Satan's temptations, the blast of the terrible ones, which is as a storm against the wall, so as they shall not be destroyed by them; by praying for them, succouring of them, supplying them with his grace, and delivering from them in his own time: likewise he protects them from the rage and fury of their persecuting enemies, when they come like a "whirlwind" to "scatter" them; they have rest in him, when troubled by men; and security by him, when these winds and waves beat upon them; and when they are tossed with the tempests of afflictions of various kinds, he bears them up under them, and carries them through them, and delivers out of them, and brings them at last safe to glory:

*as rivers of water in a dry place;* which are very delightful, refreshing, and fructifying. This denotes the abundance of grace in Christ, and the freeness of it, which flows from the boundless ocean of divine love, and which greatly comforts and refreshes the souls of the Lord's people in this dry and barren land, and makes them cheerful and fruitful, revives their spirits, makes glad their hearts, and causes them to go on their way rejoicing:

*as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land:* to travellers in it, who passing through a desert in hot countries and sultry climates, are glad when they find a rock which casts a shade, under which their can sit a while,

sheltered from the scorching sun. Such a weary land is this world to the saints, who are wearied with sins, their own and others, with Satan's temptations, with afflictions and troubles of various sorts; Christ is the "Rock" that is higher than they, to whom they are directed and led when their hearts are overwhelmed within them; on whom not only their souls are built, and their feet are set, and he is a shelter to them; but he casts a shadow, which is very reviving and refreshing, and that is the shadow of his word and ordinances, under which they sit with delight and pleasure, and which makes their travelling through this wilderness comfortable.

**Ver. 3.** *And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim,* &c.] Not of the seers and prophets, or ministers of the word only, but of the righteous in general, as the Targum; even all such as are illuminated by the Spirit of God, who shall have a clear discerning of Gospel truths, behold with open face, with eyes unveiled, the glory of them, and of Christ in them, and not have their eyes covered, or such a dim obscure knowledge of them as under the law; and not only the watchmen shall see, eye to eye, all truths clearly and distinctly, but even all, from the least to the greatest, shall know the Lord, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of him, as the waters cover the sea. It is a prophecy of the great increase of spiritual light in the times of the Messiah:

*and the ears of them that hear shall hearken:* very diligently and attentively to the word preached, and receive and embrace the doctrines of the Gospel, and submit to, and obey, the ordinances of it.

**Ver. 4.** *The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge,* &c.] Such who have been hasty and precipitant, as the word<sup>f634</sup> signifies; who have not given themselves time to consider what they have read or heard, or has been proposed unto them, and have hastily received every thing that has been suggested to them, especially by carnal sense and reason, shall now sit down, and coolly consider things, and so gain an understanding of divine and spiritual knowledge, of the knowledge of Christ, of his person, offices, grace, righteousness, and salvation; an experimental knowledge and understanding of these things, heart and not head knowledge:

*and the tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak plainly;* or, "shall make haste to speak neatly"<sup>f635</sup>; elegantly and politely; such who hesitated in their speech, and spoke in a blundering manner, and scarcely intelligibly, especially when they spoke of divine and spiritual things, yet now, without the least hesitation, in the freest and most ready manner, with all plainness

and propriety shall talk of these things, to the great delight, satisfaction, and use of those that hear them: this was true of the apostles of Christ, those babes and sucklings, out of whose mouth God ordained praise, and who were most of them Galilaeans, very illiterate and unpolished, and yet these, especially when they had the gift of tongues, spake the great things of God very readily, and in good language; and also is true of other ministers of the word, raised up among the barbarous nations of the world.

**Ver. 5.** *The vile person shall be no more called liberal, &c.]* Or “Nabal” (a fool) “shall no more be called Nadib”<sup>f636</sup> (a prince); or have this name put upon him, or be advanced to honour and dignity, or be flattered with such a title, so unbecoming him. The sense seems to be, that, in Gospel times, such who are fools as to the knowledge of spiritual things, that have no spiritual and experimental knowledge of the truths of the Gospel, but are quite ignorant of them, shall not be made princes, or spiritual rulers, and governors in the house of God;

*nor the churl said [to be] bountiful;* or called a lord, as Jarchi interprets the word; which, he says, is used of such an one, because all men look to him, and respect him<sup>f637</sup>; but now a covetous and tenacious man, that withholds more than is meet, that keeps, all he has to himself, without communicating to others, and scarcely allows himself the necessaries of life, being so sordidly avaricious, such an one shall not be a pastor, or ruler, in the church of God; such were the Scribes and Pharisees among the Jews in Christ’s time, and therefore rejected, (~~4234~~ Matthew 23:14 ~~4264~~ Luke 16:14,15) folly and covetousness are both bad things in a minister of the word, and greatly disqualify a man for that work and office: or else the sense of the whole is, that there should be such a discerning of men in Gospel times, and such faithfulness used towards them, that a wicked man should not be taken for a good man, nor in a flattering way be called one; but the precious and the vile should be distinguished, and called by their right names. The Targum is,

“the wicked man shall be no more called just, and they that transgress his word shall not be called mighty.”

**Ver. 6.** *For the vile person will speak villainy, &c.]* Or, “a fool will utter folly”<sup>f638</sup>; a man that has no understanding of Gospel truths himself can not deliver them to others; he will only speak foolish things, concerning the purity of human nature, the power of man’s free will, the sufficiency of his own righteousness to justify him, and the merits of good works, and the

like; and therefore such a man is a very improper one to be a guide and governor in the church of God:

*and his heart will work iniquity*; forge and devise it within himself; will form schemes of false doctrine, discipline, and worship, disagreeable to the word of God:

*to practise hypocrisy*; to make men believe he is a very devout and religious man, when he has no good thing in him, and to put others upon a profession of religion that have none; which things are commonly done by foolish and ignorant preachers:

*and to utter error against the Lord*; such doctrines as are contrary to the free, rich, sovereign grace of God; to the deity, personality, sonship, offices, blood, sacrifice, and righteousness of Christ, and so to the person and operations of the blessed Spirit:

*to make empty the soul of the hungry; and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail*; the “hungry” and “thirsty” are such as hunger and thirst after, and earnestly desire, the sincere milk of the word for their spiritual nourishment and growth; whose “souls” become “empty”, and their “drink” fails, when the doctrines of grace are not dispensed unto them, but false and unedifying doctrines are delivered, so that their souls sink and faint, and are ready to die away, for want of the bread of the Gospel; agreeably to this sense, the Targum paraphrases the words thus,

“to make the soul of the righteous weary, who desire doctrine, as a hungry man bread; and the words of the law, which are as water to him that is thirsty, they think to cause to cease.”

**Ver. 7.** *The instruments also of the churl [are] evil, &c.* Not his [vessels] or measures he sells by, which are small and deficient, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; nor his servants, his tools in doing his wickedness, which are fit for his purpose, wicked men; but rather these are much the same with “the instruments of the foolish shepherd”, (<sup>38115</sup>Zechariah 11:15) and may signify the evil ways and methods which covetous pastors or shepherds take to fleece the flock, and to increase their own gain:

*he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right*; he consults, contrives, and forms schemes with all craft and cunning, on purpose, to corrupt, as the word<sup>f639</sup> signifies, the poor and meek, humble and afflicted souls, with false doctrines; even

when these poor and needy ones, who want to have sound and comfortable doctrine delivered to them, speak and ask for that which is right and just, agreeably to the oracles of God, and the analogy of faith, but can not have it; wherefore such a man is unfit to be a ruler in the house of God.

**Ver. 8.** *But the liberal man deviseth liberal things, &c.*] The man of a princely spirit consults and contrives, and delivers out things worthy of a prince and governor in the church of God; he that is one of a free spirit, that is made free by the Spirit of God, and is led into the doctrines of free grace, will study to deliver out the same to others, and, as he has freely received, he will freely give, and without any sinister, selfish, and mercenary ends and views:

*and by liberal things shall he stand*; or, “be established”<sup>f640</sup>; both by the doctrines of free grace he dispenses to others, to be established by and with which is a good thing; and by the free communications of the gifts and grace of the Spirit to him, to supply and furnish him yet more and more for his work; by the discoveries of the free favour of God unto him; by the enjoyment of his gracious presence in private and in public; by the blessings of a free and well ordered covenant; and, at last, by being brought to eternal glory and happiness, in which he will be settled to all eternity; or, “on liberal things shall he stand”; grace here, and glory hereafter. The Targum is,

“the righteous consult truth, and they upon truth shall stand.”

**Ver. 9.** *Rise up, ye women that are at ease, &c.*] On beds of down, unconcerned about the present or future state of the nation; who had their share of guilt in the nation’s sins, particularly pride, luxury, superstition, rejection of the Messiah, and contempt of his Gospel, and so should have their part in its punishment. Some think that the men of the nation are so called, because of their effeminacy. The Jews interpret them of the other cities of Judea, besides Jerusalem; the Targum explains it by provinces:

*hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear to my speech*; the words of the prophet concerning the future desolation of their country; here it is thought the lesser towns and villages are intended by daughters, who dwelt in confidence and security, having no thought and notion of destruction coming upon them; so Ben Melech interprets the “women” of cities, and the “daughters” of villages.

**Ver. 10.** *Many days and years shall ye be troubled*, &c.] Or, “days above a year”<sup>f641</sup>; a year, and somewhat more, yet not two years; which some understand of the time from this prophecy, until their troubles began, by the invasion of Sennacherib; and others of the continuance of it, it lasting more than a year; or, “days with a year”; so Kimchi, days upon a year, year upon year, one year after another; and so denotes a long duration of their troubles; and so the troubles of the Jews, before their utter destruction by the Romans, lasted a great while, and since to this day; for the prophecy respects those times. Kimchi says it may be interpreted of the destruction of the whole land of Israel, and of the destruction of the temple in the days of Zedekiah; or of the destruction of the second temple, that is, by the Romans:

*for the vintage shall fail*; being spoiled by the enemy, or taken for their own use; and so there would be no wine to cheer their hearts, and make them merry:

*the gathering shall not come*; of the other fruits of the earth; when the time of ingathering should come, at which there was a feast that bore that name, there should be none to be gathered in; the consequence of which must be a famine, and such there was before and at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

**Ver. 11.** *Tremble, ye women that are at ease*, &c.] Which may be considered either as an exhortation to repentance for their sins, of which, if a due sense was impressed on their hearts, would cause a trembling of body and mind, under a fearful expectation of divine wrath; or as a prediction, that though they were now quite tranquil and easy, and nothing disturbed them, yet such calamities would come upon them as would make them tremble:

*be troubled, ye careless ones*; or, “confident ones”<sup>f642</sup>; that live securely, trusting in their present wealth and riches, and confident that things will always continue as they are; be it known to you that trouble will come, and better it would be for you if you were now troubled for your sins, and truly repented of them, that the judgments threatened, and coming, might be prevented:

*strip ye, and make you bare*; of your fine clothes, and beautiful ornaments, in which they prided themselves, which used to be done in time of mourning, (<sup>3172</sup>Ezekiel 7:27) or it signifies that this should be their case,

they would be stripped not only of their richest clothes and decorating jewels, but of their ordinary apparel, and left bare and naked by the enemy:

*and gird [sackcloth] upon [your] loins*; as a token of mourning; (see <sup><13734></sup>Genesis 37:34) the word “sackcloth” is supplied, as it is by Kimchi, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions; though some understand it as a direction to gird their loins for servile work, signifying what would be their condition and circumstances when taken and carried captive by the enemy; they would no longer live at ease, and in pleasure, as mistresses, but would serve as handmaids.

**Ver. 12.** *They shall lament for the teats, &c.*] Either of the beasts of the field, that should be dried up, and give no milk, through the great drought that should be upon the land; or through the waste of the herbage by the enemy; or else of the women, their breasts and paps, which should afford no milk for their infants, through the famine that should press them sore, which would occasion great lamentation, both in mothers and children; though some think are to be understood of the fields, and are explained by them in the next clause; the fruitful earth being compared to a woman, its fields are like breasts or paps, which yield food and nourishment, but now should not afford any, and therefore there would be cause of lamentation. Jarchi interprets it, “they shall beat upon their breasts”<sup>f643</sup> a gesture used in lamentation to express exceeding great grief and sorrow, (<sup><1313></sup>Luke 18:13 <sup><1313></sup>23:48) some, because the word rendered “lament” is of the masculine gender, and so not applicable to women, render the words in connection with the preceding verse (<sup><1311></sup>Isaiah 32:11) thus,

“gird sackcloth on your loins, and on your mourning breasts”<sup>f644</sup>;

though they may be interpreted indefinitely, “there shall be lamentation for the teats”, among all sorts of people, men, women, and children:

*for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine*; as the fields are when covered with corn and grass, and the vines with clusters of grapes, but now should not be, either through drought, or by being foraged and trampled on by the enemy.

**Ver. 13.** *Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns [and] briers, &c.*] The curse of the earth, the spontaneous productions of it, being uncultivated, and this through want of men, they being destroyed or carried captive by the enemy; this is to be understood of the land of Judea, and not Samaria, as Aben Ezra; where the professing and covenant people of God



dwelt; which is mentioned to show the apostasy of this people, for which ruin came upon their land, and the aggravation of it, as well as the goodness of God to them, which continued to the last, still considering them as his people. This respects not the desolation of the country by the Assyrian army, nor by the Chaldeans, but rather by the Romans, even their last destruction:

*yea, upon all the houses of joy [in] the joyous city*; not Samaria, the head of the ten tribes, as some; but Jerusalem, the joy of the whole earth, as Jarchi; and the “houses of joy” in it mean not public houses, as taverns, and the like, where persons meet to revel and carouse, but the houses of nobles, princes, and rich men, who lived voluptuously, in great sensuality and carnal mirth, drinking wine in bowls, and chanting to the sound of the viol, and using all instruments of music; but now their houses, in which they enjoyed so much pleasure, should be demolished, and briars and thorns should grow upon the spot where they stood. Some render the word *yk*, “burning”, as in (<sup>2134</sup>Isaiah 3:24) “burning shall be on all the houses”,<sup>f645</sup> &c.; and think it refers to the burning of the city of Jerusalem, and the palaces or houses of nobles and rich men in it, which was done both by the Chaldeans and by the Romans.

**Ver. 14.** *Because the palaces shall be forsaken*, &c.] The palaces of the princes and nobles shall be forsaken by them, they being obliged to flee from the enemy, or being taken, and either slain, or carried captive. The word in the Hebrew is in the singular number, “the palace”, meaning the royal palace; and so Aben Ezra and Jarchi interpret it of the king’s palace; though the Targum paraphrases it the house of the sanctuary, or the temple, so Kimchi; which was left desolate, as Christ foretold it should be, (<sup>4238</sup>Matthew 23:38):

*the multitude of the city shall be left*; to take care of themselves, and to the fury of their enemies, their princes and nobles being killed or fled; or, “the city shall be left of the multitude”,<sup>f646</sup>; the multitude of inhabitants that were in it shall forsake it, and flee, or be destroyed in it, so that few or none shall remain:

*the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever*; Ophel and Bachan, which some take to be the names of two towers of Jerusalem; of Ophel we read in (<sup>4273</sup>2 Chronicles 27:3 <sup>4435</sup>Nehemiah 3:26,27) but rather these intend in general the high towers and strong fortifications of Jerusalem, which being

cut out of rocks, when demolished served for dens for thieves and robbers, and wild creatures; and this being “for ever”, that is, for a very long time, shows that it cannot be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and the seventy years’ captivity; but it is to be understood of the last destruction, which continues unto this day:

*a joy of wild asses*; which delight in wild and desert places; (see <sup><1830f></sup>Job 39:5,6)

*a pasture of flocks*; where flocks of sheep feed, instead of being inhabited by men. Jarchi’s note is pretty remarkable,

“for the desire, or at the will, of the Ishmaelites, and for the feeding of the Grecians, and their army;”

and certain it is that Jerusalem now is in the hands of the Ishmaelites, or Turks. The Targum is,

“the place which was a house of joy and gladness for kings is now become a spoil for armies.”

**Ver. 15.** *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, &c.*] That is, Jerusalem shall lie in ruins until this time comes; which therefore cannot be understood of the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, which, as it was before the destruction of the city by the Romans, so the desolation it was brought to by the Chaldeans did not last so long; but must be interpreted of a pouring forth of the Spirit in his gifts and graces yet to come, which will bring on the fulness of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews, and till that time comes Jerusalem will continue in a ruinous condition; the sense is the same with that of (<sup><12124></sup>Luke 21:24) “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled”. The Targum of the place is,

“until refreshing comes to us from the face of him, whose Shechinah, or Majesty, is in the highest heavens;”

with which may be compared (<sup><418f></sup>Acts 3:19):

*and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest*; this will be the consequence, fruit, and effect of the effusion of the Spirit in the latter day; that such parts of the world as were like a wilderness, barren and unfruitful, producing nothing but the briers and thorns of impiety, infidelity, superstition, and idolatry, should now become

like a fruitful field; the Gospel being now preached everywhere, multitudes of souls converted, churches raised and formed, and these filled with such as were laden with the fruits of righteousness; and such places where the Gospel had been preached and professed, and where churches had been planted, and there were some good degree of fruitfulness in word and works, now should be abundantly more fruitful, and the professors of religion more numerous, and look more like a forest, for number of trees, than a field. Kimchi says this whole paragraph shall be accomplished in the days of the Messiah.

**Ver. 16.** *Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, &c.*] In the desert part of the world, inhabited by Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans; where the Scriptures, the rule of judgment, and where the Gospel, sometimes called the judgment of the Lord, (<sup><2510></sup>Isaiah 51:4) had no place, now they shall have one, and an abiding one; and men of judgment in spiritual and evangelical things, and such as do justice and judgment, shall dwell there:

*and righteousness remain in the fruitful field;* both the doctrine and practice of righteousness shall continue in the church of God, which will be the glory of it; the righteous men will be the settled constant inhabitants of it; these will be all righteous at this time, (<sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 60:21) not only by profession, but in truth and reality; at least the far greater part; so the Targum interprets it of those that do judgment and do righteousness.

**Ver. 17.** *And the work of righteousness shall be peace, &c.*] Not works of righteousness done by men, no, not by the best of men; for though peace may be had and enjoyed in doing them, yet it does not arise and flow from thence, because there is no justification by them, and salvation through them, without which there can be no true solid peace; nor the work of righteousness in men, which is their sanctification, and is indeed the work of God, and follows upon the pouring forth of his Spirit, and therefore bids fairer to be the sense than the former; yet peace is one part and branch of the work itself; (see <sup><5147></sup>Romans 14:17) but the work of righteousness wrought out for man is rather meant, even the righteousness of Christ, a work proposed unto him, which he undertook, and has wrought out, and which was a work, and lay in working, and was a very toilsome and laborious one; the consequence of which is “peace”, inward peace of soul now, and eternal peace hereafter; the righteousness of Christ applied removes the guilt of sin from the conscience, it being perfect justifies from all things, and yields a tranquillity and serenity of mind, which is had in a

way of believing, in this righteousness now, and it will issue in everlasting peace and rest in the world to come; the end of the perfect and upright man, who is perfectly justified by Christ's righteousness, is peace, (~~137:37~~ Psalm 37:37):

*and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever*; or, <sup>f647</sup>“the service of righteousness”; the same as before, with the “work of righteousness”: a service which Christ performed, as a servant, in obedience to the law, in the room and stead of his people; a service perfectly and completely done, and what is well pleasing unto God; and which, when a sensible sinner sees its interest in, produces “quietness” of soul, under the mighty hand of God, amidst all the calamities in the world, and judgments upon men, under the load of calumny and reproach cast upon him, and notwithstanding all the charges and accusations of Satan: moreover, this also gives “assurance for ever”, of interest in divine things, in the love of God, and relation to him as a Father, in Christ as a Saviour and Redeemer, and in the glorious inheritance which this gives a title to; or a holy confidence and boldness at the throne of grace now, having this righteousness to make mention of as a justifying one, and also hereafter, before the throne of judgment, this being what will answer for him in a time to come.

**Ver. 18.** *And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation*, &c.] Jews and Gentiles, and all the saints, shall dwell in peace and love one with another, and shall be free from all the outrages and persecutions of the enemy; which, when these happy times of the pouring forth of the Spirit and of the spiritual reign of Christ come, will be no more:

*and in sure dwellings*; where they may dwell safely and confidently, secure from all enemies, in no fear of them, and free from all hurt and danger by them:

*and in quiet resting places*; where they may sleep and rest quietly, and none to disturb them, and make them afraid: and though all this may be understood of their private houses and habitations, yet may well enough be applied to the several Christian communities and churches to which they belong; where they shall enjoy much spiritual prosperity and safety, great peace and quietness, comfort and rest, under the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances.

**Ver. 19.** *When it shall hail, coming down on the forest, &c.*] The people of God will be peaceable and quiet, safe and secure, when the judgments of God, signified by a “hail” storm, shall come upon antichrist, and the antichristian states, intended by the “forest”, both for their numbers, and for their barrenness and unfruitfulness; (see <sup>᠙᠙᠗᠔</sup> Revelation 16:21) and as so it sometimes is, by the disposition of divine Providence, that a storm of hail falls not upon fields and gardens, and the fruits of the earth, but upon forests and desert lands; and as the plague of hail fell upon the Egyptians, and not upon the Israelites in Goshen, to which some think the allusion is here; so will it be when God comes to take vengeance on the enemies of his people:

*and the city shall be low in a low place:* meaning not the city of Jerusalem, surrounded with mountains, built under hills, and so under the wind, and not exposed to the fury of a storm; but rather Babylon, built in a plain, in a low plain, and yet should be brought lower still; mystical Babylon is here meant, the city of Rome, that should “in humiliation be humbled”, as the words may be rendered, that is, brought very low, exceeding low; (see <sup>᠘3᠓᠖</sup> Isaiah 26:5) and which, at the time of the great hail, will be divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations shall fall, and Babylon be had in remembrance by the Lord to destroy it, (<sup>᠙᠙᠗᠔</sup> Revelation 16:19,21).

**Ver. 20.** *Blessed [are] ye that sow beside all waters, &c.*] In places well watered and moistened, and so fit to receive the seed sown, which grows up, and brings forth much fruit, and amply rewards the pains of the sower, who on that account is happy. These words are directed to the ministers of the Gospel in the latter day; the word is compared to seed, and the preachers of it to sowers of seed, who have a commission to preach the Gospel to every creature; and in the latter day, in the spiritual reign of Christ, to which the whole paragraph refers, they will sow the seed of the word “by many waters”; or among great multitudes of people, signified hereby, and with great success, great numbers both of Jews and Gentiles will be converted:

*that send forth [thither] the feet of the ox and the ass;* which were used in ploughing and tilling the earth, and in making it fit to sow the seed in it, and to eat off the heads of grain when it is grown thick and full, which some think is here meant; and the one might also be used to gather it in when ripe, and the other to tread and thresh it, as the Targum and Jarchi interpret it; there being a law given the Jews, that these two should not

work together, (~~f620~~ Deuteronomy 22:10) and from hence it may be concluded, that these words refer to a time when this law should be abolished; and the Jews themselves apply it to the times of the Messiah<sup>f648</sup>; and it undoubtedly points to Gospel times, and even to those times when the Jews shall be converted, and great numbers among the Gentiles also, who shall join together in spreading the Gospel, and in promoting the interest of Christ.