

us, and which would be contrary to all our impulses. His thoughts and His ways are just as superior to ours as the heaven is high above the earth.

Besides looking back to the wonderful offer of pardon in the previous verses, verses 8-9 also look forward to the assurance contained in verses 10-11. At Christ's first coming the Jews expected Him to set up His kingdom by force. Instead of doing so He paid the penalty for sin on Calvary's cross and then sent forth a small band of disciples to declare His Word. How futile it seemed to human eyes! "Surely," His enemies thought, "in a short time the memory of Him will completely perish; some of His followers will soon lose their interest; the others will die off, and nothing will remain of the movement He began." How different was the result! In the next few centuries the Word of God was carried all through the then-known world, and sinners were redeemed in many continents. The method is one which would appear futile to human eyes -- this method of spreading knowledge of God through the simple word of salvation -- but it is one which God declared would accomplish His will. Just as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and man is powerless to stop them, so will God's Word accomplish the purpose He has in mind.

It is fascinating to visit one of the great desert areas in eastern California in the springtime. Ordinarily nothing is visible but barren desolation, but what a change the spring rains bring! Soon the whole region is covered with a carpet of beautiful wild flowers! How similar is the result God's Word will accomplish when He pours it forth upon the earth. It will not return to Him void!

There are two opposite errors in the study of the prophetic books. One is to neglect the teaching regarding the Millennium. Some interpreters even twist such clear millennial passages as Micah 4, Isaiah 2, and Isaiah 11 into predictions of the church of this age. Such fanciful methods could make anything mean anything. The millennial kingdom of Christ is clearly taught in both Testaments and no reasonable interpretation can remove it. This, however, should not lead us to the opposite error of finding the Millennium everywhere. Some passages have one subject, and some another, and each must be carefully determined. Our present passage