

(10) For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bring forth and bud, and giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, (11) so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish what I desire, and will succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

All of God's actions are purposeful. The creation and development of the universe are not an accident. God has a marvelous and perfect plan, and His desires will certainly be accomplished.

In addition to this great general truth these verses show the special importance of the word that goes forth from God's mouth - which finds its greatest expression in the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible has had an influence in human life far beyond that of any other book. Many have come to the truth simply by reading it, without hearing it explained by another human being. It is not only a presentation of truth; it is a presentation with power and effectiveness, constantly used by God to accomplish His purposes.

(12) For you will go out with joy, and be led forth with peace. The mountains and the hills will break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. (13) Instead of the thorn the cypress will come up, and instead of the brier the myrtle will come up, and it will be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that will not be cut off.

These two verses present the great climax of God's work. It will result in joy and peace. All the universe will sing together with happiness over the results of what Christ did on the cross. All the evil that sin has brought will be removed. The thorns and briers that were introduced when men fell will be replaced by plants that are strong and beautiful.

Verse 13 beautifully illustrates the changes that should occur in the lives of all who come to know Christ. In their character the thorn bush should be replaced by the cypress and the brier