

previous revelation but rather an extension of it, and that the casting aside of some of the natural branches is only a temporary phase.

The same teaching is found in Isaiah 65. In verses 8-11 the prophet shows that the line of God's blessing has not come to an end, with an entirely new tree substituted for the old one. There is, rather, a continuous progression, though important changes will occur. By the end of verse 7 one might have received the impression that He was putting an end in disgust to His previous work, but verse 8 declares that this is not the case. Grape juice (new wine) is found in the cluster; even though the grapes look bad and many of them are dried up, there is still something there that is worthwhile. There remains a blessing in Israel, and this can be developed into great blessing for all the world. He says that He will not destroy it for His servants' sakes, in order that He may not destroy them all.

This word "servants" is interesting. The chapters between Isaiah 40 and 53 often mention "the Servant of the Lord," that great character who was to do the work for which Israel had been called. Israel could not do the work of the Servant because Israel itself was in suffering and misery, blind and rebellious. However, the work must be done by Israel, so it is to be done by One who comes out of Israel and who performs the work not only for Israel but also for the Gentiles. After chapter 53 there is no longer any reference to the Servant, but there are many references to "my servants." These servants would seem to be those who are followers of "the Servant" -- those who are redeemed through Him and who are seeking to do His will. For their sakes, we are told in verse 8, the line of God's blessing is to be continued.

In verse 9 we are told that "a seed" is to come "out of Jacob" and "out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains." It is likely that this is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that He is the seed out of Jacob and the inheritor out of Judah, the one in whom all the promises find their culmination. The language is not definite enough for us to be certain that it could not be taken in a more general sense, but in line with the rest of the verse it would seem quite reasonable to think that it is actually a prediction of the