

consolation. The Lord will bring them joy but will bring shame to those who falsely claim to be His.

Here the Lord is looking to His true followers among the Israelites. Doubtless there were a great many who listened gladly to the words of Isaiah and sought to do the will of God as it was presented to them. They were in misery because of the sin of the people and the refusal of the nation to turn away from its wickedness and to come back to whole-hearted obedience to God. They knew that the exile was a certainty. They could see it as if it were already present, because of their belief in the predictions that God had made through Isaiah and other prophets. In the reign of Manasseh, while Isaiah was probably still living, many of them suffered persecution for their faith. At various times in later ages true believers have endured affliction for the Word of God. Sometimes they have even been cast out of synagogues and churches. In verse 5 the Lord declares that He will give great blessings to those who suffer for His truth. His coming will bring joy to them, but great shame to those who have oppressed and persecuted them instead of standing with them, as they should have done.

Verse 6 connects closely with verse 5. Its final words, "a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies," tie up with the predictions of destruction which have preceded it. In graphic fashion the verse describes the tumult in the city - - "a voice of noise from the city" -- and then points to its cause -- the voice of the Lord speaking from His temple. God speaks and the nations are moved. At His Word, coming forth from His temple, vengeance is poured out upon the workers of iniquity. There has been much discussion as to whether "the temple" here refers to the temple of Zerubbabel or to that of Herod, or to a temple to be built in the future, but at this point such discussions are quite unnecessary. It describes a voice which God sends forth from His own abode, a voice decreeing tumult upon all who oppose His will. There is no need to tie it to a specific earthly temple.