

John 3-7

that orchards and vegetable gardens will be beautiful, glorious, excellent, and comely for those who are escaped of Israel. In agriculture, ^{rather than from} instead of in vain adornment, ^{1) as the 3rd and 5th will come from} is to be their glory and their pleasure. ^{2) 4) 8)} This interpretation is certainly unsatisfactory. It is hardly worthy of the grandeur of the context to think of mere agriculture as that which is here described.

A second ~~method~~ ^{would be} of interpretation is to take the first phrase, "the branch of the Lord" as a figurative reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to take the second phrase, "the fruit of the earth", in its literal meaning, as referring to agriculture. The third method of interpretation is to take both of them as referring to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The whole tone of the context makes it seem rather unlikely that it is simply agriculture which is meant. The previous verse tells of the great lack of men in the land, and we would expect this verse to describe some way in which those women who are true to the Lord are to be recompensed for this great loss. The remainder of the chapter tells of wonderful blessings which are to come and these seem to be unrelated to a mere agricultural blessing or to merely material prosperity, but rather to have their emphasis on spiritual matters and on the specific element of God's protection from evil. Moreover, it is easy to demonstrate that it is possible to consider the phrase "the branch of the Lord" as referring to the coming Messiah, in view of its use in later books.

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