

ISAIAH

ISAIAH 57:11-13a, YAHWEH FORGOTTEN

Isaiah 57:11-13 is a prophecy of Israel's state of affairs not only in Isaiah's time, but also in terms of the future going into the Tribulation. The relationship of the nation to the nation's one, true God is being discussed. This represents the culmination of the nation's unfaithful conduct. They have been engaged in rebellion, idolatry, and apostasy for the life of the nation which will culminate in the imposition of God's wrath and judgment on the nation which itself will be followed by deliverance and restoration. The Israelites have lied to themselves and to others concerning their relationship, or, more accurately, lack of a relationship, to and with Him. They have forgotten Him, and they no longer take any knowledge of Him to heart.

Isaiah 57:11 ¹¹“Of whom were you worried [דָּאָג] and fearful [יָרָא] When you lied [כָּזַבְתְּ], and did not remember [זָכַרְתְּ] Me Nor give Me a thought [לֵב] ? Was I not silent [הִשָּׁתַּמְתִּי] even for a long time [עוֹלָמִים] So you do not fear [יָרָא] Me?

This is a continuation of the rebuke Israel is hearing from God because of the nation's idolatry. All the years the nation was living the lie of idolatry by worshiping deaf, dumb, and impotent idols instead of Him, the Creator of the people and the nation, have resulted in silence on the part of the One who could actually speak to them and help them. What time is this? It wasn't when Isaiah was revealing this prophecy; God was certainly speaking through the prophet and others at that time. This suggests that an end times period of time is in view.

Of all the things that worried and frightened Israel from the time of their refusal to enter the land, to the period of the Judges, to the imminent dangers posed by the Assyrians and the Babylonians and numerous other foes, the people were not afraid of the One of whom they should have feared, and that is Yahweh. Instead, they worshiped and feared gods of wood and stone, gods created by man who could do nothing for them. The word order here is significant and emphatic (direct object, whom, first in the sentence) with the emphasis on what they were worried and fearful about.

Worry, דָּאָג, means to worry, to be afraid, to fear, and even to dread. The sense is to be or to become worried, concerned, or fearful about something.

Fear, יָרָא, means to be afraid or frightened which is characterized by feelings of great distress and deep concern brought on by pain or other unfavorable circumstances.

The irony to this is that the worry and fear Israel has experienced throughout the nation's history has been self-imposed. At Mount Sinai, they promised to obey Yahweh (Ex. 24:3). If they had only done what they promised to do in the way God required them to do it, they would have been blessed and there would have been no reason for worry and fear. We must also acknowledge that the worry and fear under which Israel constantly lives are real, but it is real because God is simply imposing the divine temporal discipline on the nation that He promised them over 3,000 years ago for disobedience and rebellion.

Actually, the question being posed here is unclear in terms of who or what the nation is worrying about and fearing. The most likely answer is, in view of what was just said, is that they are worried about and afraid of just about everything including the nations and their false gods, when their worry and their fear should have been directed at the God who formed them to be a nation and a people. The real question may be answered by an inquiry into why they are so worried about and afraid of nations and gods who are worthless and impotent in the face of the power and might of Yahweh, Israel's true God. The obvious answer is that they have rejected Him and give Him no thought. They may go through the motions of practicing Judaism as it was to be practiced (cf. Is. 58:2), although there is ample biblical evidence that the Temple was neglected and the Word of God forgotten during some rather lengthy periods of time leading up to the Babylonian captivity.

This is the serious issue facing the nation then and now. They have to resort to lying to themselves about their relationship with Yahweh.

Lie, **שָׁבַר**, means to lie, to deceive. The sense is to tell an untruth, or to pretend with the intent to deceive. This verb is imperfect meaning the deception is continual, and it is intensive, meaning that the people are really working at self-deception, and they are also intensely attempting to deceive God into thinking they are actually being a faithful people. Thinking that one is deceiving the one true God who is omniscient and therefore knows everything is an exercise in self-delusion; God cannot be deceived. But that has not stopped the Israelites from trying although, at some point, they simply abandon Him altogether.

We also have to remember that the worthless shepherds/watchmen of Israel were condemned in Isaiah 56 for leading the people astray by neglecting their spiritual development and leading them into idolatry. Part of pagan worship is fear. If the gods are not properly placated, they are thought to make life miserable for people. When the people's focus is on pagan gods, their thoughts naturally turn to them and away from God. Once God is ignored for a period of time, the tendency is to think of Him less and less until He is forgotten altogether. The literal rendering of this is "and Me, not you remembered." The word order here is emphatic (direct object first) emphasizing the fact that it is Yahweh the people did not remember. Furthermore, the shepherds/watchmen were getting what they wanted out of the deal; therefore, it was to their benefit to lead the people away from Yahweh and His Law which, if the people followed it, would have lessened their power and caused them to clean up their act—which they did not want to do. They did not even consider how God would react to their rebellion. We know that the Babylonian captivity is upcoming in less than 200 years, and the Tribulation judgment, imposed for the same reasons, will be upcoming at the end of history as we know it.

Remember, **זָכַר**, means to remember, that is, to recall information or events. The sense is to remember by keeping in mind for attention and consideration. However, the word is negated meaning they did not remember. The verb is a perfect verb meaning completed action; the Israelites did not remember God at all; it was just the opposite. They had forgotten Him. Perhaps even worse, they had no use for Him because they had turned to other gods. They no longer even thought of Him. The personal pronoun, "Me,"

is in an emphatic position in the Hebrew text emphasizing that it is God Himself they failed to remember.

Thought, לֵב, is the word meaning heart, but it is used in numerous ways. Out of 202 uses in the Old Testament, the NASB translates it "thought" three times. Most translations use something like "you have not laid it to your heart" (LSV), "nor taken it to your heart" (NKJV). Those translations are more accurate and convey the meaning in English very well although in a more figurative manner. The point being made is that the Israelites were not thinking about God, that is, taking God to heart, at all; they forgot about Him.

The result is that God became silent before them for a long time. Silent, הָשֵׁט, means to be silent, inactive, still. This is a causative verb form meaning to keep or to cause silence. In this instance, God is deliberately going silent. The personal pronoun for God, "I," is in an emphatic position in the text indicating that it is God who has been causing Himself to refrain from providing them with further revelation by going silent. We know that the time period in question here was an active time in terms of God speaking through the prophets from Elijah to Malachi. After Malachi, however, there was a 400-year period of silence we refer to as the intertestamental period. Since the first century, there has been a nearly 2,000-year period of silence which will end when the Tribulation begins and there will be 144,000 Jewish evangelists and 2 witnesses in Jerusalem in addition to numerous signs, wonders, and miracles from God. This particular time period of silence is taking place right now.

During the Tribulation, the people will be deceived by their leadership into accepting the lie that the antichrist and the false prophet will finally deliver them from the world's persecution under which they have suffered for so long, but that will be deception. Many of the people will believe that God has abandoned them and will therefore give their allegiance to those who will truly deceive them and eventually turn on them in order to kill them in a misguided plot to prevent the Lord from returning to rescue the nation. "They construed the silence of their God as indifference, rather than a manifestation of His long-suffering, and therefore ceased to fear Him" [Merrill F. Unger, "Isaiah," *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1309].

"The question shows why the Israelites had not feared God, namely for a long time He had been silent and they evidently regarded Him as dead. Had God intervened with wrath and anger they would have thought of Him. Because God was silent, Israel was faithless to Him and did not fear Him" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:407]. This is really a big circle. Israel was faithless and did not fear Him and that is when God went silent; it was not because God went silent that Israel became faithless and did not fear Him. But once God went silent, Israel forgot Him all the more and feared Him even less. However, God is going to break His silence with wrath and anger, and He will do it several times before the end (Babylon, Rome, antichrist), but it will not get Israel's attention until that end-times event occurs. What this describes is still the situation today. Many Israelites are atheists who do not acknowledge the existence of God, but He will get their attention when He begins to pour out His wrath on Israel and the world during the Tribulation.

This does not mean that God is not active and working to ensure that His plan for Israel and history is being accomplished according to His will; it is. It does mean that there is no Word from God at this time that is revelatory in nature and therefore canonical, and that He is not communicating revelation through signs, miracles, and wonders at this time. Because of that, Israel may feel abandoned, but the reality is that God is simply seeing to it that His program for Israel, including devastating divine temporal discipline, is being carried out as He sees fit to have it happen. Besides, Israel wasn't exactly paying attention to the prophets when they had them, so what difference would it make even if they still had God's prophets operative today? Would they listen any better now? The answer has to be surely not!

How long has this been going on? Long time, עוֹלָם, is often translated as eternal, forever, or everlasting, but in this context, it is referring to a long duration of time. The basic meaning is most distant times. It refers to a very long time, for a duration, that is, an undetermined duration of time without reference to other points of time with a focus of no anticipated end, but nevertheless may have limits. If this dispensation is the primary reference to this long period of silence, then it certainly has been a long time from a human point of view, but not so long in the sense of God's reckoning of time and of the concept of eternity. God's silence has gone on for so long that the people stopped fearing Him.

The personal pronoun for God, "Me," is once again in the emphatic position in the sentence to place the emphasis on the fact that it is God Himself the people no longer fear. Fear, יָרָא, in this context, may partially refer to fright, but it also seems to be a reference to the aspect of fear that relates to respect and reverence referring to showing high status and honor to one in authority, in this case, to God. The sense is to regard someone with feelings of respect and reverence; to consider someone or something hallowed or exalted or to be in awe of. This emphasizes the fact that the people no longer bring Him to mind at all. They have turned aside instead to false gods of various kinds.

Lending support to the understanding that God's silence is a reference to this dispensation is the fact that He will break His silence when it is time to inflict His wrath on the Israelites in judgment and in wrath, and, at the end of that time, to inaugurate the Messianic Kingdom.

Isaiah 62:1 1For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, And her salvation like a torch that is burning.

Isaiah 65:6 6"Behold, it is written before Me, I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will even repay into their bosom,

There have been many instances recounted in the Scriptures when the calls for God's action on behalf of His people were, in their mind, slow in coming while God was silent and hiding from them for a period of time. His silence at this time has been for a much longer period of time—nearly 2,000 years and still ongoing. God will speak when the time is right and not necessarily when the people want Him to speak. Besides, they aren't paying attention to what He has already spoken; therefore, it is going to take some very serious attention getting measures to get through to them in the end.

“This perverse pragmatic response that requires instant gratification concerning what they want done, without first considering why God might be putting them through this kind of experience, demonstrates the shallowness of their relationship with God. If he does not quickly satisfy all their needs and grant them their every request, they quickly turn away and ignore him.... Is the biblical worldview all about how God can make me feel good? This verse suggests that part of what gives people a sense of the real presence of God in their lives (the opposite of God being silent) are their own acts of fearing, remembering, and thinking about him” [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 558].

Israel has been having a pity party for themselves for centuries when all they had to do to solve the problem was turn to God in faith, serve Him only, and observe the Mosaic Law. In this dispensation, the requirement has changed to placing their faith in the Messiah that their national leadership led them into rejecting, but the result would be the same—a healthy relationship with God.

In terms of application, this situation is not unique to the Israelites. Modern Christianity is saturated with this instant gratification, self-centered mindset. This is how the false prosperity gospel is so easily embraced by so many people around the world. Faith has become all about us and our temporal well-being instead of being all about Him and His mediatorial, Messianic Kingdom plan for history. Many people get angry with God when the horrifying things of a sinful, broken, fallen world happen to them, and they get angry when He does not answer their prayers in their timing and in their way. When people think that God is remote and distant, they can turn to other things they can see and feel to replace Him. The irony is that those things are the creation of man and can do nothing at all to help them. We have God and we have His Word even when we don't think those things are working on our behalf—which is generally beside the point anyway. God has a plan and a purpose for history that is being worked out, and His plans and purposes are of far greater importance than any one individual's personal situation. All we can do is our individual part in furthering His plans and purposes according to His Word and by doing so we can be a faithful part of His plans and purposes for history. That does not mean that He cannot or will not intervene in our lives to bless us, minister to us, answer our prayers and so on, but it does mean that it is His will be done and not our will be done.

Israel is delusional. The Israelites think that they are righteous, but God will expose their righteousness and their deeds for what they are—worthless! They think they are untouchable because they are God's people, but they are wrong.

Isaiah 57:12-13a ¹²“I will declare [בְּגַד] your righteousness [צְדִיקָה] and your deeds [מַעֲשֵׂה], But they will not profit [יַעֲלֶיךָ] you. ¹³“When you cry out [תִּצְעֵק], let your collection [קְבוּרֵיךָ] of idols deliver [יִצְלְלוּ] you. But the wind [רוּחַ] will carry [תִּשָּׂא] all of them up, And a breath [נְפִיל] will take [תִּלְקַח] them away....

Declare, בְּגַד, means to tell, to report, to make known, to explain, to be reported, or to denounce. This verb is in the causative form, and is therefore used to declare something, that is, the righteousness of Israel, or, in this case, lack of righteousness. It refers to speaking information and is used in such contexts as a message, a verdict, a warning, etc. When

the word is translated “denounce,” it has the sense of expressing strong disapproval of something or someone, especially to distance oneself from the thing being denounced.

This word is also translated expose (CSB, NIV, BSB), denounce (NET Bible), and pronounce judgment (TANAKH). The only lexical support for these three is for translating it “to denounce,” which seems to be very appropriate in this context. “To denounce” explains the fact that the righteousness of Israel was anything but righteous, whereas “to declare” does not inform us about the state of Israel’s righteousness. “To expose” is also suitable in terms of an English understanding of the context, but I just can’t find any lexical support for using it. There is actually a Hebrew word, גָּלַהּ, which means expose and which could have been used if that was the God intended meaning.

Righteousness, צְדָקָה, means righteousness, justice, rightness referring to the state of doing what is required according to a standard. The sense of the word concerns adherence to what is required according to a standard. Usually when this word is used to mean something less than righteous, the word “unrighteous” is used to describe it. In this case, the word “righteousness” must be used because the Israelites thought they were being righteous while God saw their behavior as nothing but unrighteous. “What they [Israel] consider as their ‘righteousness’ will not help them when their actions will be brought to light. Man’s ‘righteousness’ or moral code is starkly contradicted by his actions, even by the standards of his own light” [Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah: A Commentary*, 440].

“But the simple reference is to what Israel in its blindness regarded as righteousness; whereas, if it had known itself, it would have seen that it was the most glaring opposite. This lying-righteousness of Israel would be brought to a judicial exposure by Jehovah” [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Isaiah*, vol. 7, 7:548].

The people have forgotten God and gone their own way. Rather than continuing His silence, God is going to reveal Israel’s lack of righteous behavior, and their works, worthless as they are, will not be of benefit to them.

Deeds, מַעֲשֵׂה, means work, labor, deed, occupation referring to the focused expenditure of energy in order to do or to accomplish a goal or a task. It may also refer to the practices or customs of the nation, that is, to the energy regularly expended as to become a custom or a habit as a particular pattern of behavior. That certainly describes the behavior of the idolatrous nation. The concept of “deeds” is a reference to bad deeds. If one has moved away from God, whether it involves an individual person or the nation, and then replaced Him with the worship of idols, bad things are the only possible result. They may look good to the world, but to God they are determined to be worthless, even counterproductive and evil. It is possible that the deeds referred to here concern the labor it took for the Israelites to construct their idols and to the effort it took to participate in the fertility cult rituals associated with them.

Profit, נִיבֵל, means to have value or benefit referring to having a use or to be of gain in some way. The sense of the word relates to something that is beneficial for someone. It indicates something that is done beneficially, resulting in success and betterment. It is used most often as a figurative reference to spiritual benefits from the Lord. This word is

used in a causative sense and it is negated meaning that the nation will not be caused to profit due to their unrighteous immersion into idol worship.

Israel thought they were perfectly fine. They were God's specifically created nation for His purposes, and they had the Mosaic Law, the priesthood and the Temple, and they were in their own land. The reality was that they had forgotten about God and turned to the worship of idols; however, we also have to remember that Israel had allowed idolatry into the Temple itself (Ezek. 8); therefore, they may have thought, to some small extent, that they were still acknowledging Yahweh in a positive manner. The reality is that this is a toxic combination. The Israelites thought that they were just fine in terms of their relationship with God, but their actions were contrary to everything God created the nation to be which resulted in an unrighteous and evil blend of their calling and their pagan behavior. The end result is that their calling was forgotten and their pagan behavior became the norm.

The grammar used here is very emphatic indicating that it is God Himself who will expose their worthless righteousness and works. Literally, it reads, "I, I will declare ...". How and when this happens is up to God. It has happened to some degree throughout the nation's history as part of God's divine temporal disciplinary program, but the final revelation disclosed here will happen during the Tribulation when Israel will suffer the ultimate in judgment and the believing remnant will be identified for Messianic Kingdom entrance.

When Israel finally realizes just how much trouble they have really made for themselves, they will cry out for deliverance, but their idols will be unable to help them. If my understanding that this is ultimately fulfilled in the Tribulation is correct, then most of the Israelites will not cry out to the Messiah King for deliverance until the very end when the situation is all but hopeless and the nation is on the brink of annihilation. They will finally realize that they cannot deliver themselves by trusting in anything other than in Him, and they will cry out to Him to be saved (Mt. 23:39).

Cry out, קָרָא, means to cry out, to exclaim, to call with the primary activity implied is that of crying out in pain or by reason of affliction. The sense is to cry out for help in terms of uttering aloud an intense request for help. "[T]he word is used almost exclusively in reference to a cry from a disturbed heart, in need of some kind of help. The cry is not in summons of another, but an expression of the need felt. Most frequently, the cry is directed to God" [Harris, Archer, Jr., and Waltke, s.v. "קָרָא," *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 248]. In this context, the Israelites will first cry out to their idols, but when they prove to be the worthless nothingness they have always been, the Israelites, realizing they are in imminent danger of annihilation, will finally turn to the Messiah King for deliverance and cry out to Him to save them.

Israel has trusted in many things throughout the nation's history other than God. To this point in history and with the exception of the believing remnant, they have never fully realized, or at least admitted what they already know, that those things cannot save them in any way. Whatever their "collection of idols" is, they will be destroyed by God, and the Israelites will finally realize that their salvation is found only in the Messiah King. They will finally give up their rebellion and submit to Him.

Collection, קבוצה, means an assemblage or a collection referring to an accumulation of several items of the same particular kind or class and usually considered many items as opposed to a few. The sense is that of several things grouped together or considered as a whole. It may be thought of as a pantheon, a collection of gods.

"The root means *to gather*, and here would seem to depict the idolatrous objects that Israel has gathered and accumulated as treasure. Gesenius may be correct in speaking of it as a pantheon, a collection of gods or idols. If these are to deliver Israel at the time of its crying, there obviously will be no deliverance. These collections are so dead and impotent, that a wind will lift them up; even a breath will take them away" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:408].

Some theologians believe the assembly or collection is a reference to the sons of a sorcerer, the adulterer, and the prostitute, those who worship the idols, and who are therefore removed and they therefore stand in contrast with those who "take refuge" in God and are saved.

However, there are some complex Hebrew grammar issues in play that reveal the contrast here is not between believers and unbelievers, but between the idols and God. The theology is not quite right in this quote, but the fact of the contrast is correct. "[T]he contrast lies between the idols, which cannot save, and Jehovah, who not only saves those who trust in Him, but sends them prosperity according to His promises.... [W]hen Jehovah gathers His faithful ones from the dispersion, and gathers others to them (from among the heathen), then will the plunder which the faithless have gathered together be scattered to the winds. And whilst the latter stand forsaken by their powerless works, the former will be established in the peaceful inheritance of the promised land" [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Isaiah*, vol. 7, 7:548].

I have noted several times that we can make anything into an idol. "Anything that we trust other than the Lord becomes our god and therefore is an idol. It may be our training, experience, job, money, friends, or position. One of the best ways to find out whether we have idols in our lives is to ask ourselves, 'Where do I instinctively turn when I face a decision or need to solve a problem?' Do we reach for the phone to call a friend? Do we assure ourselves that we can handle the situation ourselves? Or do we turn to God to see His will and receive His help? When the storm starts blowing, the idols will blow away like chaff. They are 'vanity,' which means 'nothingness.' The storm does not make a person; it shows what the person is made of and where his or her faith lies. If we make the Lord our refuge, we have nothing to fear" [Warren W. Wiersbe, "Isaiah" in *The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament: The Prophets*, 66]. The various idols the Israelites will have at this time is unknown, but we do know that whatever they are, they will be worthless and unable to save them.

Deliver, נָצַל, in this causative verb form means to deliver, save, rescue, or defend referring to causing one to be safe and out of danger. The sense is to free from harm or evil. "Deliverance often indicated the power of one entity overcoming the power of another. It was frequently expressed as deliverance from the hand (i.e., power) of another. Thus, idols and mere human might were belittled as unable to deliver" [Baker and Carpenter, s.v. "נָצַל," *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament*, 749]. In this context, the

point is that the Israelites' idols will not be able to save them from judgment; this pericope will go on to reveal that only Yahweh will be able to deliver them from harm.

The forces delivered by God to remove Israel's idols are described as "the wind" and "a breath." These must be forces that originate in and come from God Himself and are therefore outside the boundaries of naturally occurring phenomena. This is figurative language referring to the power and the ease with which God can destroy His enemies. This seems to have relevance to the fact that when the Lord returns to earth to save Israel, He will do it with the sword that comes forth from His mouth, in other words, He will speak the Word and His breath will go forth like a mighty wind that will instantly slay His enemies, who also just happen to be the enemies of Israel as well.

Revelation 19:21 ²¹And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

This has not happened yet; Israel is still operating under the spell of the idolatrous world system that has yet to be destroyed, which is ultimately what this is revealing.

Wind, רוּחַ, means breath, wind, spirit. It refers to wind which is air in rapid movement as a normal weather condition. This movement of air may or may not be done with considerable force. This word is also used as a reference to the Holy Spirit.

Breath, נְשָׁמָה, means breath or vapor and it may mean breathing referring to the unit of air that passes in and out of the lungs through the mouth and nostrils with a focus on its briefness and lack of content. This word may also refer to a gentle breeze (cf. Gesenius) or the wind (cf. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*) and it is translated "breeze" in the NET Bible and the TANAKH. This word also means "nothing," and it is often translated "vanity" (KJV), but this context argues for breath or breeze. Either way, the word represents the idea that idols are nothing and easily disposed of when it is God's will to do so. At that time, it will be something so simple as the breath of God that Israel's idols will be swept away. This is an indication of just how powerless they really are, and, conversely, just how powerful the Creator God really is. Breath is often used in the Bible to indicate the power God yields to cause something to happen which highlights the ease with which He exercises His power. However, when used that way in most of the Old Testament, the Hebrew uses *rûah*.

2 Samuel 22:16 ¹⁶"Then the channels of the sea appeared, The foundations of the world were laid bare By the rebuke of the LORD, At the blast of the breath [רוּחַ] of His nostrils.

The end result will be that the idols of Israel will be carried and taken away which is a figurative way of saying that they will be removed and destroyed. Once this happens, idolatry will never again be a problem for the Israelites.

Carry, נָשָׂא, means to bear, to carry by picking up and moving an object in linear movement. The sense to carry away or lift up by removing something from a certain place or environment which is conceived of as lifting the thing up.

Take, *לקח*, means to lead or take away by causing an object to move from one place to another. The sense of the word is to take away by removing from a certain place, environment, or mental or emotional state; also involves transport into a new location or state.

At some point still in the future when the final act of God's temporal disciplinary action for Israel is being played out, Israel will look to her idols to save her—whatever form or fashion they take—and finally realize that those idols are worthless and cannot save them and only then will they turn to the One who can save her. All of this figurative language is being used to convey the message that the idols will be destroyed and Israel's national salvation will be secured.

“[N]o matter how large the collection of this world's gods may become, whether they are of trees, wadis, mountains, or far countries, in the end they are of no substance. In comparison to the glory (the weight, the reality, the significance) of God that fills the earth, there is nothing to these things. They are a chimera, a vapor, an imagination of human minds that have rejected the truth. In the final glare of unveiled reality, they will vanish on the wind like the chaff they are. Nothing more than a breath will be needed to whisk them away. All the vast expenditures of human skill, both intellectual and physical, that went into creating the religions of humanity will be shown to be a monumental waste, and their creators will be left stripped naked in the terrible white light of the glory of the Creator” [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 482-483].

When the Lord returns to save Israel, He will be shrouded in His Shekinah glory. Not only will He return and destroy the world system with the spoken word, the breath of His mouth, but He will return in the “white light of the glory of the Creator.”

Matthew 24:29–30 ²⁹“But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰“And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.