

Isaiah 29:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?

Analysis

Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field (הָלוֹא־עוֹד מְעַט מִזְעָר וְשָׁב לְבָנוֹן לְפָרְמָל, halo-od me'at miz'ar veshav Lebanon lakkarmel)—in a מְעַט מִזְעָר (me'at miz'ar, very little while) לְבָנוֹן (Lebanon, Lebanon, representing barrenness or cedar-covered mountains) becomes פָּרְמָל (karmel, fruitful field/garden). **And the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?** (וְהַפָּרְמָל לַעֵר יִחָשֵׁב, vehakarmel laya'ar yechasev)—the productive field becomes יַעַר (ya'ar, forest/wilderness).

After six woes, Isaiah pivots to eschatological reversal. God specializes in inversions: barren becomes fruitful (Sarah, Hannah, Elizabeth); last becomes first; death yields life. The timeframe—'a very little while'—is prophetic perspective: soon from God's timeless vantage, even if centuries pass for humans. This announces the Messianic age when blind see, deaf hear (v. 18), poor rejoice (v. 19)—comprehensive transformation. Lebanon's cedars, symbols of pride, become farmland; farmland becomes wilderness. God reshapes reality itself.

Historical Context

Lebanon represented majesty and inaccessibility—cedar-covered mountains, source of timber for Solomon's Temple. Carmel ('orchard/garden') represented fertility. Isaiah's reversal imagery anticipates the new creation (Isaiah 65:17-25,

Revelation 21:5). Fulfillment began at Christ's first coming, continues through church age, will consummate at His return.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What 'barren' areas of your life or church need God's transforming work to make fruitful?
2. How does God's promise of coming reversal sustain faith during present difficulty?
3. What 'Lebanons' (proud strongholds) might need to become fruitful fields of humility and service?

Interlinear Text

הָלוֹא	עוֹד	מְעַט	מִזְעָר	וְשָׁב	לְבָנוֹן
H3808	H5750	little while	Is it not yet a very	shall be turned	and Lebanon
		H4592	H4213	H7725	H3844
וְהַפְרֵתָּ לְ	וְהַפְרֵתָּ לְ	לִי עֵר	יִחְשָׁב:		
and the fruitful field	and the fruitful field	as a forest	shall be esteemed		
H3759	H3759	H3293	H2803		

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 32:15 (Parallel theme): Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

Matthew 19:30 (Parallel theme): But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

