

# ISAIAH

## ISAIAH 46:10-13 BABYLON'S IDOLS, ISRAEL'S SALVATION, PART 3

God has just declared, once again, that He is the only true God, and only He knows the end from the beginning. No other so-called “gods” have a viable existence through which they can exercise power; they are figments of fallen man's imagination fired up and augmented by the dark forces operating according to the dictates of Satan and his evil world system.

Isaiah 46:10–11 <sup>10</sup>Declaring [נִגַּד] the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose [עֲצָה] will be established [קָוָם], And I will accomplish [עֲשֶׂה] all My good pleasure [תְּהֵי]’; <sup>11</sup>Calling [קָרָא] a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly [אֵן] I have spoken; truly [אֵן] I will bring it to pass. I have planned *it*, surely [אֵן] I will do it.

The panorama of history is in view here—the beginning, the things taking place now, the things which have yet to take place, and the end. Nothing is beyond the control of God; all things are working together in His divine providence to bring to completion all that He has declared must take place in order to establish the Kingdom program He designed for planet earth. God obviously has not revealed to mankind everything about Himself and His plan for history, but He has revealed a lot and mankind is responsible for knowing it, believing it, and cooperating with it. His words are not empty, and they are not powerless. The creation proves it, as do His signs, miracles, and wonders that authenticate Him, His message and His messengers, and fulfilled prophecy. All of these things work together to prove the truth and accuracy of His declarations. Only God can long ago declare things which have not been done and see to it that they come to pass exactly as predicted. Only God can plan things in eternity past that will come to be exactly as He planned them to be and then continue on into eternity future. Only God can precisely predict the future down to the minutest detail and have it come to pass in all of the details whether they are major or they are minor. All of His plans will come to pass; all of His purposes will be fulfilled. Only God can do things that have never been done before, and we are destined to see amazing things take place in the future, things the world has never before seen. When God plans something, when God has a purpose, when God declares things, all will take place as He has determined them to do so.

Declare, נִגַּד, means to tell, to inform, and to make known referring to speaking information for any purpose. This is a causative verb, meaning God causes these things to be known. He declares them in various ways and at various times and places through various people, by means of what we refer to as general and special revelation, and then He brings them to pass in due time which serves to authenticate or validate Him and His message.

Only God knows the end from the beginning. It is easy for man to look back and determine what has happened in the past, depending on the presence and the accuracy of historical records, of course, but it is impossible for mankind to accurately predict the future down to the smallest detail. Man may think he is in control of the world's destiny, but he is not; God is in control of history, and history is moving inexorably toward the

establishment of the mediatorial kingdom God originally planned for planet earth when He created it and placed mankind on it to rule over it. Man may think he can predict the future, but he cannot. Our world appears to be a chaotic mess—and it is—but God is in control of it and out of this chaotic mess, which is not the result of the plan of God, but rather it is the result of man's rebellion against God, the Messianic Kingdom with the Messianic King occupying the Davidic Throne will emerge. The chaos will cease, and the Messianic Kingdom will be a time, planned by God, yet unimagined by man, that will be the most amazing, blessed time in history. Only God could even plan such a plan, and only God can bring such a plan into existence.

Implied in this assertion is the notion that there was a beginning and that God controlled that beginning. Equally as obvious is the fact that there is an end and God controls that end as well.

Genesis 1:1 <sup>1</sup>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 Peter 3:7 <sup>7</sup>But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

There can be no doubt that God's plan for history will be fulfilled, but He reinforces that truth by declaring that His purpose or plan will be established which will result in the completion of His desire, which is the salvation of national Israel and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom ruled by the Davidic King, God the Son.

Purpose, עצה, means a plan, scheme, or purpose referring to a course of action. It is usually used in connection with the advice of counselor or someone providing direction. God, of course, needs no counsel, and God Himself provides the direction.

Establish, קום, means to institute, to enact, or to establish which refers to confirming something as valid and in force.

Accomplish, עשה, means to do, to labor, to work about anything referring to carrying out or performing an action or a course of action.

Good pleasure, הִפֵּץ, means delight, pleasure, desire, or matter. The root idea is to incline towards something. It has the sense of referring to desire as an object of something that is desired.

God has a purpose or a plan for history, He is going to institute that plan, He is going to ensure that it is carried out, and He will accomplish what He originally set out to do which results in His desires for history and the world fulfilled. God's words are powerful, they can create something out of nothing, and whatever He speaks, He will do it and He will complete or fulfill it. Whatever He plans, He will certainly do. To confirm those truths, He uses King Cyrus as the example of how He works things out, in time and space, to complete His purposes. The assignment He has for Cyrus will be completed and the Israelites will be freed to return to Jerusalem. If He can accomplish His purposes for Israel by predicting the rise of a king and his army and see them come to pass, then He can bring His purposes for world history to come to pass. "[T]he Lord does not conceal or alter the Cyrus plan.

He [Cyrus] comes as a rapacious victor (*bird of prey*), under the compulsion of the divine will (*purpose*). God has spoken (*said*), God will act (*bring about*); it is the product of divine wisdom (*planned*) and backed by divine action (*do*)" [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 296]. There are four verbs in verse 11. The first verb, "spoken," reveals the plan, the second, "bring" and third, "planned," refer to the enactment of the plan, and the fourth, "do," refers to the completion of God's plan.

Cyrus becomes the example of a prediction that will come to pass in the future and which will serve to validate God's unique ability to predict the future and bring it to pass just as He has done throughout the nation's history. Cyrus is likened to a bird of prey that is going to come out of the east, a far country, against Babylon (Is. 44:28-45:7), which Medo-Persia will conquer as surely as a bird of prey snatches its meal off the ground or out of the water. While Cyrus will be thinking that he is a powerful, mighty king fulfilling his desires to kill and conquer, He is really fulfilling God's purposes in relation to Israel.

Call, קָרָא, means to call, to summon, or to appoint referring to calling someone in an official manner. It refers to assigning a task to someone. We should not think that God specifically spoke to Cyrus and told him what he was supposed to do. Instead, God sovereignly guided him and ensured and assisted His success behind the scenes, so to speak, so that Cyrus was going to end up conquering Babylon and setting the Israelites free just as God wanted him to do. God called him "the man of My purpose." Cyrus knew nothing about this until he was shown the Scriptures after the fact, but it is noteworthy that he, in contrast to the ever-disobedient nation, was obedient to God's call and repatriated the Israelites back to Jerusalem.

One caveat in all this is the fact that Cyrus is not specifically named here in verse 11. In my opinion, it is very likely that he is the subject of this prophecy given what has immediately preceded it in terms of Cyrus being the king that God is going to use to defeat Babylon and repatriate the Israelites. Babylon is in the immediate context of this prophecy which also reinforces the conclusion that Cyrus is this "bird of prey" that is being called out of the east. The east is also where Media and Persia are located in terms of their geographical relationship with Babylon and Israel, both of which are west of Medo-Persia. While all the relevant factors point to Cyrus and while I am convinced this is a reference to Cyrus and I fail to see any appropriate alternative, I would not get dogmatic about it either. Smith maintains that the identity of this "bird of prey" is incidental to the important meaning of the verse and that it "is far more important to appreciate the importance of the general principle taught in these promises (God speaks and he establishes his plans), than to focus on an unidentified historical event" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 293]. Other commentators, while acknowledging that Cyrus is not specifically named, also admit that the context I just explained can hardly be a reference to anyone but Cyrus.

An affirmative word is used here to confirm the truth just spoken. The NASB translates this Hebrew word as "truly" (twice) and as "surely" (once), but all three are actually the same word in Hebrew.

Truly (and surely), אֲנִי, mean also, yea, indeed, or even. It can denote emphasis which is the situation in this verse. "The particle אֲנִי 'even, surely' introduces an intensive clause" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 293, n. 661]. אֲנִי introduces intensive clauses [Wilhelm Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, sec.153, 483]. "Spoken" is in a verb form that represents intensity, and "bring" represents causative action. God is intensely speaking and causing His plan to come to fruition.

The word אֲנִי has an emphatic, intensive sense to it in Hebrew. "This use of אֲנִי as a correlative conjunction is regarded as a 'noteworthy inclusion' since it signals that the information referred to in each sentence preceded by אֲנִי carries equal weight as far as the substantiation of an explicit or implicit assertion is concerned." [van der Verwe, Naude, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 40.14(d), 396]. "The threefold repetition of the particle 'ap 'even, surely' in the second half of this verse emphasizes that this promise is an unshakable truth that the listener can count on" [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 293].

The NASB's use of this word in this instance where the translators used the word "surely" is misleading. The word appears in the NASB text in italics which otherwise denotes the addition of a word to the text for purposes of clarification in English. That was not necessary in this verse; the Hebrew word is in the Masoretic text and "surely" did not require a font in italics in order to suggest it is an addition in English. It is not. The word can mean "surely;" therefore, using it as part of the translation is the completely correct thing to do.

Having said that, the NASB translation's use of this word, "surely" is acceptable, but there was no need to use two different English words for the same Hebrew word used in a consecutive fashion to make an emphatic point. I prefer the LEB translation. Isaiah 46:11<sup>11</sup>... Indeed I have spoken; indeed I will bring it *to being*. I have formed *it*; indeed I will do it (LEB). The repetition of the words is a powerful revelation of the emphasis being placed on the words spoken, and dividing that one Hebrew word into two English words reduces the impact of what is being emphasized by the repetition in Hebrew.

The emphasis here is on God and on His promises and His ability to do what He says He will do. There is absolutely no doubt the predicted events are going to occur. The Creator God of the universe, who is absolute truth, is the guarantee that these things will come to pass.

Next, an admonition to listen is directed to those who are stubbornly refusing to listen to God.

Isaiah 46:12<sup>12</sup>"Listen [שָׁמַעַתְּ] to Me, you stubborn[אֲבִיר]-minded [לֵב], Who are far [רְחֹק] from righteousness.

Listen, שָׁמַעַתְּ, means to hear or to listen, but it also, in some contexts, carries the sense of understanding what has been heard and then obeying it. The sense is to listen, hear, or pay close attention to and usually respond in conformity to what was heard. When God is speaking to the Israelites, their unwillingness to listen to God is linked to rebellion. "The

primary meaning of *šāma'* is hear sounds with the ear. Where words are heard, it implies an engagement with the mind and comes to mean listen.... In many passages, *šāma'* means listen attentively, pay attention.... This meaning is found esp. in the impv. [imperative verb form], a summons to hear or to listen, when introducing direct speech" [Willem A. VanGemeren, s.v. "שמע," *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 175-180].

Stubborn, אָבִיר, means mighty, valiant, strong, and powerful. "When used to describe a person or a person's heart, it normally refers to a strength independent of or opposed to God" [Baker and Carpenter, s.v. "אָבִיר," *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament*, 6].

This word is linked to the heart, לֵב. In Hebrew thought, the heart and the mind are more or less equivalents, but a literal reading of the text is "heart." The Hebrew language does not have a word that specifically means "mind." "Mind. Center of intellectual activity, an English term translating several different Hebrew and Greek terms. The biblical languages possess no one word parallel to the English 'mind.' The primary word is *leb*, which means 'heart'" [Gerald P. Cowen, s.v. "mind," *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed., 1104].

When "mighty" or "powerful" is used in conjunction with "heart," the sense is "stubborn of heart." That is why the NASB translates these words, אָבִיר לֵב, as "stubborn-minded." In English, we use an idiom, "headstrong," to describe this condition; we may also describe it as being "pig-headed." "In itself, the word simply means *mighty* or *stout*, but in this context the *strong of heart* may be those who exercised this strength in hardening their heart against the grace of God. This does not mean, as Hahn suggests, that they could be conquered through either the love or the wrath of God, but simply that they made their hearts to be strong in resisting the overtures of God" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:229]. The more literal translation of this is "strong of heart" or "mighty in heart." The problem with Israel has been their continual refusal to believe the revelation God has provided them. Even today, the number of Israelites who believe is very small, and the majority are still in active rebellion against God, with most of them being atheists or agnostics. The orthodox are religious, but they remain in unbelief. That situation cannot be characterized so simply as a failure to know, they do know, but they do not want to accept what they know. They truly are "stubborn of heart." At this time, the nation continues to experience the temporal discipline that God promised them for their disobedience and rebellion, but the promise revealed in verse 13 is that they will be granted "salvation in Zion."

"We often consider hard-heartedness the result of arrogance, the attitude of those who do not think they need deliverance. But it may be just as much, as here, the response of those who recognize their need but cannot believe that God can meet it. Here the unbelief seems to be focused in three questions: Is God really strong enough to wrest his people from the gods of Babylon? Would he want to save them at all, since their sin will have been so grievous? Is the conquest of Babylon by another pagan, Cyrus, really an acceptable mode of deliverance?" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 237-238]. These questions may

be summarized by using the word “doubt.” Would, or even could, God do what He has been saying through Isaiah that He is going to do? He can and He will!

This is describing Israelites who are in rebellion against God. The context suggests that these are the people who think God should not be using a pagan king, Cyrus, to free His people from the Babylonian captivity. They are full of inappropriate questions and doubt. However, the Israelites really didn't need a specific reason to be in rebellion, and the exact reason for this situation is unstated in this verse.

Isaiah has presented a progression of thought that calls out Israel's failure to obey the words they were hearing, and, on top of that, to doubt them. While those things have been a national sin since the formation of the nation, it certainly becomes more and more of a problem the closer Israel moves to the time when they will be in such a state of rebellion that Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed.

The Israelites have already been rebuked for questioning God.

Isaiah 40:27 <sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the LORD, And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God”?

After questioning God and rebelling against Him for so long, they blinded themselves and caused their hearing to fail and their eyes to go blind.

Isaiah 42:18 <sup>18</sup>Hear, you deaf! And look, you blind, that you may see.

The Lord finally tires of the nation's rebellious attitude to the point that He pronounces a curse on them.

Isaiah 45:9 <sup>9</sup>“Woe to *the one* who quarrels with his Maker— An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you doing?’ Or the thing you are making say, ‘He has no hands’?”

In chapter 46, He has called them transgressors (v. 8) and hard-hearted or stubborn minded (v. 12).

Israel was privileged to have more revelation than any other people on earth. They saw and they heard, but they never really embraced what they saw and what they heard.

Isaiah 6:9–10 <sup>9</sup>He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.’” <sup>10</sup>“Render the hearts of this people insensitive, Their ears dull, And their eyes dim, Otherwise they might see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, Understand with their hearts, And return and be healed.”

The end result of their rebellion against what they saw and what they heard was going to be destruction. That would take place in 586 BC when Babylon destroyed the nation and took the people into captivity.

Isaiah 6:11–12 <sup>11</sup>Then I said, “Lord, how long?” And He answered, “Until cities are devastated *and* without inhabitant, Houses are without people And the land is utterly desolate, <sup>12</sup>“The LORD has removed men far away, And the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

We know that once the Israelites returned to the land from Babylon, they still had not learned the lessons that God’s temporal discipline was designed to teach them. Israel experienced the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple a second time at the hands of Rome in AD 70. They will experience dispersion and destruction one final time at the hands of antichrist during the Tribulation, but at the end of that the nation will finally be saved, which is what verse 13 is revealing.

Some theologians believe that this verse is a reference to some Israelites who were discouraged that they were in captivity and that the imminent promise of release was not true; therefore, they were simply sad and discouraged about their plight and the seeming failure of God to do anything about it. The situation is, however, that rebellion, disobedience, and sin were the long-term problems in Israel, not discouragement. “These people are the ‘rebels’ in 46:8 ... [T]heir error was a simple hard-hearted unwillingness to believe in God’s ability to do everything he planned. If they were not willing to believe God, they would not be people who could demonstrate the righteousness of God in their lives by acting in faith” [Gary V. Smith, *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture: Isaiah 40-66*, 294].

These words are directed to those who are “far from righteousness.” Far, רָחֵק, means distant, far off, far away, or remote referring to an amount of separation between two spatial points. It has the sense of a distant one, that is, a person who is distant in location from someone or something. It is used in either the spatial or the temporal sense. This word is used as a figure of speech to refer to those who have removed themselves from God and are therefore unsaved, which places them far from the righteousness He desires to see in His people.

What does righteousness mean in this context? “Here it refers to those who have no righteousness before God, who themselves are not righteous. Those who are far from righteousness are those who are far from being right with God, and so are deep in their own sin and depravity” [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:229]. Of course, we know that no human being has any righteousness that will commend them to God because no person possesses any righteousness in and of themselves. However, we also know that people who believe and are therefore born again, have the righteousness of God imputed or credited to them (Rom. 4:11; James 2:23). This suggests that belief resulting in justification salvation is what is in view in this verse. Verse 13 is also going to suggest the same thing when God’s righteousness is going to be granted to Israel alongside national salvation. The emphasis is on God’s righteousness, which is identified by the personal pronoun, “My.” Righteousness is found only in God, and it only comes from God. His righteousness becomes manifest in those who believe because they are granted, or given, His righteousness as a grace gift based on belief.

“... chs. 40-55 typically apply *righteousness* to God, not to humans. When it is so applied, it most commonly refers to God’s righteous actions in regard to his covenant with Israel.

That is, he will be faithful to the promises he made to be their God and to deliver them from all their enemies. It is clear that this is the point in v. 13. The parallelism with *salvation* leaves little doubt about that point. Whatever Israel's righteousness may have been, that is not finally what qualifies them for a relationship with God. It is solely the undeserved faithfulness of God to his promises" [John N. Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40-66*, 238].

The point to verse 13 is that God is fully capable of seeing to that the Israelites are ultimately saved. Throughout history, Israel's refusal to believe this truth has cost them nearly 3,500 years of divine temporal discipline for disobedience and rebellion interrupted for only a few years during the reigns of a few of Judah's kings when a faithful king assumed the throne for a short time. The salvation that released the Israelites from captivity in Babylon is a type of the final, ultimate national salvation of Israel. Verse 13 refers to the final salvation, which is the salvation that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26) which itself is a reference to national salvation that does not happen until the end of the Tribulation. It certainly does not apply to the return to the land from the Babylonian captivity.

Isaiah 46:13 <sup>13</sup>אֲבִיבְרִיב אֶבְרִיב אֶבְרִיב [קָרִיב] My righteousness, it is not far off [רְחֹק]; And My salvation will not delay [אֶעֱתֵר]. And I will grant [נָתַתִּי] salvation in Zion, And My glory for Israel.

National salvation for Israel was not realized when the captives returned to Israel from Babylon, nor was it realized when Israel became a nation again in 1948. It will be fully realized when the nation cries out to the Messiah to save them from destruction at the hands of antichrist right at the end of the Tribulation. Once the nation turns to Him in faith, Israel will be saved and the Messianic Kingdom will be inaugurated. This verse is referring to national salvation for Israel which cannot occur until the prophecy of Matthew 23:39 is fulfilled when the Jewish leadership cries out to Jesus to save them from certain annihilation at the hands of antichrist unless He intervenes to stop it.

Matthew 23:39 <sup>39</sup>“For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”

This salvation is something that only God can grant to Israel. The verb form indicates that God, identified by the personal pronoun “I,” will save Israel; Israel cannot save herself. Grant, נָתַתִּי, means to give, to put, or to cause to receive. It has the sense of giving which is the result of transferring possession of something concrete or abstract to somebody.

“The prophet assures God's people that their deliverance will not be long delayed. Departing from the historical situation the prophet sees Israel's glorious future. The Lord will place in Zion salvation and glory for His people Israel” [Victor Buksbazen, *The Prophet Isaiah: A Commentary*, 370].

“It is said distinctly that in righteousness the Messiah will judge and make war to deliver His people, Israel, and to set up His millennial Kingdom at His second advent. This verse has the deliverance from Babylon in view, but that prefigures the last great deliverance preceding the Kingdom at the second advent, when He will place salvation in Zion for Israel, His glory. Then Israel will realize the mission to which God has called her to be His



glory, making Him known to all nations as a trophy of His grace" [Merrill F. Unger, "Isaiah," *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1270].

Bring near, קָרַב, means to come near or to approach. In this context, it means to bring near, and it is a verb of intensity. When Israel's salvation is finally near, it will be a period of intensity the world has not seen since the flood. God's wrath and judgment will be poured out on the world, and His temporal divine discipline will fall on Israel. The purpose will be to separate out the unbelievers from the believers and bring the saved into the Kingdom.

Ezekiel 20:33–38 <sup>33</sup>"As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. <sup>34</sup>"I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; <sup>35</sup>and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. <sup>36</sup>"As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you," declares the Lord GOD. <sup>37</sup>"I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; <sup>38</sup>and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

Far off, רָחֵק, means to be far, far off, far away, or distant. It refers to being in a position that is a relatively great distance from another position in time or space or degree. It is negated which means God is not far away from Israel and the nation's salvation.

Even though the nation is faithless, God is faithful and He is working to fulfill the promises He made to national Israel's patriarchs. Israel does not realize that fact, but it is a fact; God is always working to ensure that world history is moving inexorably to the end He has decreed, and part of the work is ensuring the survival of Israel. In God's sight, all of this will happen soon, although to human beings it seems to be taking a very long time. The concept of happening soon, or not delaying, causes many theologians to suppose that this must be talking about some time shortly after Isaiah revealed these words. We have to remember, however, that God is outside of time, and our perception of time is not the same as His perception of time. Israel has yet to experience national salvation, and because God has promised it, it is sure to happen—all Israel will indeed be saved! In the meantime, He is providentially working on their behalf to ensure their survival until the appointed time arrives, whenever that is, and it is not long from God's perspective, when Israel will experience final, national salvation. This verse is clearly referring to national salvation in Zion which has yet to take place.

Will not delay, אָזְהַר, means to delay, to tarry, or to hesitate referring to taking longer or to delaying, slowing down, or lingering to extend a period of time and so delay or hold back an action. The sense is to take longer to do something than planned, scheduled, or required. This verb has the sense of intensity which is emphasizing the determination of God to bring salvation to national Israel. While it seems to Israel that God is taking a very long time to send Messiah, it is, in terms of history and in terms of God's view of time, a very short period. From our vantage point at this time in history, it seems that the time is very

near when God will finally finish his pre-Kingdom program for history and inaugurate the Messianic Kingdom. But that, of course, remains to be seen.

This is all for God's glory which is a fact that Dispensational Theology recognizes. Everything that happens in history is all oriented towards glorifying God. That is to say that God has a doxological purpose for history.

As used here, the word glory is not the usual Hebrew word that is translated "glory," כְּבוֹד. Here, the word glory is תְּפִאָּרָה which has two meanings that have been used to provide an interpretation of this clause in the verse. It may mean finery or ornament which is a reference to that which is an adornment of some kind with a focus on the beauty wearing it provides. The word may also mean honor and glory referring to the state or quality of giving a high attribution or status to someone.

Motyer interprets it as a reference to the beauty of Israel after God brings salvation to Zion. "Nevertheless, his will is *righteousness ... salvation... splendour* [sic]. It embodies and implements all the Lord's absolutely right purposes, brings salvation/deliverance to his people and is designed for their (lit.) 'beauty', i.e., to make them the lovely thing he desires for them to be. The idolater makes a god in his own image, the Lord intends to make his people in his" [J. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*, 296].

Young interprets it as a reference to the glory of God. "Of itself Israel is stout-hearted and far from righteousness. The nation will be the glory of the Lord, when His righteousness is brought near to them and they have received of His salvation. Then will it appear to all the world that the God of Israel is a God of grace who saves the stout of heart and those far from righteousness. Through the saved Israel, the glory of the Lord, will be seen the Lord of glory, the Savior of His people" [Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: A Commentary*, vol. 3, 3:230].

The glory of God has to be the meaning of this verse. Israel's national salvation is to the glory of God, not to the glory of Israel. It is true they will be the head nation and certainly Zion will be a beautiful place, but that is all to the glory of God who will make it all possible.