



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 49:1-26

“The Glorious Success of the Troubled Servant of Jehovah”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we turn again to Thee with grateful hearts for the redemption that is ours through the Lord Jesus Christ. And, Father, as we look back over the ages and reflect upon the fact that so many of the prophets and apostles and saints of ancient times have had, as the object of their hope, the same hope that we have. We are indeed amazed at the way in which Thou hast sovereignly worked out Thy plans and purposes. We thank Thee for the Prophet Isaiah and the revelation that was given to him. And as we read it, we marvel at the way in which it was fulfilled so minutely in the history of the Lord Jesus Christ. We marvel also, Lord, at the fact that men may actually read some of the pages of the word of God and not see in them the hand of God. We know as we read them we sense the power of the Holy Spirit as we read them. And even when we do not understand everything that we read we still sense that the Scriptures are inspired of God and are profitable for us.

And, Lord, tonight as we turn again to one of the great chapters that has prophecies concerning the Son of God, may they minister to us and build us up in our faith and strengthen us. And may they be useful to us in our Christian lives. We commit this hour to Thee with thanksgiving and praise for all that Thou hast promised to us

through the Redeemer who has come and is yet to come again. We pray in his name.
Amen.

[Message] Tonight we are looking at Isaiah chapter 49 and particularly directing attention to the first few verses of chapter 49 because it is in these chapters that we have a further revelation concerning the suffering servant of Jehovah. And the subject for tonight is “The Success of the Troubled Servant of Jehovah.”

Now, I think it would be good for us to read through the entire chapter, but we will direct most of our attention due to limits of time to the first six or seven verses.

Now, the prophet writes, beginning with verse 1.

“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. (Now, you can tell right from the beginning that the servant himself is speaking). Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God. And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him (Now, these next words are, I think, rendered inaccurately in the Authorized Version, which has “Though Israel be not gathered.” And they really should be rendered something like “And that Israel may be gathered together to him), yet shall I be glorified in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest (Now, here, again Yahweh speaks to the servant), and he said, it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus

saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped Thee (You know, it's so interesting to read these passages and to realize when you come to statements like this that these are phrases that the apostles pondered and came to understand and know because they cite them in their books in the epistles that they wrote. And I'm sure you'll recognize this as a citation of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians chapter 6. Verse 9), That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. (And, again, this is a text that is given to the Apostle John in Revelation chapter 7 as descriptive of the Messiah's work in the future). And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim. Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by

reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.”

Well, we turn again to the prophecies of the evangelical prophet whose place among the greatest writers humanity has produced is unchallenged. By tradition, Isaiah was of royal blood. His name means “Jehovah is salvation.” And that’s certainly an appropriate name because the great theme of Isaiah’s book is the fact that Yahweh is the salvation of the people of God.

Critics have often called him the great unnamed because while his name is given, so many of them feel that there were other writers who collaborated with the Isaiah that we know or perhaps even some who were not the Isaiah that we know have collaborated together to write this book. They have doubts about the authorship of chapters 40

through 66, describing them to Deutero-Isaiah, or to the Babylonian Isaiah, and some even think the book is written by more than two authors, three authors, Trito-Isaiah and so on. But, so far as we know, there are many indications of the book itself that support the idea of a unitary authorship. And I've never seen any convincing reason why we should not regard the Isaiah that we know who lived in the days of the kings mentioned in the opening of the book, wrote this book.

Now, the book itself, you may remember, may be outlined very simply. The first thirty-five chapters are prophetic in their import. But the emphasis of the first thirty-five chapters is judgement upon the nation because of unbelief. And then there is some historic interlude in chapters 36 through 39 concerned with Hezekiah, the king of Judah. And finally, beginning in verse 40 through verse 46, the last twenty-seven chapters of the book, give great details concerning the Messianic salvation. One could outline the three parts of the book by the use of three alliterated words: condemnation, confiscation and consolation.

The outlook of the first part of the book is the times of the Assyrians, and the outlook of the second part of the book, the outlook of the Assyrians and the Babylonians. But the outlook of the book from chapter 40 through chapter 66 is Babylonian. I think I mentioned the first time that we looked at Isaiah that these last twenty-seven chapters, you can always think of Isaiah as just like a miniature Bible in the sense there're thirty-nine chapters in the first two divisions, twenty-seven in the last, just like there're thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven books in the New Testament. And even the simplest of us can divide twenty-seven into three and come up with nine. And the last twenty-seven chapters may be easily divided into three parts.

You'll notice chapter 40 through 48 is the first of the nine chapters and it concludes in verse 22 with “There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.” And then in chapter 57 in the last statement of the 57th chapter, verse 21, “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” And then while the exact words are not used at the

conclusion of the book, the same sentiment is expressed there. And so, we have three divisions of the last part of the book, each of nine chapters. And the midpoint of the entire section of twenty-seven chapters is the 53rd chapter, verse 5 and verse 6. Isn't that striking? I don't know whether Isaiah understood that or not. Maybe he didn't understand this until after he finished his book and some good student in his day said, “Isaiah, did you know that verses 5 and 6 of chapter 53 are the middle point of the last part of your book?” Or maybe even the apostles didn't know this. And when we get to heaven they will put their hands on someone and say, “Well, you certainly taught us something we didn't realize. That there were twenty-seven chapters and the midpoint was verse 5 and verse 6,” where we read these words.

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

What a beautiful outline of those last twenty-seven chapters. Three chapters, each of the sections ending with the idea “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,” and the midpoint of these great Messianic prophecies, those verses which set out so plainly the work of our Lord in redemption.

Now, we also mentioned last time that there are a series of prophecies concerning the servant of Jehovah, chapter 42, chapter 49. The next one, next Tuesday night, the Lord willing, that we will look at will be chapter 50, if you want to read ahead. And then we will look at the great section, chapter 52, verse 13 through 53:12, the highlight of the suffering servant of Jehovah prophecies. And in these prophecies, we have the ministry of the servant of Jehovah set out in as much detail as we have anywhere in the Old

Testament. And it really takes the New Testament gospel records to give us more details than we find here of the ministry that the servant of Jehovah will undertake.

Now, the background is the deliverance from the Babylonian captivity. And Cyrus is the great Messiah, or anointed one, who will be used by God as his servant. But Cyrus fades into the background here and the servant of the Lord looms before our eyes. And first of all, we look at his call and qualifications. And we want to stress this. And then we will look also at his passion and prize, verse 7 and verse 8, if we have time.

Now, notice the statements that are made here and the suffering servant himself is speaking. “Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb.”

Now, if you turn back to chapter 48 and verse 16 we have a most interesting prophecy. “Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.”

Now, if you look back up in the verses that precede, you will discover that the one who says, “Now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me,” is the one who has just said in verse 12, “Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.” And so, this individual who is the first and the last in verse 16 says that “The Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.”

Now, you can see from this that if there is any text in the Old Testament that refers to the triune God, it is right here in Isaiah chapter 48. We know that the Bible does not, in the beginning, tell us that the God of the Bible is a trinity. In fact, you can read through the Old Testament and if you read it from the vantage point of the New Testament you can see the doctrine of a triune God. But if you did not have the New Testament to look back at the Old Testament, it would be much more difficult. You would know that God was a plurality because you read in the opening chapter, “Let us make man after our image and likeness.” And so, we have the idea of plurality. Then we

also have the appearance of the angel of Jehovah, who in specific context, is at a point in time in the context spoken of as the Lord. He is called the angel of the Lord and then he is called the Lord in the same context. A number of times, that occurs. And, of course, we have references to the Holy Spirit that mark him out as a divine being.

So, we have at least the triune God in this respect that there is a divine being who has created, there is the Holy Spirit of God who is a divine being, and then we have this divine being who is sent by the Lord God and his spirit. So, we have a very interesting thing. And we, as I say, have to say the doctrine of the Trinity is not unfolded in absolute clarity in the Old Testament. It's the New Testament that makes that evident. But you can sense that what we are doing is moving on to that. And these appearances of the angel of Jehovah, the theophanies, they are called, these theophanies were designed to prepare Israel for the fact that there would come someone who would be born among them and be the Son of God. So, the nation is being prepared slowly by divine revelation for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, we read here, “The LORD hath called me from the womb.” Now, this is not Israel, nor the prophet. But this is the Lord himself. As we read in a moment, “And he said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” And then he also is spoken of as the one who will deliver Israel the nation. So, this is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, “The one who called me from the womb.”

A German commentator said, “If the church has Christ at all, it is impossible that she should fail to find him here.”

Now, I like this statement very much because from what we know of the Lord Jesus Christ you can see that this absolutely is harmonious with it. “The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother.” “From the bowels of my mother.” The Messianic promises of the Old Testament say nothing of a human father of the Lord, or of the Messiah. For example, we've had, in Isaiah chapter 7, “A virgin shall conceive, and shall give birth to a son.” It's a reference to a woman. In Psalm 22 and verse 9 and

10 we read these words. “But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.” In Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15, of course, he is called the “seed of the woman.” And then in Micah chapter 5, verses 2 and 3 we read these words.

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.”

So, a Messianic prophecy says nothing of the human father of our Lord and this is in perfect harmony with it. “The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother he made mention of my name.”

Now, the Jewish people often will say, “If Jesus is the Messiah, why is not his name found in the Old Testament? If he is the Messiah, why is his name not found in the Old Testament?” Well, of course, one of the reasons would be that that would prevent all kinds of counterfeits from rising up just as counterfeits did begin to rise up after our Lord came. It wasn't but shortly after the time of our Lord that Bar Kokhba, which means “son of the star” and is related to Balaam's prophecy of the star that would arise, arose and sought to present himself as a Messianic figure. So, one can see immediately that that's one of the reasons why the Messiah's name is not given in the Old Testament. Of course, there're indications that he will be the savior or salvation of Israel and the nations. And that, of course, is what our Lord's name is. He is called Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. His name was Joshua, or the Lord is salvation. That's what Mary called out when she called out the back door to tell him to come in for lunch. It was

Joshua, or the Lord our salvation, or the Lord is salvation, or salvation of the Lord, come in. Well, that's the meaning of his name.

But there is something else that I find very interesting. He says here “From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.” I'm going to ask you to turn over to Luke chapter 1 and let's read verse 26 and following because here we have the annunciation by Gabriel, the archangel. And we read in verse 26 these words. Luke chapter 1,

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shall bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.”

Now, isn't that striking that just as Isaiah has said here in chapter 49, “From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.” In other words, the announcement of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ comes almost precisely at the time that the conception takes place.

So, it's just as the prophet said. If he had been named in the Old Testament, one might say, “Ah, but he was named in the Old Testament and in the Old Testament times and it says here, ‘From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.’” So, I can imagine someone rising up and saying, “Ah, I found a mistake in the Bible.” So,

we read here “From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.” And our Lord is named at almost the precise time of the conception.

Now, further words are spoken with reference to him. In verse 2, “He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword.” One thinks of the things that are said in the Bible with reference to him and the execution of divine judgement. In chapter 11 and verse 4 of this book, reference is made to the judgement that he will exercise as King when he rules and reigns upon the earth.

If you turn back a few pages to Isaiah chapter 11 and verse 4, this is what we read about the Messianic reign. “But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked one.” So, “He has made my mouth like a sharp sword.” That, do doubt, is a reference to the fact that when our Lord Jesus was here in his first coming he did say sharp words. He said sharp words to the Pharisees. He often said sharp words to those who were the enemies of the gospel. But we tend to think of our Lord’s first coming as the coming in which he came as a meek and gentle Messianic King. And we reserve the time when he comes with his mouth like a sharp sword for his Second Advent. Well, that is probably true. But the statement here “he has made my mouth like a sharp sword” is one that is true of our Lord in all of the circumstances of his ministry.

I think of the time in the day of questions, for example, in that last week when all kinds of questions were put to him and finally our Lord said, “Well, if you have finished asking your questions then I’m going to ask you a question.” And so, at the end of chapter 22,

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of the Messiah? whose son is he? They said, The son of David. And then he said to them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit

thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then called him Lord, how is he then his son? (And we read), And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”

Isn't that striking? So, he was able to put them to silence. So, the Lord has made his mouth like a sharp sword. And then we read, “In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me.” Verse 3, “He said to me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.”

Now, remember our pyramid, the pyramid of the term Israel. The term Israel refers, remember, to the Nation Israel, ethnic Israel, and then, our second division, our second line, in the triangle, and the first part, the broadest part of the triangle, the base of the triangle, the nation as a whole, then the second parallel line across marks out the remanent of Israel, believing Isrealites. The one of whom Paul refers when he says, “They are not all Israel.” That is the bottom part of the triangle. “They are not all Israel who are Israel.” In other words, there is an elect Israel within ethnic Israel as a whole. That's the second. But the center and kernel of Israel is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Prince of God. That is what Israel means. He is the covenant head, the covenant head of the family of God. And he is also the head of Israel. He is the Israel. He is the seed of Abraham. Remember, Paul in Galatians 3 makes that. He turns the Old Testament prophecies about Abraham's seed and says, “Notice, he saith, and to Thy seed. Not as of many like seeds; but as of Thy seed as of one, which is Christ,” he goes on to say. So, Christ is Israel. The believing element is Israel, the true Israel, and then all of the ethnic decedents of Jacob may be called Israel, not Abraham. That is why in the Bible we are called children of Abraham even though we may be gentiles because we have believed. But we believing gentiles are never called children of Israel. So, when he says here then “Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified,” he is talking, of course, about the Prince of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Now, the fourth verse might seem startling to you. “Then I said (And this is the servant of the Lord, the Israel, the kernel of all, the Messiah to come) then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain.” One might think that this is a strange thing for the Messianic King to say. But remember, the Messianic King is one divine person. But he possesses two natures. One is a human nature; one is a divine nature.

Now, in the divine nature, of course, we have all of the attributes of deity, one divine person, one divine nature. But our Lord, at a point in time, took to himself an additional nature, a human nature.

Now, in the human nature he must experience apart from sin all of the growth and development that human beings experience, or should experience. And in our Lord’s case there were certain things even in his adult ministry that he did not know. For example, he did not know the time of the Second Advent.

Now, from the standpoint of the divine person he knew the end from the beginning. But he voluntarily surrendered the use of his divine attributes and submitted himself to the father for the carrying out of the mediatorial task. And he himself studied the Scriptures, grew in the knowledge of the Scriptures, grew in the experience of obedience, never disobeying. He did not, as the writer of the Hebrews puts it, he did not learn to obey, but he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. In other words, he experienced obedience by the things which he suffered. He had to find the will of God just as you and I have to find the will of God. And he found the will of God by waiting on the father for instruction as to what he should do and what he should say. He waited on the Lord.

Now, there is a big difference between you and me. Of course, we have to find the will of God and then when we have found the will of God when it is revealed to us by the Lord what is his will, we have a difficult time obeying because within us there is the struggle between the sin principle and the divine new nature. But in our Lord’s case,

as soon as he found the will of God, or as soon as the will of God was revealed to him, he obeyed implicitly. So, in his case he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. He was not tempted in the same way that you and I are because he was not tempted from within. We're tempted from without and from within. But our Lord was tempted from without.

Now, he was tempted by Satan and he was tempted in the same way that you and I are, except that the source of the temptation was different. The temptation that we all have is the temptation to turn us out from the will of God. That is really the essence of temptation. In our case, it may come from the flesh, it may come from Satan, it may come from the world. In our Lord's case, it came from the world and from Satan, but not from himself. But the same principle is involved.

Now, some people think, “Well, if he didn't have temptations from the flesh, then he doesn't fully understand us.” No, that's not true at all. In fact, what you are really saying is that that kind of temptation is different. It's not different. It's just a different source, but it's the same essential temptation to turn us out from the will of God.

And then there are people who give the impression that you can really sympathize with a person if you've fallen into the same kind of sin. In other words, you can really be more sympathetic with an alcoholic if you've been an alcoholic yourself. That's false. Or you can be sympathetic with an adulterer because you've been an adulterer yourself. In fact, some people have so turned that around that they have suggested of what we ought to do. Amazing. In Christian circles what we ought to do is to go out and experience some sin that we might be able to sympathize. How foolish can you get? Sympathy from sin does not arise out of yielding to sin. Sympathy arises from overcoming because it's only those who have overcome that know the real stress and the real tension of temptation.

For example, if we could put this in a diagram, we could diagram this in this respect. That if we had one hundred percent degree of temptation and we all start on on

the Christian life, most of us fall at one point or another. Howard Prier’s been able to do better than most of us. And so, he might get up fairly good, up to thirty or forty percent degree of testing before he fell.

But you see, when our Lord came here he managed to perfectly withstand temptation. So, he knows what you feel at five percent where you and I fall out, and what you feel at ten percent, and what you feel at twenty percent, and what you feel at thirty percent. He knows what Howard felt and on beyond that. It’s the person who has overcome sin’s temptation that is able to sympathize with the higher degree of temptation. So, it’s the holy person who is best able to sympathize with a person who has fallen. Not an unholy person. But now, I’ve strayed a long way from this text. But it was necessary in order to understand what we have here. “Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain.”

Now, the Lord Jesus was a true human being. And as he looked out in his ministry he saw much reason for discouragement because there were very few responding. He was preaching the gospel in the purity of the preaching of the Son of God. No one ever preached the gospel more purely than he. And yet, it was only a few who were coming. They are the little flock of God. And there would be very good reason for our Lord to think, humanly speaking, “The work that I’m doing seems to be in vain. I have spent my strength for nothing and in vain.” But notice the conclusion of that verse. “Yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.” So, looking out on things there might have been occasion for disappointment and discouragement. But our Lord’s true trust was in the Lord God. And as one looks at him carrying out his ministry and sees him, for example, weeping over the city of Jerusalem. That is an expression of what is referred to here. It is the expression of love and compassion and the human feeling of disappointment that Israel the nation has not responded to her Messianic King. It’s the true kind of compassion that a Christian feels

for someone who has had the gospel preached to them plainly and clearly, and yet they are turning away from it.

Remember in Gethsemane. “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” Amazing prayer if that was all that it was because he has already said he is going to Jerusalem, he’s going to suffer and be buried and be raised again the third day. How is it possible for him to pray like this? Well, that’s a prayer that arises out of his human nature. But notice what follows, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.”

Even the great John Calvin said that the opening part of that prayer was something he let slip, but then recovered with the last words. No, it was not a slip, John. You know better now when you’re in heaven. It was not a slip. It was an expression of a genuine sense that came out of his human nature. But even then he said, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.”

So, here, that’s what he means. And in the New Testament we read in 1 Peter, I think it is chapter 2 and verse 23, words that are somewhat parallel to this. We read, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.”

Now, let’s notice verse 6. We read, “And he said (This is Yahweh speaking to the Messiah) and he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel.” Incidentally, you can tell from this that the Israel that has been referred to, “my servant, O Israel,” is not Israel the nation, but Israel the Messiah. Because here he is the one who is responsible for the restoration of Israel, Israel responsible for the restoration of Israel. So, he says, “It is a light thing that thou should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.”

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Now, as we've been saying, I think last week, laid stress upon this. The ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, remember, was first to the Nation Israel. “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But when the lost sheep of the house of Israel, it becomes evident that they are turning away from him, one can see even in the Lord's ministry an indication of the fact that he realized that the message is going to go out to the gentiles. “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring.” And then when the Greeks come to him and say, “We would see Jesus.” He recognizes now the movement of the Holy Spirit in what is ultimately to be efficacious grace among the gentiles, there is a turning among the gentiles toward the Lord God and immediately he says, “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” In other words, he recognizes that the cross is soon to come when the program of God will branch out and include the gentiles.

And then as you read through the Book of Acts that's what you read. The apostles go to the Jews and then they, after they are rejected by the nation as a whole gathering some of the remnant of the true Israel, they move out to the gentiles. Paul puts it well, I think, in Romans 15. He says, “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.” And so, that is what we see here already in the Prophet Isaiah. “Thus saith the LORD (in the 8th verse), In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.” And so, the father speaks ratifying the promises in the language that is reminiscent of Isaiah chapter 53 and verse 3, a covenant of the people. Notice, if I may ask you to do this. Notice the reference in verse 7. “Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth.”

Now, I'm going to take the liberty – I should have hurried a little instead of spending so much time on that part of the two natures – of reading something about what

David Baron said about the Jewish people. It will help you, I think, to understand the Jewish people. David Baron was a Jewish man, converted. Referring to this particular idea that our Lord was despised and abhorred by the nations, he said, “Israel’s blind hatred to the Messiah does not stop short at His person, or His virgin mother, but extends to His words, and works, and particularly to those of their nation who are ready to take upon them his reproach and follow Him. Thus His works are still ascribed to witchcraft and Beelzebub; His gospel is Aven or Avon-gillajon, “the sinful or mischievous writing;” while Rabbinic hatred to His followers (especially from among the Jews) was not satisfied with classing them as ‘apostates’ and ‘worse than heathen,’ but rose to the height of instituting a daily public prayer in the most solemn part of their liturgy, that ‘the Nazarenes’ may, together with all apostates, ‘be suddenly destroyed,’ without hope, and ‘blotted out of the book of life.’”

Now, David Baron was a converted Jew, and then organized a mission to the Jews and served as a missionary to his own people for all of his life. He says, “The Holy One who knew no sin, nor was guile found in his mouth, is often styled ‘the Transgressor;’ and another term frequently found in the mouth of the Jews is ‘Tolui’ – ‘the hanged One,’ which is equivalent to ‘the accursed Ones.’ There are other lying and filthy designations, such as ‘Ben Stada,’ or ‘Ben Pandera,’ which imply blasphemies not only against Him, but against her who is ‘blessed among women.’” In other words, he’s called a bastard among them.

So, these are the things that the prophet anticipated a long time before the Lord Jesus Christ came. If Israel had only studied the Scriptures, they would have known that he was the Messiah. That really is the problem we have today, isn't it? We have, as gentiles, our fundamental problem in life, the failure to study the Scriptures. The neglect of the Scriptures is really the source of almost all of our difficulties in life. May God help us to give attention to his word. Let’s bow together in prayer.

“The Glorious Success of the Troubled Servant of Jehovah” by S. Lewis Johnson
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[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for these marvelous prophecies written so many years before the time of the coming of Thy, our Lord. And such marvelous grace Thou hast unfolded him to us, so that there could be no mistake by men whose hearts were seeking to know Thee. Lord...