



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

The Suffering Savior, Various Scriptures

"The Servant of Jehovah and the Suffering Messiah:

The Nature of the Atonement - I"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Our Heavenly Father, we are grateful again that we're able to come to Thee and ask for Thy blessing upon us as we study the Scriptures. We ask that Thou would give us understanding. Enable us to profit from the studies that we undertake. May they help us to understand the sufferings of our Lord in a more significant way? We pray that the Holy Spirit may enlighten us and also motivate us as a result of the truth that comes home to our hearts. We would ask Thy blessing upon each one present and we pray, Lord that together the result of our study together may be further glory for Jesus Christ who has loved us and loosed us from our sins in his own precious blood. We commit the hour now to Thee. For His name's sake. Amen.

[Message] Tonight we are beginning a two or three-part series entitled, "The Servant of Jehovah and the Suffering Messiah: A Study in the Nature of the Atonement". Now this is within our larger series, but we want to devote some special attention to the great passages in the Old Testament in the Book of Isaiah, which set forth our Lord as the Suffering Servant of Jehovah and seek to analyze them and discover what they have to say about the nature of the atonement. We have been looking at New Testament passages in

the passion of our Lord and now we want to go back and look at these Old Testament passages upon which he relied so much in the understanding of his ministry.

Probably in looking back over the analysis of what we've been doing, it would have been better for us to insert these two or three studies earlier in the series, but since they require a little more understanding to handle these Old Testament passages, I've reserved them for the present time in our series. At any rate, I want you to turn in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 42 and in a few moments, we will look at the first of the Servant songs and at least the second, I hope, tonight as well. So our topic, "The Servant of Jehovah and the Suffering Messiah: A Study in the Nature of the Atonement".

And first a few words by way of introduction. Atonement may be the most important word in Christian theology. The English word "atonement" comes from the English words "at" plus an old Middle English word "onement". So "at onement" or at one; in union; in harmony, is the meaning of the term atonement. It is that which Jesus Christ did in his suffering death. He accomplished an atonement. He restored the shattered relationship between sinners and a holy God and the ransom of his life was the means to that end. So atonement; at onement.

The Old Testament is the story of the development of the history of redemption and, of course, of the preparation for atonement. So we should think of the Old Testament as a time of preparation, a time of history, in which God unfolds in certain stages, (the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "In many parts and in many ways, God of old spoke to the fathers by the prophets") certain stages, the doctrine of the atonement.

There are two dominant figures in the Old Testament teaching, in the Old Testament prophecy, which our Lord applied to himself. I wish that we were a little smaller class and I could just stop at this point and ask you a few questions. I don't want to embarrass you in front of this gigantic audience on Monday night, but nevertheless, I

would like to be able to ask you this question, "What are the two dominant figures of the Old Testament prophecies that our Lord applies to himself?"

Now these two figures speak of atonement and its issues. Now if you're wise at all, even if you didn't know those two figures, you would know since we're studying the Suffering Servant of Jehovah that undoubtedly one of these figures is the Servant of Jehovah. And, of course, you would be wise and you would be right. For the Servant of Jehovah is one of the dominant figures of the Old Testament and it is one of those figures of Old Testament prophecy which the Lord Jesus referred to himself. He said, for example, that "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto (not to be served), but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many". He is telling us in that text, which probably rests upon these Servant songs, that he is the Servant of Jehovah and he came to give his life a ransom for many.

What is the second figure which the Lord Jesus applied to himself? Well now, if you didn't have any idea at all, you at least could remember the text that I just cited. The text is, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many". And I'll bet that Billy Crump knows that second term. What is it, Billy?

[Comment from the audience.] [Laughter]

[Johnson] No, I don't think I did. I cite the text again. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many". Guess. What other figure, what other term from the Old Testament did our Lord often apply to himself? Think of that text.

[Comment from the audience.]

[Johnson] Thank you, Billy. There are two Billy's in the audience [Laughter]. I knew you would know it, Billy. [Laughter] That's right. It is the term Son of man. And very strikingly, in that text, Mark chapter 10, verse 45, these two figures are there. One of them explicitly, the Son of man, the other implicitly, he came to serve.

Now the striking thing about these two figures: the Servant of Jehovah and the Son of man; figures of Old Testament prophecy, which our Lord applied to himself, the striking thing about them is that they tell, in a nutshell, what Jesus Christ came to do. For the first figure, the Servant of Jehovah tells us that he came to suffer. That the climax of his career upon the earth would be suffering for others.

The second term, the Son of man, is one that is not derived from Isaiah 42 or Isaiah 49 or Isaiah 50 or Isaiah 53, as is the term Servant of Jehovah. It is derived from Daniel chapter 7 and verse 13 and verse 14. And you'll remember that in Daniel chapter 7, Daniel is given a vision of a great assize and the Ancient of days is seated upon a throne and he sees the Son of man coming to the Ancient of days and receiving a kingdom. And that kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. And the Son of man is to reign over the earth as a result of the gift to him by the Father of a kingdom.

Now what does that text tell us about the career of the Son of man? Well it tells us simply that the climax of the activity of the Son of man in the future will be the activity of reigning. And so the two figures then go together. The Servant of Jehovah tells us that he will suffer. The Son of man tells us that he will reign. And together they give a blueprint of the career of the Old Testament Messiah. He will suffer and he will reign or as Peter says, "The prophets of the Old Testament search the Scriptures, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ (Servant of Jehovah) and the glories that should follow (the Son of man)."

And do you remember the incident in which the Lord Jesus drew near to the Emmaus disciples, Cleopas and perhaps Mrs. Cleopas, as they were going from Jerusalem

to Emmaus? He drew alongside and after he elicited from them their unbelief, and hence their miserable condition, because they had lost hold upon the risen Christ, he said to them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written". If they had studied the Scriptures, they would have known that the Messiah came to suffer. He came to offer a kingdom, but not a kingdom apart from suffering. He came not simply to suffer, but also to offer a kingdom. But the kingdom that he offered was a kingdom through suffering.

Now there are some friends of mine who like to say that Jesus Christ came to offer a kingdom and when Israel refused the kingdom then he suffered. That, of course, is true historically, but that is not the purpose of our Lord's first coming to give a kingdom. No kingdom could ever be given by our Lord to Israel apart from suffering. He came to offer a kingdom, but he came also to offer a kingdom only by means of sufferings. And then that's why he says,

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written: Ought not Messiah to have suffered these things, and then to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself".

And no doubt in that great exposition in which he was the text, in which he was the sermon, and in which he was the preacher, there loomed large in it an exposition of these passages that have to do with the Servant of Jehovah and the Son of man.

Now in this study we want to study the figure of the Servant of Jehovah and its contribution to the doctrine of the nature of the atonement. What do these great atonement passages tell us about the character of that work that Jesus Christ did to restore sinners to a holy God? Now I want to notice a couple of preliminary things, this is a

lengthy introduction, but it's necessary because it's something of an introduction to our two or three studies. I want to notice a couple of preliminary things.

In case there are some good Bible students in the audience who are very finicky about terms, I want to make one thing clear. The term "atonement" does not occur in the New Testament at all. Now the reason I say this is because occasionally in speaking over the radio and on the tapes, I've had letters from intelligent Bible students who've written in because I use the term "atonement" to refer to what Jesus Christ did on the cross. They've written in to remind me of the fact that the term "atonement" is not a biblical term. It does not occur in the New Testament at all. In the Old Testament, it is the rendering of a Hebrew word *kaphar*, which means "to cover over" or "to pacify."

Now I want to justify this term. It is true that in one place in the New Testament, in our King James Version, the word "atonement" is found. Now I don't know whether Mr. McRae is in the 5th chapter of Romans yet or not. If he is, I'm sure that he's commented upon it. In chapter 5 and verse 11 of Romans we read, "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement". Now the Greek word that is used there is the word *katallage*, which means reconciliation. And so this term should be translated reconciliation. And in the New Scofield Edition, it has been changed by the editors who realize that and we read, "By whom we have now received the reconciliation". Atonement is, therefore, a theological word. Now as you well know, the term "trinity" does not occur in the Bible either, but we use the term "trinity" to refer to the Godhead. It is a theological term. There are many theological terms that we use and use rightfully because they express biblical teaching, but which may not be found specifically in the Bible.

Now we have to be careful about this because if we use terms that are not in the Bible, there is always the danger that we may wander off into some bypath meadow and not be giving biblical truth. But there are many of these that we use. As a matter of fact, the terms "new nature" and "old nature" are not in the Bible either. But frequently biblical

teachers use the term our "new nature" and our "old nature". And some use the term our "higher nature" and our "lower nature". But these are just attempts to explain what the Bible means when it uses the term "flesh", for example. So this is not a biblical word, but it is a theological word.

In the Old Testament it is the term that is used of the Day of Atonement. That word *kaphar* is based upon the fact that in Leviticus chapter 16, the great day in which the relationship between God and Israel was restored again, or renewed again would be a better term, for one year in the Day of Atonement, the term *kaphar* is used and that is the term that means to cover over. In the Old Testament then there was a kind of covering over of sins. They were not really done away with in Old Testament times.

In the New Testament times, we do not have covering over, for sins have been done away with, and that's why we do not have in the New Testament any term for covering over. The term reconciliation is used. The term redemption is used. The term propitiation is used. Many of these terms that refer to the saving work of Jesus Christ are used, but we cannot use atonement in the sense of covering over. But now since almost all theologians need one word to describe the whole of the activity of Jesus Christ when he died upon the cross, and since atonement in English is a good word, that is the word they have hit upon, and that is the word that they use, and you cannot understand theology if you don't understand atonement. It comes from two English words "at" plus "onement" and it expresses what has happened now that Jesus Christ has died for our sins. The Old Testament, I say, was a time of promise. The New Testament is a time of fulfillment and that explains this.

Let me illustrate the relationship between the Testaments because I think it is well for us to have this in mind. Let's just suppose that there is a young girl who would like to get married. Let's suppose there's one of those. Let's suppose also that through force of circumstances she's heavily in debt. Let's just suppose there is a young lady who's heavily in debt. And let's suppose that, therefore, it would be a very happy circumstance if she

could manage to land a young man as a husband who would assume her obligations. And let's just assume that it would be a real stroke of good fortune if she could land a big fat fish who would have enough money to pay all of her debts and to set her on easy street. In other words, as we would say back in the '30s, I know you've studied about the '30s in your history books, back in the '30s they would say, "She's looking for a sugar daddy". So at any rate, let's just suppose that there happens to fall across her path just such a person.

But now let's suppose to make it a good illustration, more real, that she really falls in love with this man and he really falls in love with her. But she has this problem of all these debts. And so finally when he pops the question, she realizes it's a moment of crisis. She wants to get married and she does not want these heavy debts to stand in the way, but conscience finally triumphs and she says, "I would love to marry you, but I want you to know what you're getting into. I am heavily in debt." And he says, "How much are you in debt for?" She said, "Well, actually I'm in debt for ninety-eight hundred and fifty dollars". And he said, "That's nothing. I'll be happy to pay every one of those debts and on those terms I'm more than happy to have you as my wife", and they are engaged. And she goes home to her friend and she not only is happy because she's engaged, because she's been in love, but a tremendous burden has been lifted off of her heart because her debts are going to be paid.

But now they're going to be married in just a few weeks and so he said, "As a matter of fact, I'm going to present you as one of the wedding presents those bills stamped paid". Now in the meantime, she lives by faith in the faithfulness of her fiancé to the promises that he has given her. And so she is relaxed; she's happy because her faith rests in him and it's justified. So on the day of the wedding, he has in the meantime gone all over town, various places, he has paid all of her debts, he has all of those canceled receipts, and when the wedding ceremony takes place and she says, "I do" and he says, "I

do". Then afterwards he says, "I've got a little present for you". And in an envelope he hands to her all of those canceled bills. "It's paid for".

Now then, he does something a little extra. He said, "By the way" (now this, of course, is a true story, you understand, that's the reason I'm able to tell it with such realism [laughter]) He not only pays her debts, but he also says, "By the way, here's something else", and he reaches down in his pocket and he pulls out several checkbooks full of checks and he hands them to her and she's amazed to read that an account has been taken out in the name of Mr. and Mrs. S. Lewis Johnson, Jr. And he said, "I've opened a joint account. All that I have is just as much yours as it is mine". Now you can tell I made up that illustration, but this is designed to represent what happened when Jesus Christ died.

Now if you'll go back to Hebrew chapter 7 and read verses 11 through 19, you'll find that what I've told you is exactly in line with what the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews says concerning the Old Testament saints. They had the promises of a coming Redeemer, which were before them. They believed those promises. And on the basis of the faithfulness of the God who made the promise that there would come a Redeemer who would die for sins, they walked in faith, in consciousness of the forgiveness of sins, which was to be theirs, in fact, when the Redeemer came and suffered. And on the day that he came and cried out, "It is finished", that's the equivalent to the "I do's" of the marriage ceremony, the union came to pass. And not only were they forgiven, but they were introduced into a relationship to him of union that is deeper and more significant than the marriage union itself. And thus, they possessed not only the forgiveness of sins, but all of the riches that are in Jesus Christ our Lord. Now in the Old Testament then, they looked forward to the consummation of those promises. That's one thing I want to keep in mind as we go along. Atonement, realizing the Old Testament significance and the New Testament significance, but it's a theological word. Remember that.

Now the second thing I want you to bear in mind is that I am proceeding on the assumption that our Lord saw himself as the Servant of Jehovah. Thus, if that be true, it is most important that we should study what the Old Testament has to say about him. So now I want you to look down on your pages, if you already have Isaiah chapter 42 and I'm going to read a few of the verses of Isaiah chapter 42, which is the first of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah songs in the Book of Isaiah. When we turn to Isaiah, we turn to the evangelical prophet whose place among the greatest writers humanity has produced is unchallenged. Even men who do not believe the Scriptures acknowledge the greatness of the man who wrote the Songs of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. This is in the outline is Roman one, Isaiah and the Servant of Jehovah.

Now listen as I read the nine verses of Isaiah chapter 42, first nine,

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth justice to the nations. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth justice in truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth: and the coasts shall wait for his law. Thus saith God the LORD, he who created the heavens, and stretched them out; he who spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he who giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk in it: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and those who sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the LORD: (notice the capital letters, "I am the covenant keeping God) that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to carved images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

By tradition, Isaiah was of royal blood. And I am convinced myself that that tradition has a great deal of reason for truth if you judge Isaiah by the vocabulary that he uses. For Isaiah was a master of the Hebrew language and his vocabulary is rich and full, the kind of vocabulary that you might expect of a man who was of royal blood to have. His name means "Jehovah is salvation". His name, therefore, is very closely related to the name of the Lord Jesus. For that was essentially the name of him and also the name of Joshua. Critics have called him "The Great Unnamed", but what they mean by that is that they are not sure that one Isaiah has written all of the Book of Isaiah.

As you may have learned from your courses in religion in universities or colleges, most of the teachers in universities and colleges, as you well know, are rather liberal in their theology and Isaiah is usually said to be authored by two, sometimes three, and sometimes more prophets. Usually, the second author is called Deutero-Isaiah and ordinarily the first 35 or the first 39 chapters are assigned to the first Isaiah. And these great chapters beginning at chapter 40 through chapter 66, perhaps the most significant chapters of the book, these are assigned to Deutero-Isaiah, a second Isaiah. Sometimes they are assigned Trito-Isaiah or a third Isaiah. But so far as the teaching of the word is concerned, and I think that there is good scholarly reason for thinking so, one Isaiah is the author of the book.

The subjects that make up the first part of the book are so different from the subjects that make up the latter part of the book that I am well able to understand why the vocabulary and why some of the diction and style should be a little bit different in the latter part of the book.

Now we can outline Isaiah in this way and I put the outline on the board for you. It's not too important that you get it, but if you want it, you can. The first 35 chapters of the book are prophetic in significance and the keyword is condemnation. There are great prophecies of judgment, not only upon the nations with which Israel is in immediate

contact such as the Assyrian, but upon some of the other nations round about as well. Then there is a little historical interlude in chapters 36, 37, 38, and 39 and there the keyword is confiscation. And finally, the last part is almost entirely Messianic and the keyword is consolation; the background is the Babylonian captivity; and through Isaiah, God speaks with that captivity in its background moving on beyond the Babylonian captivity to the worldwide dispersion and gives Israel promises of ultimate restoration to the land.

The outlook then of Roman one is Assyrian. The outlook of Roman two is Assyrian and Babylonian and the outlook of the third division is Babylonian, but the look of Isaiah goes beyond to the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. The last section, the last 27 chapters, it's always easy to remember the chapters in the Book of Isaiah if you just remember that the Bible contains 39 books in the Old Testament, 27 in the new. And the big division in the prophecy of Isaiah is the first 39 chapters and the last 27 and everybody, even Billy Crump, knows that to divide twenty-seven by three equals nine. And strikingly, these last 27 chapters of the Book of Isaiah form three divisions of 9 chapters each. And I want you to notice that the last sentence of each of the 9 chapters, in chapter 48 and verse 22 we read, "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked". That is the conclusion of the first division of the last section of the book.

And then in chapter 57 and verse 21 we read, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked". And so this refrain now occurs a second time at the end of the second of the nine chapters and the same thought occurs in chapter 66 and verse 24 where we read, "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorrence unto all flesh. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked".

And it's also very interesting to know that the central two verses, in fact, the central section of the last 27 chapters of the Book of Isaiah is Isaiah chapter 53, verses 5 and 6,

"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've turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all".

That is the central two verses of the last 27 chapters of the Book of Isaiah; the midpoint. Not a few Gentiles, even a few Christians, have difficulty with our Lord's words, "Salvation is of the Jews"; the curved nose of the Jew. Now that's really a nice way to put it, the hook nose of the Jew. Thrust between the eyes of the Gentiles and the pure light of God has proved a great offense to Gentiles down through the years. And you know this anti-Semitic attitude is something that not only exists among the unsaved Gentiles, but it also exists among some of the Christian Gentiles. The Jews have been a great offense to them. It recalls William Norman Ewer's *How Odd of God to Choose the Jews*. And some people still think it is extremely odd that he should choose that recalcitrant, stiff-necked people. It reminds us of our Lord's words to Solomon in 1 Kings 9:7, he said, "And Israel", if they are disobedient, Solomon, "Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all the nations". And that is true to the present day.

When I was in California last week, we were discussing this with some of the leaders in Jewish mission societies. Two of them were at the table, one morning at breakfast, in the Holiday Inn down near the center of Los Angeles where we were staying. And I made the comment, "Well, it's very rare to find a genuine Christian that is anti-Semitic, in my opinion". And then, they began to tell me a few illustrations in some churches; these happen to be in the Midwest for these men were from the Midwest. As a matter of fact, he told us of a very well known evangelical church in the Midwest in which there was apparently no question about it being an evangelical church. That they had restrictions on membership that prevented Jews from becoming members and it was

still an issue to the present time. Now that's an amazing thing. That's something I can hardly understand, but it is still with us. A reading of the passages on the Servant of Jehovah should convince us that our Lord was right, however. "Salvation is of the Jews". And let us never forget that our Lord Jesus was a Jew.

Now we want to look at our two songs for just a few moments. I cannot expound in detail these songs. They are such great passages of Scripture that we could take a week speaking every night on almost each one of them. They are that significant. So I'll just stress one or two of the points that arise in them. The first song stresses the program of the ministry of the Messiah. You'll notice it begins with a "behold"; "Behold my servant". Now when you're studying the Bible, remember, often these little first words that begin sentences are the most important words and, furthermore, they give us a clue with regard to the argument of the writer.

Now just looking above, you'll notice that in verse 29, we read, "Behold (we didn't read, but here it is), " Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their melted and cast images are wind and confusion." Now that "behold" pointed to the sentence upon the idolaters. And here, following that "behold", there is a "behold" which points to God's great mediator who restores Israel to him. Questions arise when we think of the Servant of Jehovah. Is he a person or is he a personification? If he's a personification, is he a personification of all Israel? Is he a personification of the ideal Israel or a part of Israel or of the order of the prophets? And interpreters of Isaiah have wrestled with this question. On the other hand, if he is a person, is he Isaiah himself?

There is a well known Hebrew interpreter of the Old Testament who has argued lengthily to the effect that the Suffering Servant of Jehovah even in Isaiah chapter 53 is Isaiah the prophet himself and, furthermore, that in that chapter there is no teaching at all on vicarious atonement (we'll deal with this, if not the next time, the following time for that's what we want to talk about, the nature of the atonement in these Servant songs) or if not Isaiah is he some unknown martyr? "Of whom speaketh the prophet this?

(Remember the Ethiopian eunuch asked Philip) of himself? Is he talking about himself or of some other man?

Now it's rather striking, I think, that that Ethiopian eunuch could have been sitting in a classroom in a modern theological seminary for that is the precise question that is being asked and also answered in our theological classrooms today. Nineteen hundred years have not taken us away from the key question, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself? Is it Isaiah who's the Suffering Servant or is the passage speaking of some other man?" And you'll remember Philip got up in that Lincoln Continental with him, sat down, and took those very words that he was reading and preached Jesus unto him. So his interpretation was that the prophet was speaking about Jesus of Nazareth.

Remember the situation. Israel is in captivity in Babylon. This is the background of these chapters and these are words of universal scope and hope yet they are addressed to a little group of people in a minority dialect for they are in Hebrew, not in Aramaic, to a helpless tribe of captives in a world sunk in ruin. That's the background. So they are in apparently a hopeless situation and these are the words that God would have them read in the Babylonian captivity. "Behold my servant". The Targums of the Old Testament translate here, "Behold my servant Messiah" and so they understand this as a reference to the Messiah. "Behold my Servant". So before he serves man, he must serve God. He is the Servant of Jehovah. "Behold my Servant whom I uphold". He is loved by God. He is chosen by God. He is sustained by God and he is equipped by God. Notice, he says, "In whom my soul delighteth". He is loved by God. "Mine elect", he is chosen by God. "Whom I uphold", he is sustained by God and further, "I have put my Spirit upon Him", and so he is empowered or, as I said, equipped by God.

Now if the Lord Jesus needed the Spirit of God to accomplish his Messianic ministry, my poor Christian friend, if you are going to accomplish the will of God in your life, how much more do you need the Spirit of God? Isn't that a striking thing to remember? That the Lord Jesus, in accomplishing the Messianic ministry which was given

to him, the Suffering Servant of Jehovah, was empowered by God to do that very thing. He was given the Holy Spirit.

When was he given the Holy Spirit? Well, do you remember that our Lord Jesus was baptized? Yes, you do. You remember that he came to John the Baptist? John took one look at him and said, "I have need to be baptized by you. Why do you come to me?" Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now: in order that we may fulfill all righteousness". And so John baptized him and as our Lord went down in the water and came up out of the water, or as our Presbyterian friends might say, "As the water was sprinkled upon him". Or rather as he went down into the water, they would have to say, and had water poured on him, the Christian church has been rent in twain over the question of whether it is immersion or aspersion or what's the other term? Old age is upon me [Laughter]. I'll think of it in a minute: sprinkling, pouring or immersion. The Lord Jesus came out of the water and the Holy Spirit appeared as a dove upon him and the voice from heaven was heard which said, (and I don't know whether anyone heard this but our Lord) "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased".

Now just think for a moment. What does that mean? Do you know what that means? Now if you've heard me speak on this, you may have some inkling of it, at least I hope you do. Perhaps you've heard somebody else speak on it and you have some inkling of it, but you know our Lord Jesus knew exactly what kind of a pathway was plotted out for him when he heard that voice from heaven. Do you know why? Because he was a student of the Bible and if you have some doubts in your mind, at the present time, about what that meant for our Lord in detail, then you haven't studied your Scriptures enough.

Now think a moment, "This is my beloved Son". Let me put it in this way, "This is my son, my chosen one, in whom my soul delighteth, in whom I am well pleased". Does that give you any kind of hint? Well, it should because more than once in the New Testament there is a passage in the Scriptures, which our Lord read and studied as a

young man and as a mature man, which marked out him as the Son of God. Do you know what text it is? It's Psalm 2 and verse 7, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee". He knew that passage and when he heard the voice out of heaven say, "This is my Son", he knew immediately, "I am the Messianic King. That's my destiny." Furthermore, "This is my beloved Son".

Now the term "beloved" in Hebrew means the same as chosen. In fact, in one of the gospel accounts instead of reading at the transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son" it reads "my chosen one" because in the Greek New Testament "agapetos" is the same as "ekloge", but it goes back to a Hebrew equivalence of the two. To be beloved is to be chosen. To be chosen is to be beloved. And so "This is my beloved Son" is "This is my chosen Son".

Now then, we read right here, "Behold my Servant whom I uphold mine elect, my chosen one" and then "in whom my soul delighteth", "in whom I am well pleased". And so here we have Psalm 2 which presents our Lord as the King who will reign upon the earth and we have Isaiah 42, the first of the Servant songs, which says that the Servant of Jehovah is going to be given as a covenant of the peoples and in the 53rd chapter of that same person, it is said that he should die for sins of others.

And so our Lord knew immediately on the day of the baptism that his destiny was to act out, in reality, the part of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah and by means of that he would become the Messianic ruler over the whole of the earth. And all derive from the study of Scripture. The Father was speaking to the Son and he heard it and the Spirit was given him to equip him for that Messianic ministry.

Now over in Acts chapter 10, there's no need to develop all of this, it's so plain in the Bible. Peter talks about how he was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power and that took place at his baptism. So right here, we have that which is fulfilled in the ministry of our Lord in his baptism. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him (and now his task): he shall

bring forth justice to the nations." Your texts, if they are the old King James Version have judgment. Justice is the word. It is the truth that as applied to the simple life; a national virtue of the nation during the millennial days. "He will bring forth justice to the nations". This is one of the things that our Lord Jesus is to accomplish at his Second Advent. We shall not have justice upon the earth until then.

Unfortunately, there are many ways by which men seek to fulfill the will of God and one of them is the doctrine of socialism; another is the doctrine of communism. These are satanic attempts to fulfill the word of God. I also could add democracy because it is the same thing. It is a kind of inversion of the kingdom of God. All of these are human attempts on the part of men to set up a kind of government that will make it unnecessary for the kingdom of God to come upon the earth.

Winston Churchill said that "Democracy was the worst of all forms of government except for all of those other forms that have been tried". And he expressed what is absolutely true that all of our forms of government are all failures, and they will be failures. For the only kind of government that can possibly succeed is a theocracy and also with citizens who are responsive to a theocracy. So he shall bring forth justice to the nations. So if you are young and if you are bright-eyed and you have great hopes for transforming human society, I hate to disappoint you, it will never be done. The only hope is the Kingdom of God upon the earth. And, therefore, I suggest that you change your directions and you engage in the accomplishment with God of his program upon the earth. Therefore, line up behind our Lord Jesus Christ, preach the gospel, and that's the best preparation for the time when justice shall be upon the earth.

Now I have only time to mention one or two other things here,

"A bruised reed shall he not break and a smoking flax shall he not quench (He shall come very gently. He shall not come blowing his trumpet before him. He shall not come with Madison Avenue style of P.R. men. I have, well I'm not going to say anything about that,

I'm gonna move on). Thus saith God the LORD, Behold he who created the heavens, and stretched them out; he who spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he who giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk in it: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people".

Now I want to stop at that point. Remember, we were talking, not long ago about the Lord's Supper and how the Lord Jesus at the Lord's Supper took the cup and he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for many for the remissions of sins". That was our Lord taking the cup and through the shedding of his blood establishing the righteous basis of the covenant by which sins would be forgiven. That was a specific reference to Jeremiah chapter 31, verses 31 through 33, but that is only a further step down the way from that which we read right here, "He shall be given for a covenant of the people and for a light of the nations". And the order is of the greatest significance for worldwide salvation shall not come to the Gentiles until it first of all comes to the Jews and that is the order in the Bible. That is why God is so interested in bringing the Jews to a right relationship to the Messiah because it is through them that worldwide blessing is going to come to the Gentiles. And so in the final analysis, we Gentiles are dependent upon Jews for worldwide blessing. Like it or not.

Now then, the section closes with a word from the Lord himself. Verse 8, Do you wonder whether he can fulfill all these promises? Do you think that it is possible that all of these promises are just vain promises and that they shall not be fulfilled? Well these last two verses, verses 8 and 9, are a kind of divine signature in which he initials these promises and says, "I'm going to fulfill them" and reminds us who he is. He says, "I am Jehovah. I am the covenant keeping God: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to carved images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them". And so

God in effect, says, "My name and my honor is pledged to the accomplishment to the work that I have just set forth for the Servant of Jehovah and I guarantee it. Jehovah is my name and I stand behind it". And by the way, did you notice that he does not want his glory to be given to another? He not only says that "I am going to do this, but I am going to do it by myself".

That is what Jonah learned in the belly of the great fish when he cried out finally, "Salvation is of the Lord". He tried offering vows, he tried making promises, he tried quoting Scripture. He was still in the belly of the great fish. But when he cried out, "Salvation is of the Lord", the next verse says that he was on dry land. And so God is saying in effect, "I'm going to fulfill these promises and furthermore you are not going to have anything to do with it. The glory is going to be all mine". And I might say that this principle is not only true of the Messianic kingdom, but it is true of the salvation of a Christian. And it means, my dear friend, that in the salvation of a Christian, God demands that he get all the glory. And he will have all the glory and he will not even let any of the free willers have any of the glory either.

That's why there is no such thing as free will so we'll not get up to heaven and say, "Oh, I was saved because I exercised my free will and received Jesus Christ as my Savior". Up there, if you get there, because I wonder if you understand grace when you speak so strongly of free will. If you get there, one of the first things that we will do for you is to straighten you out on your theology. [laughter] It's the desk, it's not me. You thought I had collapsed, I know. It's time to close anyway.

But that is a very, very important sentiment which we should never lose sight of. That salvation is of the Lord and it is through the working of the Holy Spirit who comes to the blind man, and the dead man, and the rebellious man, who is unwilling and makes him willing so that he responds to the gospel. So that when we get to heaven, we will say, "Yes, we made a decision of the will, but our wills were in rebellion and the Holy Spirit took us, when we were unwilling and made us willing, and we turned and received

as a gift by the grace of God, eternal salvation, 'Praise the Lord'." We might even say, "Hallelujah" up there too. Our time is up. We have actually a minute or two. Does anyone have a question you would like to ask? Yes, sir?

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] Well, I didn't try to give that impression and I'm glad you've asked the question because, of course, this question has been raised, "Was this the time when Jesus came to understand that?" I have written an article on that and so I have documentation, not just tapes.

[Comment from the same audience member] Good.

[Johnson] And I pointed out that this was simply a confirmation of our Lord's conviction concerning his Messianic status and his Messianic activity. I did not mean to give the impression that this was the time when he came to understand for the first time that. It's evident that very early in our Lord's life, when we do not know, he came to an understanding of the fact that he had a special mission. He said even as a twelve-year-old boy, remember, "Must I not be about my Father's business?"

And so he had that sense of mission and the sense of Messiahship was with him early. But here, at the baptism, was the official confirmation and inauguration into that Messianic ministry. So it was the official inauguration into the Messianic office at this time, for he cannot enter into his Messianic office until God has put his Spirit upon him for that task. And that apparently occurred at the baptism. Does that help?

[Comment from the same audience member] Yes.

[Johnson] That's a good question. I'm glad you asked it because I wouldn't want all of these people running around in error. If you had both errors, free will and that, it would be very, very sad. [Laughter] Yes, sir?

[Question from the audience]

[Johnson] What about what?

[Comment from the same audience member]

[Johnson] You mean, Isaiah?

[Comment from the same audience member] Yes.

[Johnson] If he did, I don't know. I don't know what particular point would be made by that, Pat, because Daniel was involved in politics too, if that's the point you're trying to make. Is that the point you're trying to make?

[Comment from the same audience member] Yes.

[Johnson] That what?

[Comment from the same audience member]

[Johnson] Well, there's nothing wrong with being involved in politics as long as you remember that the kind of government that you're in is not the ideal form. I didn't

intend to suggest, therefore, that nobody should ever enter politics who is a Christian. I just want them to realize that the establishment that we have is not the final word.

[Comment from the same audience member] We would not, therefore, be passive. We would be active.

[Johnson] I think that all Christians should be active in their participation as a citizen because they live in that sphere too. We have the sphere of the family. We should be active there. We have, of course, the sphere of the church. We should be active there. We have the sphere of the state and we should be active there. And we have a relationship by ourselves to the Lord and we have some responsibilities in all of these four spheres. So an activity of citizens is perfectly all right. Gerald? Tape room, you can cut it off. [Laughter]. Go ahead.

[Question from the audience] How would you understand the second verse of Isaiah 42 in light of our...

[Johnson] Well, I think that that verse, as well as the one about the bruised reed and the quenched flax is a kind of figurative expression of the fact that his ministry would be gentle. It would not be raucous. It would not be, as I mentioned, it would not be Madison Avenue style. It would not be along those lines. It's obvious that that could not mean that he could not shout to make a point, but I presume that it means that he's not a, what do we call someone like Huey Long, the term escapes; just a moment. Huh? Yeah, a demagogue, that type. That's the exact word I was looking for. Boy, you're really good. Could you tell me that other one? Aspersion, immersion, effusion? All right, I'll remember. Any other questions? That's all I know about that, Gerald. Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we're grateful to Thee for the privilege of study together and we pray that as we study further the Suffering Servant of Jehovah that we may learn further facts about all that the Lord Jesus accomplished for us when he shed his blood for Christ's sake. Amen.

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]