



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Deuteronomy 32: 15-43

“Moses' Swan Song: From Indictment to Hope, part II”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Again, Father, we give Thee thanks for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. We thank Thee for these passages from the Old Testament, which are so meaningful when looked at in the light of the New. We thank Thee for the way in which Thou didst deal with Israel for the lessons that we may learn from the way in which Thou didst deal with them, and we ask Lord, that we may in our own personal lives and in the life of the church, by Thy grace, see these principles carried out.

For those things that have to do with the future and the eschatology of the Nation Israel and of the Gentiles, help us Lord to not only see the principles at work and then but to earnestly look forward in true hope and anticipation of the things that lie ahead. We know that this will be a great unfolding of the glory and the beauty and the splendor of the triune God and we look forward to that and we ask that in the meantime, Thou would be with each one of us in this auditorium with the members of Believers Chapel with their friends and particularly for those visitors, Lord, may we continue to see the work of God in our midst.

We give Thee thanks and praise for the marvelous way in which Thou hast dealt with us. We thank Thee for taking us, largely gentiles in this audience, and grafting us

into the olive tree to become fellow partaker to those to whom the promises were first given. We give Thee thanks for that in Jesus’ Name. Amen.

[Message] Tonight, we are turning again to Deuteronomy, chapter 32, and our subject, which is the subject of last week too, is Moses’ Swan Song: From Indictment to Hope. Just one note away of academics, Moses’ swan song is a didactic poem, that is, it is on in which Moses teaches and he is teaching Israel, some very important things. There are a number of similarities in this magnificent song to the ancient covenant lawsuit pattern found in the ancient Nuristan cultures and in the Old Testament: both in Isaiah, and Micah, and in some other places as well. In fact, the Book of Deuteronomy itself is constructed along those lines.

Well, that is the academic side of the subject and we say no more about it tonight, because we mentioned a few things about it last week. We also tried to lay stress upon the importance of this chapter. It is clear from its content. If you just read through this, I have a dozen times and get the general flow of what Moses is saying and manage to come to understand at least most of the statements that he makes, you will see that this is of great importance and in fact, he himself giving the words of God, has stated that it is important from the standpoint of its content, because its God’s witness against Israel and it is intended to be a permanent kind of thing.

Notice chapter 31 and verse 19, to which we looked last week. “Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.” And again, in verse 21, the same idea is repeated. “And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed.” You see, it was something to be taught generation after generation. “For I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swore.” So, you can see from the

standpoint of its content, it is important, it is something that God said should be a continual testimony against Israel. It should be something that they read and teach their children so that they would understand the Song of Moses.

Now, I do not understand everything about Jewish people at all. My experience with Jewish Christians has been that most of them will confess that they knew very little about the Scriptures, and I think that that is generally true. If you read their literature, and I do take some significant periodicals that are written by Jews, for example, *Commentary* magazine as well as scholarly literature, but *Commentary* magazine is a well-known, highly regarded Jewish periodical, very worthwhile reading incidentally for all of us. When you read the sections on Scripture and its teaching, and almost all issues of *Commentary* have some one of their professors or rabbis, writing on some interest in Scripture, or Scripture teaching, or something having to do with the Old Testament, it is evident that there is no deep understanding of the word of God. There is a lot of scholarly understanding, but the same kind of understanding that one finds among the gentile, New and Old Testament scholars, for they are Jewish New Testament scholars as well as Old Testament scholars.

My feeling is that if Israel, I am speaking of the Hebrews, if they really were to sit down and ponder Deuteronomy 32, the Song of Moses, and really ponder it and recognize it as a testimony of God with reference to them, it would make a big difference in the life of the Hebrews today. So, it is important because of its content, what God says about it, and the fact that it is important, also is authenticated by the fact that the rest of the Old Testament cites this and cites it as being very important.

Isaiah refers to Deuteronomy chapter 32, Micah uses the language from Deuteronomy 32, and in effect, it is evident those prophets regarded this as something that was applicable to them in their day, long after Moses wrote Deuteronomy 32. When we turn to the New Testament, and remember that the New Testament was largely written by Jewish men, with the exception of Luke’s two books, then we note that it is cited or

alluded to 23 times at least in the New Testament, you can see how important the New Testament authors regarded the Song of Moses.

So we are not just studying some Old Testament passage that may have some antique interest, but this is something that the church in its earliest days regarded as important. They felt its principles were important and they felt also that its eschatology was reliable because they coded not simply as work from the Old Testament, the principles of which are applicable to us, but they quoted as being eschatologically sound. In fact, the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews cites Deuteronomy 32:43 and relates it to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. So it clear that they regarded this is a very important section of the Old Testament. I am not surprised.

David Baron, one of the greatest of the Hebrew Christians, missionary to the Hebrews, founder of a missionary society to the Hebrews and England and editor of magazine and an author of a number of books, once wrote a chapter on this and entitled it, *The National Song of Israel - A Divine Forecast of the Whole History of the Jewish People*. Reading last week, one of the commentaries on Deuteronomy, chapter 32, there was an interesting appraisal of Deuteronomy 32 by a German commentator and this is what he says: “This song, soaring as it does to the loftiest heights, moving amidst the richest abundance of pictures, of both present in future with its concise, compressed, and pictorial style, rough, penetrating and sharp, but full of the holiest solemnity, a witness against the disobedient nation, a celebration of the Covenant God set before us in miniature, a picture of the whole life and conduct of the great man of God whose office, predominantly, was to preach condemnation.” So it is evident that this a widely appreciated section from the word of God.

Now, we looked at the opening part of the Deuteronomy 32 last week in our study and we are going to pick it up at verse 15 tonight and first of all the fourth section is a section that the deals with the perversity of Israel toward God. He has spoken about his goodness, now he speaks about Israel’s perversity. Verse 15 through verse 18, again

we have only time to hit the high points, this is the lengthy chapter and I hope that this will be just an introduction for your own further study.

“But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of His salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with strange Gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto demons, not to God; to Gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begot thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed Thee.”

Now, this is an expansion of what was stated in verses 5 and 6. Jeshurun, that is an interesting expression, it is of course a symbolic name or figurative name for the Nation Israel. Strictly speaking, this word means “the upright one.” So, Jeshurun is a name that marks out Israel as Israel is objectively in the sight of God as a result of the atonement of the Messiah. So they are called out. Isaiah later on will call them that as well, but he says, “Jeshurun grew fat and kicked.” And what he goes on to say is that they lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

One of the interesting things about this chapter which you will not get if you simply read the English text is that several times the root, Nafal, which we know as in English as Nabal, and you remember that Nabal was a man that referred to in the Old Testament as a fool, that is what the word means. This word occurs several times here in its verbal form and so in a sense, what he is saying is, Jeshurun grew fat and kicked and became Nabals, they became fools. So just like the Nabal of the Old Testament, the foolish man, so they have become. And notice the figure that is used. They grew fat, waxed fat, they are grown thick.

Now, imagine folks, this does not have to do with physical side of things, but it has to do with the spiritual side of things. This is no personal attack on any of you. I want you to understand that. They grew fat, they waxed thick, but there is something about that physical side that obviously God uses as an illustration. Luther once said, “A full stomach does not promote piety for it stands secure and neglects God.” It is true that we can have so many material possessions that we feel so secure that the Lord God really does not have much place in our lives and it would not hurt any of us to have the face the future without anything because then we would really be able to prove the faithfulness of the Lord God. So, the figure that is used here is a very vivid future and Luther is right – a full stomach, I guess you could say, often does not promote piety or usually does not because it stands secure and neglects God.

Now he goes on to describe God again as the Rock. Now this is done a number of times. We have already heard it in verse 4, “He is the Rock, His work is perfect.” Here, the Rock of His salvation and then in a movement in chapter 30, we will read, “Except their rock had sold them,” there is a figure for the Gods of the heathen. “For their Rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” So at least four times we have the term “Rock” used of God, again a figure designed to stress the refuge and the safety and the security that one has when he hides under Rock.

That is why we have some of the great Christian hymns. “Rock of ages, cleft for me. O! Safe to the rock that is higher than I,” Christians often sing. So the term, ‘Rock’ is a beautiful figure of the Lord God and of the things that the Lord can do for us. Now, you will notice that Israel has had the greatest of blessings. They have had the personal experience with the Lord God. They have seen his mighty miracles, they have gone through the experience of the Red Sea and while this is on other generation now, that is follow the other one, their fathers have told them about the red sea and Moses and others have told him about the experience there and they have had no doubt often those great

miracles set up before them, and nevertheless in spite of that, we read, “They have lightly esteemed the Rock of His salvation.”

Now, we have, in recent years, at least I, and I have preached on it, I hope some of you have listened, we have looked at a number of those minor prophets and some of the major prophets too for that matter, I think we studied Isaiah, a bit of Isaiah, and that was one of the great things of the minor prophets, the theme of the God who has been forgotten by His people. God mislaid. God forgotten.

That is characteristic of humanity and so the Lord lays stress on that through Moses here, and what this really is just apostasy. There are several kinds apostasies, there is of course, doctrinal apostasy, which we often think about when we think about apostasy, but do not forget moral apostasy is just as significant as doctrinal apostasy. The departure from the Lord God that takes place is often not ostensibly doctrinal, but moral and it is also true I think to say that doctrinal apostasy leads to moral apostasy because if we do not think right, then we will not live right, but on the other hand, it is also true to say that moral apostasy leads to doctrinal apostasy and one of the reasons for that is that when a man departs from the teaching of the word of God and begins to double in sin, then he begins to excuse himself by doubt and words spoken against the teaching of Holy Scripture. That is often the case.

In fact, you can, I think in the history of Christian church, point back into the history of individuals who first departed morally and then doctrinally from the teaching of the word of God. Well, that is a tremendous section. “They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they Him to anger. They sacrificed unto demons, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begot thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed Thee.”

Now, this is God’s witness against his people. Do not think for one moment that that would not be His witness against us in the Christian church, if we forget him and

begin to run after the other Gods of our day. O’ We do not run after the Belials, but we have our Gods too. There are just as much Gods. After all, what is a God? Well, a God is really that which has no ultimate concern of ours and we as Christians, we affirm the ultimate concern is the triune God. He is our God, Father, Son, and Spirit, but many men have ultimate concerns while with their mouth, they deny that there is a God. Their God turns out to be influence, power, materialism, whatever the particular ultimate concern that they have might be, it can be our business, it can be our family, it can be our possessions, it can be even our friends, it can be our children, its very easy to transfer our affection from the one true ultimate concern, the triune God and His interests to other interests, which often seem perfectly proper in themselves.

Now, having unfolded this, Moses again speaking for the Lord God, remember speaks of the judgments upon Israel in verse 19 through verse 25, because when a man perversely turns away from God and neglects the Lord God, then you can be sure that discipline and judgment is to come. Verse 20, and we read verse 20 through verse 25, “And he said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked Me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.”

You may remember that this is a language that is drawn upon by Hosea in the first chapter of his prophecy. “For a fire is kindled in Mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend Mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.” Perversity, on the part of Israel leads

to the hiding of the face of God. And you know you have heard these verses, these are some tremendous list of calamities that God is going to bring upon the nation, but I suggest to you that the greatest of these calamities is that very first one where He says, “I will hide My face from them.” Nothing could be worse than to have the Lord God hide His face from us. All of these other things flow out of that and finally the section concludes with “sword without and terror within.”

Look at the history of Israel. Examine the history of Israel in the light of these statements made by Moses, and I think you will have to agree that a large part of the history of the children of Israel can be described by just what we find here and further more traceable to the loss of the sense of the true God in the worship of Israel. Listen to one of their well known Rabbis, I will mention his name, but he is a very well-known Jewish Rabbi known in scholarly circles; that is why I first read of him. At a convocation of students at Emory University, he said, “God is the holy nothingness.” Rabbi, so and so, also argued that if God is regarded as the source of hope that we should give up hope. Human existence he described as ultimately hopeless and meaningless. This is a Rabbi teaching to the children of Israel.

Jews in particular, he said, cannot believe the Lord God of history. For how can one explain such a God in relation to Auschwitz and the degrading slaughter of 6 million Jews? That is terrible. The holocaust is certainly one of the most terrible things that has taken place in the history of the human race. He continues, “Though Christians might interpret horror of Auschwitz as a final sign to the Jew to convert and to accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of Israel, the Jews,” he said, “still await the Messiah and redemption.” Indeed, the Rabbi does not see the possibility of a Messianic Kingdom on earth but only when all of creation and man are returned to God in an ecstasy of nothingness. Now, that is a religious leader in Israel today. One can, I think understand some of the things found here.

David Baron said the history of Israel is one long martyrology, an unparalleled list of sufferings, a chronicle of massacres, oppressions, banishments, fiendish tortures, spoliation, and degradations which have been inflicted upon them for the most part by so-called Christian nations. We are to be ashamed of that, of course, but we also recognize and Mr. Baron recognizes this that so-called Christian nations are not necessarily Christian in the biblical sense. Lamentations 1:12 says, “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. All if Israel only understood the full significance of what has transpired. Well, the judgments upon Israel is set out here in simple form, but as you know later on, throughout the Old Testament, more and more of those that the things that lie before her are set up by the prophets that follow.

Now, having said this, we next read of the pleadings of divine mercy in verse 26 through 33. Listen to these verses,

“I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: ‘Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this. For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! How should one chase a Thousand, and two put ten Thousand to flight, except their rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?’”

In other words, the only way in which you can explain the defeat of Israel is the fact that God has forsaken them. He who did all of those mighty miracles and stands as the ultimate source of the divine power would not have allowed His people to be taken captive and destroyed in the way described here, were it not for the fact that he had left

them. So He goes on to say, “For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” Is it not a striking statement? In other words, even the heathen recognize that their god, their gods, I should add, because it is plural, their gods cannot compare with Israel’s God. They themselves acknowledge that.

Have you ever thought about why? Well, one of the reasons is that the gods of the heathen share their glory. It is not one god, it is gods. As you know, it was Baal of Shechem, the Baal of Beersheba, the Baal of Dan or whatever; in other words, their gods were local deities. So they are all shared power, even they themselves in their panoply of their gods, acknowledge the fact that their god was not an almighty God, but he only ruled in certain little areas. That is why in the Old Testament in a number of places the Lord God through His prophets makes very plain that He is the God who created the heavens and the earth. He is the Universal God. He is the kind of God in whom you can truly put yourself as the God of gods. Their gods share their glory, but the full glory belongs to the Lord God.

You can also sense some of the compassion on the heart of God here right in the beginning. “I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men. Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.” So they might get the credit for it and so the Lord said, “I am not going to destroy them fully because then that would give occasion for the people who worship the God’s of the heathen to glory and what it come to pass as if Jehovah can be beaten and defeated and we will read on of course about in the apocalyptic events which we now turn that the Lord God is not through with Israel.

Now finally we come to verse 34 through verse 43, and this is the apocalyptic events and I would like to sum them up under three words interposition, vindication, and atonement. And if this song is a sublime song and more I study it, the more convinced I am that it is a sublime song, and if you think it is a solemn song, and I certainly think it is

a solemn song, these sublimity and the solemnity of this song attain their climax here and in fact what we have here is Moses’ way of saying in his day the things that characterize the climax of all prophecy.

Now, mind you, the details are not here. You can be quite sure Hal Lindsey did not get many of the details of *The Late Great Planet Earth* out of Deuteronomy 32, and that in no way is to approve everything that how Lindsey wrote in his book, as I certainly do not. But the point is simply this, that this is at a stage in the unfolding of the word of God in which the details of the prophetic future are not set out or occasionally he might have some little detail, but basically, this is a general view of the flow of things here and then the word of the God, as the chapters unfold, we said this so many times, I hate to have to say it again, but there may be one last soul who has come in who has not heard me say it once, these other chapters will fill in the details of the things that are missing. But this is general now and I will read through it and will lay stress on a few of the things that Moses gives as the words of the God. In verse 34,

“Is not this laid up in store with me and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.”

Now the thing I would like for you to notice is that the Lord God is speaking here through Moses. In a moment, He will speak directly, but He is speaking through Moses and He says in verse 34 that these things are sealed up among his treasures. Jehovah was not indifferent to the sins of the Gentile world powers that are the instrumentalities for the fulfilling of his purpose toward Israel.

It is not strange that the Lord could use the unrighteous nations to discipline the righteous or the covenant nation. The apostle, the prophets, Habakkuk, particularly, he was troubled by that. He knew that Israel was the covenant nation and yet God had said

He was going to take use those Chaldeans to discipline them and that was a big problem to him. It was problem of how God can be righteous and use the unrighteous to discipline the covenantal nation, but the Chaldeans were tool in the hand of God and they accomplished His task and in fact they will beyond it and so in going beyond it, God subjected them to the ultimate kind of discipline. So that is the same general thought that is set out here, laid up in store.

He is not indifferent to the sins of Gentile world powers, and if He uses the nations to discipline His people, He will not hold those nations to be without fault. For example, if we can really believe, that Nazi Germany was an instrument in the hand of God for the discipline of the people of God, then we will ultimately see Nazi Germany come under the severest kind of judgment from the Lord God and the same is true of all of the dealings of the nations. They cannot escape the sovereign power of the eternal God. He may accomplish things with His tools and agents and by His means that may puzzle us now, because we are children. We do not fully understand but you can be sure he is absolutely righteous and finally the day will come when all the believers will affirm again with understanding the holiness and the mercy of our great triune God and the unbelievers, they will affirm it too suffer and the pangs of eternal condemnation.

Now reading on in verse 35, He says, “To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.” The anti-Semites foot shall slide in due time. That is the history of the nations, is not it? The history of those who have been tools in the hand of God often is their final history and often that is the case.

Today, we will still see this in our society today. Last year, a Jewish lady, by the name of Finkelstein came to Dallas. You remember reading about her in the paper? That is a Jewish name you know, Finkelstein, and she came and she was a *refusnik*, that is, she was one of the Soviet Jews refused permission to immigrate for so long, 200,000 of them have made request in Soviet Russia and along about 1979 or 1980, the Russians about

allowed 50,000 to leave. But last year, when Mrs. Finkelstein was here, she said, “The previous year, they allowed 200 and something I believe, to leave.” I have the article with me. Pardon me if I was wrong a little bit but they were very few that were allowed. Soviet Russia still persecutes the Nation Israel. They still persecute the Jews and there are people in the United States who do also and throughout the other places over the face of this globe, not to mention the East where a 110 million are anxious to eradicate Israel from the face of the earth.

“To Me belongeth vengeance.” Now, notice the statement of verse 36, “For the Lord shall judge His people. That is often misunderstood. That is a text by the way, incidentally, the one in verse 35, I did not say anything about that, that text is cited twice in the New Testament. That is cited in Romans chapter 12, it is cited in Hebrews chapter 10. So, the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews was acquainted with Deuteronomy 32, Paul was acquainted with Deuteronomy 32, he refers to in elsewhere and all the times to. So, these are passages that the writers of the New Testament studied, but when we read, “For the Lord shall judge His people,” that is the statement that is also cited in Hebrews chapter 10.

Now, in order to understand this, you must understand what the word “judge” means. When it says, “For the Lord shall judge His people,” you might think reading that out of its context that that means that He is going to judge His own people, in the sense of bringing judgment upon them inflicting them with some penalty. Doesn’t it look like that? Well, that is the advantage of reading and pondering the word of God and continuing to read it because if you continue to read it, and you do not have to know Hebrew, I am going to tell you what the Hebrew text says and what the Hebrew word means, but you don’t have to know Hebrew to know something like this, if you just studied and constantly read the Scriptures.

You know men who are in theological seminary would like to say to their students, “If you do not understand the Bible in the original languages, you would be an

underprivileged Bible student. That is folly to say that. It is true, that in certain places, if you understand Greek and Hebrew, and Aramaic, you may have a quick insight into something. Unfortunately, most of the people that study Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic, when they get out of theological seminary, they lay it aside.

Jim Rayburn, the founder of Young Life said when he got out of Dallas Theological Seminary, he was going to use his Hebrew Bible as a doorstop, that was his way of saying three years of Hebrew is enough for me. Now, he was a man of God and did a very significant work for God, but he did not keep up with his Hebrew. What I am saying is this, that if you will study the Bible with a couple of versions before you and really ponder the context, constantly reading, do you all understand, more than 99% of those who are students of Greek and Hebrew. Because, let me tell you from own personal experience, as well as the experience of my friends, that many of us who have the skills of languages do not really apply ourselves to the reading, the constant reading of the word of God.

Now, what does it mean, “For the Lord shall judge His people?” Well, it means simply this. The Lord will vindicate His people. That is the meaning of the word to judge in this instance. The Lord will vindicate His people. What does this mean in this context? Well, it means simply that the Lord is going to bring judgment upon the enemies of the Lord. He is going to bring judgment upon the heathen nations and He will vindicate His people in the sense that He will bring them into the full experience of the covenant that He has made with Abraham and confirm to the fathers. So the Lord will vindicate His people.

Vengeance, incidentally, is the zeal of God in the discharge of justice and it may issue in salvation or in judgment. It is the zeal of God and the discharge of justice. So Lord will judge His people in the sense that He will vindicate them and we will see Israel restored to its place of blessing according to the covenant. That is what it means incidentally in Hebrews chapter 10 when it says, “The Lord will judge His people.” It

means He will vindicate His people by bringing judgment upon the enemies of the Lord, in this context, the false Gods and the nations that believe in them.

Now, in the light of this, what of those remarks that are made by men like, Nasser, of Egypt? Well, when you read the things that Nasser said, you can see that there is going to be a whole lot of vindication of the Lord God in the future. Those of you who can look back a few years to 1967 and whereabouts may remember when Nasser was in charge of things in Egypt. These are some of the statements he made. “We are ready to reopen the case of Palestine.” He told that to a cheering Egyptian parliament. “We have restored the situation as it was before 1956. Allah will certainly help us to restore the pre-1948 state of affairs.” And then other things like, “We will drive Israel into the Mediterranean sea.” These were the statements of Egypt’s leader.

But it did not take long for God to overthrow that man and others too. I am not suggesting that as we have said so often that Israel today and the land is the final settlement of Israel in the land. That is not necessary for the point that I have made. There is a time coming, however, when Israel is settled there by the Lord God. In His determinate will, she will stay, and the nations that fight against her will be overthrown by the Lord God. Allah and all the rest, for that matter.

Now, he goes on to say in the 39th verse, “See now that I, even I, am He” and here the Lord himself begins to speak. “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with Me.” The Hebrew text is something like, “There is no God with Me that is by My side, who is sharing My glory. I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand.” This is the first time, in the Bible, by the way, that we have the expression any, an, who in Hebrew. That is literally, I, I, He or I am He in emphatic form and what that means essentially is that in Me resides all ultimate authority. This is, say the first time that that occurs, and this is the boldest possible way in which the full deity of the Lord God can be expressed. “I am He.”

When a person says, “Who is God, what is God, define God,” what does the true knowledgeable Christian have to say? He can say He is like so and so as if that is a definition, by the sense of a term definition, we could bounce around a particular topic or idea or thing and define it but the very word “define” would suggest limits cannot be applied to God, cannot be defined by created things. He is the uncreated God. So, what does he say? If someone says, “Who art Thou, what is your name?” like Moses did, he has to say “I am who I am, I, I am He.”

My dear Christian friend, this is the person with whom you have to deal. When you go home tonight, and through tomorrow, and the days that are at hand, this is the God with whom you have to deal and when you sin and violate the teaching of the Word of God, this is the one with whom you have to deal. What a serious and solemn thing. “I, I am he. I kill and I make alive.” Incontestable authority. Note the order. “It is not I make alive and kill.” It is, “I kill and make alive.”

The rabbis interpreted that occasionally as if that meant that He put to death and He also was responsible for resurrection. I am not sure that that is what that means, but of course, the principles are true. He continues, “For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of the revenges upon the enemy.”

That last clause is very interesting because in the Hebrew text, it can be rendered in different ways, and I am not suggesting that this is the way in which it should be rendered specifically, but it may mean from the head of the leaders of the enemy. Almost all students of the Hebrew text at this point acknowledge that that is a possible rendering. Some preferred instead of, “from the beginning of the revenges upon the enemy,” have from “the head of the leaders of the enemy and many Bible students” have thought that this was a clear reference to the antichrist, because it is singular.

“From the head of the leaders of the enemy,” and so if it is so, it is a veiled reference to the fact that the ultimate opponent of the Lord God will be a particular person set up most fully in the Book of Revelation in chapter 13 and 19 of that Book. So, we cannot be sure about that but that is an interesting fact that later on and in Psalm 110, the author of that Psalm also makes the statement that is very similar to this.

Finally we read in verse 43, “Rejoice, O ye Gentiles, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.” Final exhortation address to the nations of the world, address to the gentiles, because gentiles are going to be saved, they are included in the Abrahamic Covenant. “For in Thee, shall all the families of the earth will be blessed,” God said to Abraham. This is the goal of all prophecy, is not it? “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people: for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His to his adversaries, and will be merciful.” That word is a word that means “He will make atonement.”

In the New International Version, you will find that it is written something like that, because the Hebrew word *kaphar* means essentially that. He will be merciful in the sense that He will accomplish atonement for His land and for His people. The ground of all of the blessings read out in this chapter, then is the atonement that will be accomplished. Now, Moses does not tell us the details of the atonement. We have to turn to the later revelation.

We stopped. We go through the figures of course that will appear in the unfolding of Israel, but when we come to great passages like Isaiah 52 and 53, there we have an almost pictorial picture of what is going to happen in the ministry of the Lord Jesus, but the fullness of it is set out when the servant of Jehovah comes and sheds His blood for the remission of our sins. The writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews cites this particular text and he cites it in the form of the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

He says, “When He shall have brought in the first begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

For a long time, since that is only in the Greek translation of the Old Testament and not in the common Masoretic text of the Hebrew Old Testament, it was thought that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews may have used something that was not really a part of the Old Testament. But now, since the manuscripts of the Dead Sea scrolls have been discovered, this particular reading of the Septuagint or the Greek translation of the Old Testament has been found in Hebrew 4 and so, he probably cited from a Hebrew source that was true to what Moses was given by the Lord God. So, “When He shall have brought in again.” Notice that. “When He shall have brought in again the first begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

To be brought in again after the First Coming has already taken place is of course the Second Coming. And so, this text, chapter 32, verse 43, is related by the New Testament author to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is, when the fullness of the atonement will be seen for the nation, Israel, and a vengeance shall be shown to the adversaries of His people.

Let me sum up. The words ‘His land’ and ‘His people’ sum up the doctrinal section of the Song of Moses. So, the prophecy is a prophecy about the Jews and about Palestine that comes down to the land. The land in the sense that it was given to Moses more than to Abraham, more of course than what we recognize as the land today. That land that is called, Immanuel’s land in Isaiah chapter 8 and verse 8, the certainty of the fulfillment is set forth in the passages of the Old Testament such as Zachariah chapter 3 and verse 9 and Zachariah chapter 12 and verse 10, and one of the interesting things about it is that Egypt will have a share in some of these blessings. In that day, Isaiah says shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land. One might ask the question as he thinks about this and if you were speaking with a Hebrew man and he were to say, “What is the condition upon which we enter into the

blessing of these things?” Then you should turn back to the Book of Leviticus, chapter 26, and read verse 40 through verse 42, for there,

Moses was given a great section in which he set up the discipline that would face the nation in the future when we departed from the Lord God, but in verse 40 of Leviticus 26, He says, “If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against Me, and that also they have walked contrary unto Me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.” Magnificent. The whole world will see the faithfulness of the Triune God and also His sovereign power in the fulfilling of His promises.

Some years ago, in 1967, when after the War of ‘67, that 6 or 7 days of war, there was an interesting picture that appeared in the paper. I thought this was so interesting. It is a picture of some of the Israeli soldiers when they had taken Jerusalem and the temple area. And this is the picture of the young Israeli soldiers standing before the Wailing Wall. All of the tradition that was bound up in that wall, the only thing left of Solomon’s Temple, you can almost see in the eyes of these young people, this that we prayed about all our lives is ours today. Unfortunately, there was no spiritual understanding so far as we know, and still no spiritual understanding, but it does illustrate the fact that the things that are set out in the word of God are not really all that impossible for happening in our day.

May the Lord help us to study and ponder and profit from these ancient scriptures. If you are here tonight, and never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, we urgently appeal to you to consider the atonement that He has accomplished to flee to our Lord as the Rock of our salvation as we set out here and then rejoice in the forgiveness of sins and of the assurance of all of our needs being met in this great sovereign of the universe. The one

who says, “I, even I, am He.” May God help you to come to Christ. Let us bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for these magnificent prophecies from the Old Testament. How wonderful they are. We know, O God, how much they are upon the heart of God. Lord, may we be instruments by Thy grace in the accomplishment of their purposes.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.