



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 14: 27 – 18: 7

“Isaiah and Foreign Nations, part I”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] ...thanks for us through Jesus Christ in a deeper way and may in our practical life there be a difference. We commit each one present to Thee for Thy blessing upon them, in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] The subject for tonight is “Isaiah and the Foreign Nations” which is really the first part of a two-part series because these chapters that begin with chapter 14 and go on through chapter 23 are concerned, all of them, with messages to the foreign nations.

Now, I also want to say as we begin tonight that if you find difficulty in Isaiah 13, 14 and so on through chapter 23, that at least we can give you this comfort. Almost all do find them very difficult. I dare say that probably no one in this room or if there is such, you are extremely rare throughout the land that probably no one has ever heard a series of messages on these chapters.

You may have heard someone take a text from certain ones of them, but the chances are that you have never heard a series of expositions of Isaiah 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23. And the reasons are probably these. Very few preachers would turn to these passages because they are very difficult to understand. And furthermore, the

content of them seems to be so far removed from us in the 20th Century that it seems to be irrelevant to turn to them. And I think also that we can say this in all honesty. You can read these chapters over and over and over again and there are still many things in them that it is difficult to understand.

Now, I guess I am confessing my ignorance when I say this. But I have read these chapters many of times and I am still puzzled by certain sections of them. When I read them, I wonder just why this was written. And as we were coming to the meeting tonight, my wife was coming with me, we discussed a little bit of this and we were just wondering if perhaps some of these sections in the Prophecy of Isaiah such as these are sections that will especially prove meaningful to the Jews who are on the earth during the time of the great tribulation in the future.

And of course, even today, men in Israel are interested in these passages in the word of God which have to do with their neighbors such as Syria, Jordan, the Arab nations about them, Egypt. These are very, very important subjects for Israel today and perhaps in the time of The Great Tribulation, these chapters are chapters which shall be opened up by the Holy Spirit to the believers on the earth at that time. And they shall understand Isaiah as perhaps Isaiah has never before been understood.

Now, it is not all that bad of course when we get to chapter 24, 25, 26 and 27, Isaiah's great little apocalypse, things become much more understandable and meaningful. And of course when we finally get to Isaiah chapter 40 through verse 60 through chapter 66, this is one of the great sections of God's word. And it has been a comfort to Christians down through the years and they are much more easily understood, those chapters, than these. So, I am preparing you tonight for a hard time and I hope you bear with me and that together we may profit from a section that is really a difficult section.

The Old Testament men had glimpses of Jesus Christ. You remember that it is stated of Abraham that "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," that is Christ's day and he saw it and was glad. John writes concerning Moses in John chapter 5 in verse 46 that Moses,

in his writings, wrote of Christ. He says in chapter 5 verse 46, "Giving the words of our Lord for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." David too had great insight into the person and work of Jesus Christ. When Peter was preaching on the Day of Pentecost, in the 29th verse of the 2nd chapter of the Book of Acts, he says,

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried and his sepulcher is with us unto this day."

"Therefore, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Messiah to sit on his throne; He seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not lefteth in Hades, neither did his flesh see corruption."

So Old Testament men did have glimpses of Jesus Christ. Abraham, Moses, David, and others. But probably no man of the Old Testament saw as much of Jesus Christ as Isaiah the Prophet did. In the 12th of John, John speaking of Isaiah said that, "He saw his glory." He saw the glory of Jesus Christ. Now, that is an amazing thing. That he saw the glory of Christ.

Did you know that Isaiah is the Old Testament author who is quoted "most" in the New Testament? Did you know for example that John the Baptist's ministry begins and is anchored in the Prophecy of Isaiah? The 40th chapter, it is there that John derives his call, a messenger of the Lord. Did you know that in the great crisis of our Lord's life, it is to Isaiah that the Scriptures turn? For example, when he is born, it is Matthew who says that it is then that Isaiah 7 verse 14 is fulfilled. When Jesus Christ is baptized, there is the voice from heaven about which we have spoken, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." And that expression, 'In whom I am well pleased,' is derived from Isaiah chapter 42, "Behold my servant whom I uphold." Man elect in whom is my delight, in whom I am well pleased."

Then you remember when Jesus began his Messianic ministry in the synagogue in Nazareth in the 4th chapter of the Gospel of Luke. He stands up and there is given to him the book of the Scriptures, and we read that in the 4th chapter. When he had opened the Book of Isaiah, he found the place where it was written, "The spirit of the lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." In some other words from Isaiah are given. So, it is to Isaiah that he turns in order to substantiate the beginning of his Messianic ministry on the Mount of Transfiguration. When that great event which foreshadows the kingdom on the earth takes place, the voice from heaven comes again, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear him." And Isaiah 42 is again quoted.

Then remember also at the death of our Lord. There is a statement in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah which said, "He shall be numbered with the transgressors." And it is right at his death that Jesus appeals to that text from Isaiah. It is by the way the last text that Jesus quote explicitly, "It is earthly ministry, he shall be numbered with the transgressors," and he stated that that must be fulfilled. In other words, Isaiah is a book which finds its ample fulfillment in the New Testament. If we go on into the Book of Acts, there is still more evidence. When Philip met the Ethiopian eunuch, the Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah chapter 53 and remember, Philip opened the passage or came to that passage and at that very Scripture began to preach onto that eunuch, the Lord Jesus. And the last chapter of the Book of Acts which gives actually the last message that Paul preached in Acts, Acts chapter 28 is a passage in which Paul quotes again from the prophecy of Isaiah. So you can see of course that Isaiah is one of our great, great books.

Now, the great verses of the Book of Isaiah would make a Bible in themselves. It would be interesting just to read a number of these, which set forth so many wonderful truths that we have known of sometimes perhaps not realizing that they have come from Isaiah. Let me read just a few of them. You sit there and relax and enjoy it. "Come now," this is Lyndon's favorite text, "Come now, and let us reason together," said the Lord.

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." What a great writing that is.

Chapter 8 verse 20, "To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." One of the greatest of the texts of the Bible affirming this great truth, that if it agrees with the word of God, we should follow it. If it does not agree with the word of God, we should not follow it, something for all of us to remember.

Chapter 12 verse 3 and you see how I had skipped all the messianic verses that we have already studied. Chapter 12 verse 3, "Therefore with joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation. Chapter 25 in verse 8, "He will swallow up death and victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces." What a tremendous verse that is. Chapter 26 in verse 3, "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee." That is the text that lets us know that God has promised has through the Bible, peace of mind. "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusted in thee." That is the text that says that God has promised us what the world rushes to the psychiatrist to obtain, peace of mind, right there.

Chapter 33 verse 17, "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." Chapter 35 in verse 10. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs in everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Chapter 40 verse 1, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God." Is that familiar to you at Christmas time? Chapter 40 verse 11, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young," and verse 31, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint," and so on and so on and so on and we have not even touched the

great messianic passages or passages such as Isaiah chapter 53. All of which, all of its verses, we know so well and love so much.

The prophet's times, we have said, were days of international upheaval. And when they come to these chapters to which we are coming tonight, it is well for us to remember some of the facts that we have gone over briefly concerning the life of Isaiah. Remember, he was called to his work as a prophet in the year that King Isaiah died which was the year 740 B.C.

Now, as I have been a great king, he had ruled for many years from 790 to 740. Fifty years, he had sat up on the throne of Judah, one of Judah's greatest kings. Not only had he been a godly man who had done that which was right in the sight of the Lord. But he had strengthened Israel economically and militarily and politically. And Jotham who followed him was also a good king. He ruled from 740 to 732 B.C. and he too did that which was right in the sight of the law. But while his men did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, apostasy had begun to work in the nations.

You see it is possible for a nation to have outward prosperity and to have some spiritual blessing from God but at the same time for those beginnings of apostasy to be at work. You know that it is true in Christian institutions in the 20th Century. You may look at a Christian institution such as a church and it may look as if it is very healthy. It is large. It is prosperous. It has beautiful buildings. It has nice people who come to attend it. They all have the names of Jesus Christ upon their lips. They go about the motions of serving him. They support missionary projects. They are interested in those who are seeking to win others to Jesus Christ but you never can really be sure from the odd one. For it is possible, for in the midst of an organization of which there is outward success for apostasy and departure from God to begin to work. And that what was happening in Judah in Isaiah's day. Things looked good. Isaiah had been a good king, so had Jotham but apostasy was at work. They are just that: little sins of the loss of the desire for the presence of God.

You know what makes all the difference in the world when you see a group of Christians who are really anxious to know God and to advance in the things of the Lord. And then a group of Christians who think they have arrived, they are in great danger. And if we ever, individually, think that we have arrived, we are in great danger for it is at that point that Satan attacks us, when indifference comes, when satisfaction is there. And it is not at that point that we are weakest and it is often there that the works of God go down.

I have a friend who is a teacher of church history and he has studied with a great deal of diligence, a very well-educated man, studied with a great deal of diligence, Christian institution that had gone astray. And you know, he said something which to me was an utterly amazing thing. He said, "You know, Luis, in the history of Christian institutions, they have gone astray when an evangelical was president or leader, not when a non-evangelical one.

Now, is it not that interesting? Christian institutions that have fallen have fallen with men who are Christians as presidents. Is it not that amazing? But then I think, if you study the Bible in the light of that, you are not surprised at all because Judah drifted with a great king as its king. Israel drifted when a great king was its king. It was right after Solomon died that the disruption came but the seeds of that disruption had already been at work when great Solomon was on the throne.

Church after church has gone while a man in the pulpit proclaimed the truths of the word of God but proclaimed them perhaps; I do not want to blame the preacher. Some need to be blamed, proclaimed perhaps with indifference, loss of fervor, loss of desire for the face of God. You know what I mean. Do you want to know God better or do you just want know the Bible better? Do you want to know the Lord in a more intimate way or is it enough for you to know some of the doctrines more intelligently?

You see, that is what we are talking about. There is a lot of difference between wanting to know Bible doctrine which is very important, of course, and then wanting to

know God better through that doctrine. And all my prayer for you who are in this class is not that you should know Isaiah only but that you should know Isaiah's God better and that when our class is over, you should go home and get by yourself, son. Get down on your knees. It will not hurt you at all. And just ask God to bring you closer to him so that you can really know what it is to live in the presence of God.

Now, of course, when Isaiah left and Jotham left, there came the wicked king Ahaz to the throne. Ahaz was a man who immediately found himself in difficulty. You always do when you depart from God. He had difficulty from the Philistines but especially he had difficulty, remember, from the alliance between the Syrians and the northern kingdom of Israel. And so Ahaz, the king of Judah, appealed to Assyria for help. Assyria was the great nation to the north. Its ruler was Tiglath-Pileser III. And you know what happens when little nations appeal to big nations for help, have you heard of Czechoslovakia? You will always find this in the history of nations. When little nations appeal to big nations for help, frequently, big nations gobble them up. And so Tiglath-Pileser said Ahaz will help you all right if you pay for it; and so Ahaz had to pay and he paid, of course, most of all because that represented a departure from God. Instead of trusting in God, he was going to trust in Ashur. That is why he is King No-Faith, because he has a trust in his heart that is more than trust in God.

But when he met Tiglath-pileser in Damascus, he also saw something else; and this often happens. You see, when a man is out of fellowship with God, he is susceptible. And while he was there, he saw an altar in a temple that he liked. He was attracted to it. He said, "You know, that is beautiful." And he instructed his workmen to make an altar like it and, of course, he set up that altar in Judah and that further incurred the displeasure of God. A man who is departing from him has now reached the place where he is guilty of idolatry.

Now, Ahaz was a wicked man and Judah suffered because of him. When Ahaz died, Hezekiah came to the throne and Hezekiah was one of the truly great kings of the

Old Testament. The Bible says about King Hezekiah that there was none like him before him or after him; and I would presume that that means in the context, none of those in that land since the disruption. From everything that we know of Hezekiah, we are not to understand that he was greater than David or greater than Solomon. But greater than those kings that followed as kings of Judah from the time of the disruptions.

Hezekiah came to the throne and one of the first things that he did was to prepare for a revival and there was a genuine revival in his day. He took down the idols. He cleared out the groves. All of those expressions of idolatry, he did his best to do away with. In fact, he even went in and took away some of the traditional objects of worship.

Do you remember that when Israel came out of the land of Egypt and went in to the Promised Land, that on the way, in the wilderness, the serpents bit some of the children of Israel and Moses was instructed to put a serpent of brass on a pole; and he was told to tell Israel that when a person had been bitten by the serpents that if they should look to the serpent of brass upon the pole they would live? Whatever happened to that serpent of brass? What would you think would happen?

Well, just what did happen? Just like human beings, you know. That is, by the way, why we do not have the original writings of the Bible, I think, one of the reasons, at least. The reasons we have only copies is because if we had the original writings, if we had the original manuscripts, those papyrus sheets on which Paul wrote and others, we would probably have them in cabinets somewhere in some large church; and we would be required to crawl in on our hands and knees in order that we might kiss the enclosure which was around them, then token of worship of these scraps of paper. And mercifully, they have all perished.

But you see, the serpent of brass did persist for hundreds of years afterwards. And finally, in Hezekiah's day, we discovered that Nehushtan, that is the brass thing; that is what it means. The brass thing, it is still in existence. Israel has carried it all this time

and now they are worshipping it. It is just a traditional thing and so they bow down before it and Hezekiah destroyed it. It took a great deal of courage to do that.

And so a real revival takes place in Hezekiah's day but Hezekiah is in completely obedient to God. Sennacherib, the Assyrian, who succeeded Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser and Sargon, Sennacherib, the great opponent of Hezekiah, finally came down. He came down and defeated him; made Hezekiah paid tribute because he was not completely trusting in God. And then Hezekiah got sick, remember, and he had that interesting experience. We are going to talk about some of these things when we get to the second part of the book of Isaiah.

Finally remember Sennacherib came down and besieged Jerusalem. He says in one of his annals that he had Hezekiah pinned up like a bird in a cage in Jerusalem. We can read those things that Sennacherib brought today. And it was then that Hezekiah appealed to Isaiah. And Isaiah gave him some good advice. In fact, Isaiah reached the highlight of his public career during the reign of Hezekiah. When Hezekiah appealed to him, he gave the king some great advice and that advice was to trust in God and that God would deliver him from the hands of the Assyrian. And he did. And as a result of that, Isaiah reached the peak of his public life. He was the deliverer of his people, the man of God, and the prophet.

You know, I listen to the radio and I hear all kinds of advertisements that come out of Southern Methodist University, at the present time. I have nothing against Southern Methodist University. My daughter graduated from the school. I love their football team. I am sure it is a good educational institution. As far as its Christianity is concerned, it lives a great deal to be desired, of course. As an evangelical, I cannot agree with the philosophy or theology that is taught there.

But it would seem to me that some of the things that they say would not even be said by those who are weak in their theology. They are pleading for money at the

present time and in the course of some of their announcements they say, "Education is our only hope."

Now, this coming from so-called religious leaders, "Education is our only hope," listen, our only hope is God, and our only hope is not God in general. Many of my conservative friends put it that way. That is wrong. That is wrong. That is why I shall never put my politics above my word of God. For our only hope is not God in general. Our only hope is the God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that God, that God, only that God, for there is no other God. No other God.

Now, Isaiah illustrates that. For when Hezekiah leaned upon his God, he was strong and suddenly one morning the Jerusalemites got up, looked out, and what did they see? But 185,000 Assyrians left dead and the armies vanished, in one night.

You know, it is interesting to read what the scholars say about that. One of the accounts says that the mice came and ate up the cords on the spear on the shields of the Assyrian warriors and some other features of their armor and so they had to flee. And the scholars when they see this word "mice" they think that surely must be a mistake it should be rats and therefore the bubonic plague struck that night and Assyria was no more.

Now, I do not know what God used. But I know this that he did use it, whatever it was, to deliver Judah from the hands of the Assyrian. Education is not our last hope. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ is.

Now, when we turn to these prophecies that we are going to look at now briefly, I have gone into this detail because I want you to understand the background of these prophecies and some of them have their background in the reign of Ahaz, the wicked king. Some of them have their background in the reign of Hezekiah, the good king. And about most of them were not positive of the background of them.

Now, let us turn to chapter 14 verse 28 through verse 32 where we have the prophecy against Philistia. And let me read the chapter. The time is 716 B.C. The occasion is this; Philistia has captured some Israelite-ish cities during the reign of

Hezekiah. He is now to come to the throne and rout them. And so Isaiah is given a message which is directed toward Philistia and the subject is, "Don't joy over the rod which smote thee," the Davidic Kingdom, because it is now broken since the Syro-Ephraimitic war. "Don't joy over it because ultimately it shall overcome you." Verse 28: "In the year, that King Ahaz died was this birth. Rejoice not now, Oh Philistia because the rod of him who smote thee or the rod which smote thee is broken."

You see Israel or Judah is in bad shape because of that alliance between the northern kingdom, Israel, and Syria to the north of them. They have been troubling due to all of this time and so in a sense they are broken. Ahaz the wicked King has been responsible for it. "Don't joy over it Oh Philistia!" Remember Philistia or the Philistines were to the west and a little to the south of Judah. They were their ancient enemies. This was Goliath's plan. "For out of the serpent's root shall come forth an adder," my text has. I think you have something like a cockatrice. Now, either one of them is something a woman would not like to see, an adder. In other words, "out of the roots shall come forth an adder." I think that what he means by this is Hezekiah. Ahaz is gone but Hezekiah is coming and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent. A serpent for you, Philistia and, surprisingly, and I think, correctly, the Jews interpreted this as a reference to the Messiah.

"And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant. Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, O Philistia art dissolved: for there shall come forth from the north, a smoke an all destroying army and none shall be alone in his appointed times. "

Now there is no straggler in his ranks, they are as thee has. In other words, there is great desire in this army to overcome. "What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it."

Let me just say this about this prophecy. This is one of those unique prophecies of the Old Testament which is so commonly overlooked because we never studied these passages. Sometime I would like to preach a series of messages on neglected figures of the Messiah and this is one of them, the fiery flying serpent. The adder, Hezekiah, is to come but ultimately the fiery flying serpent, the Messiah is to come and Israel's destiny is settled. The Lord had founded Zion as he states in verse 32, "Her destiny is secure, Philistia, do not joy because of your apparent success against her.

Now the prophecy against Moab, chapters 15 and 16 together, the place Moab was to the east and to the south of Judah. The time of this prophecy is approximately the same time perhaps a little later. The occasion, well many have said it is when Sargon the Assyrian king who preceded Sennacherib returned to Palestine to punish Philistia, Judah, Edom and Moab. Let me read through it real quickly. Let us read the 15th chapter first and I want you to just to notice a couple of things. "The burden of Moab. Because in the night," by the way, all of these places that are mentioned here which are all so unfamiliar to us are little places in Moab. Now most of us do not know where Kir of Moab is or Ar of Moab or Bajith or Dibon or Medeba or any of these.

Well, just think of that little place Moab to the south and to the west, to the east of Judah. It is desert plan now. It is off to the east of the Dead Sea, that part of the country. "The burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence." This is sudden destruction in the night. "He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall wail over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off. In their streets shall they gird themselves with sackcloth: on the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall wail, weeping abundantly. And Heshbon shall cry out, and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard even unto Jahaz."

Now if you think I know how to pronounce these, you are sadly mistaken. I do not know to pronounce these, I am only trying to pronounce them as they appear in my Scofield Bible. "Therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; my life shall be grievous unto him. My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, to Eglath-Shelishiyah." Now the reason I know how to pronounce that one is because I know that is a transliteration of Hebrew. And of course I can pronounce Hebrew better than I can on some of these English words. "For by the ascent of Luhith with weeping shall they go up for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction. For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing." That is the prophecy of Texas. [Laughter] "Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up shall they carry away to the brook of the willows." In other words, they shall flee to Edomea, which is right next to it. "For the cry has gone round about the borders of Moab; the wailing of it to Eglaim, and its howling unto Beerelim. For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land."

Now you know there are two things here that I want you to notice just. Number one is in verse 5, will you look at it? "My heart shall cry out for Moab." Now is not this a startling thing for a prophet of Judah to say? With reference to a land that has been a trouble to Israel and to Judah down through the centuries. It is just as if in the midst of the last war, a man should rise up and say, "I have something to say about Germany." Because Germany has persecuted the Jews, Germany is going to be destroyed as the nation that exists today. Oh! How my heart weeps for Germany. How my heart weeps for Hitler." Now that would be very rare indeed, wouldn't it?

But here is a prophet of Israel who states, "My heart shall cry out for Moab." Now this is the thing. The Hebrew commentator Rashi said, "Many centuries ago that marked out the prophets of Israel from the heathen prophets. They were men who thought and

felt after the heart of God, for this is the way God feels. And when he expresses his prophecies of judgment, it is not with any sense of vindictiveness but a sense of great compassion that comes out of his love." And when you turn over to the New Testament, you see the same thing.

In my classes in Romans at the seminary, we are right now in the 10th and 11th chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. And we have just gone over the passages, I say the truth in Christ are lined up, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for I could wish that I myself were a curse from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to my flesh. That is Paul's compassion for Israel, his own people who have departed from the Lord. I would think from this too that this is the heart of the man who stands up before the church of Jesus Christ and bewails its apostasy. He must surely if he has entered into this in the spirit of the prophets and of the apostles, must bewail the apostasy of the church with a sense of great compassion for them. "Oh, how my heart wails for the church of Jesus Christ!" We should say, because of the apostasy that exists today within it.

Then in the 10th chapter, they were just looking at this last week, Paul says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." He does not say that they might be happy, but that they might be saved. What men need today is not happiness, they need salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge.

You know it is possible to have great zeal for truth, but if it is not in accordance with knowledge, it is pitiful. This is why when you see a Jehovah's Witness who is very, very sincere in his errand, you can be sure that he is not saved. You may admire their zeal, but they are not saved. It is possible for men to be very, very sincere, Charlie Brown, very sincere and very lost, very lost. It is sad but it is true.

Now that is the first thing. Well, you notice the next thing in the 9th verse, "For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood, for I will bring more upon Dimon." Now the

word "lions" in verse 9 is actually a singular in the Hebrew not a plural. "A lion upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land."

Now with that singular in mind, let us read on the first five verses of the 16th chapter. "Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness." Now God is giving instructions to Moab, "Send ye the lamb," that means to pay tribute, they paid tribute in lambs. "Send the lamb to the ruler of the land." What land? Why, the land of Israel of course. "From Sela through the wilderness." Sela is part of Moab. In other words, from the capital, the city of Sela in Moab, send tribute to the land, the land of Israel. Moab, your hope rests in Israel. Your hope rests in them who are God's chosen people.

Let us read on. "Unto the mouth of the daughter of Zion. For it shall be that like a wondering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon." That is a river. "Take counsel, execute judgment. Make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noon day; hide the outcasts; betray not him that wandereth. Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn among you." That is the way this has been rendered and I think properly so. "Be thee thou a cover to them from the face of the spoiler, for the extortioner is at an end. The spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land. And in mercy shall the throne be established." What throne? Why, the Messianic throne of course. "And he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking justice, and swiftly executing righteousness."

In other words, the hope of Moab lies in the foundation of the Davidic kingdom. And that foundation of the Davidic kingdom, this by the way is long after the time of David. The foundation of the Davidic kingdom of course, takes place when our Lord Jesus Christ, after having passed through the experiences of death, burial and resurrection, having ascended on high comes again at his second coming to establish this Davidic kingdom upon the earth as we have already read in this great prophecy of Isaiah in

chapter 11. And so Moab is told then to flee to the Davidic throne for their hope and of course to him who sits upon it.

Now in the light of that fact, I think that in verse 9, the reference to the lamb, as Professor Delich took it, this is a Messianic term. And the lion, who is here linked with the throne of David is none other than of the lion of the tribe of Judah, our Lord Jesus Christ. And if we want to understand all of the lion's roars, which God is going to mete out upon Moab in the days of the tribulation period. We must go all the way to the Book of Revelation and begin with the 4th chapter, and the 5th chapter particularly when John sees one sitting upon the throne with a book in his right hand and no man able to come to open the book and he weeps because he knows this holds, this book holds human destiny within it. And he weeps and he is heard. He hears someone say, "Weep not, for behold the lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the seal. To break the seals and open this book." And he turns, and what does he see? A lamb, as it had been slain, for the lion of the tribe of Judah is the lamb that was slain on Calvary's cross. And it is to this lamb, to this one who is also the lion of the tribe of Judah, that Moab is pointed for help.

Now I think we can dispense with reading the rest of that chapter, let us look briefly at chapter 17. Here we have the prophecy against Damascus. The time, well, now we go all the way back to the time of Ahaz. And Ahaz is troubled from the north by Israel, the ten tribes, and Syria. And here the prophet predicts the fact, or the fate, I should say of the two allies unto the hand of Assyria. Only a scanty remnant is going to survive, let us read it. "The Burden of Damascus." Damascus, the capital of Syria. Is it not interesting that here we are reading in the 17th chapter of the ancient city of Damascus and today Damascus is on the front page of our papers again. The Burden of Damascus, "Behold Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap. The cities of Aroer are forsaken. They shall be for flocks which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid."

It is as if someone were to say, "Dallas is going to suffer complete destruction and the flocks of the Bar-X ranch are going to be pasturing where Elm Street is today. "The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim and the kingdom from Damascus. And the remnant of Syria, they shall be like the glory of the children of Israel sayeth Lord of Hosts. And in that day it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin." For you see, Damascus and the northern kingdom, Israel, were in league. "And the fatness of his flesh shall become lean."

Let us skip on down to verse 9, "In that day shall his strong cities be like a forsaken bow, like the ruins of the forest, and an uppermost branch which they left because of the children of Israel and there shall be desolation." And then I want you to skip to verse 12, because here most commentators feel, and I do too, that the prophet as so often he does, writing against the background of the soon destruction of the northern kingdom and Syria, looks on to the last days. When amidst of all of those turmoils and struggles of the tribulation period, he sees the coming from the north of that great army of the beast down to take the city of Jerusalem. When at the last moment, they surround the city of Jerusalem, have even made a breach in its walls and it appears as if they are to take the city itself. Then, in supernatural fashion, Jesus Christ comes again to the earth, stands upon the Mount of Olives, destroys the enemy with the beast by the breath of his mouth and establishes his kingdom upon the earth.

Now listen to Isaiah as he describes this great army of people, far more than he could ever describe by referring only to Syria and to the ten tribes. "Woe to the multitude of many people, who make a noise like the noise of the seas, and to the rushing of nations that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters. The nations shall rush like the rushing of mighty waters but God shall rebuke them and they shall flee far off and shall be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind."

I think that is so striking because in Daniel, in the 2nd chapter, when he describes the second coming of Jesus Christ unto the form of the stone cut out without hands from the mountain which smites the great image of Nebuchadnezzar, it says that the stone smites the image on its feet. And you remember the image begins to crumble and then it becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Daniel says, "And a wind comes and blows those that the rest of that image away." And then as he looks at the stone, suddenly the stone cut out without hands becomes large, it becomes like a mountain and it fills the whole of the earth."

It is a picture of the coming of Jesus Christ. How he smites world dominion. Shatters it, it is blown away, it is no more, but his kingdom becomes the kingdom of the earth. And that is almost the same picture we have here and behold the evening troubled. And before the morning, he is not. The enemies of the Lord vanished during the night. This is the portion of those who spoil us and a lot of those who rob us.

One last word, one minute, on chapter 18, here we have the prophecy against Ethiopia. The time, 701 BC. The occasion, Sennacherib is now approaching the Nile Valley. Ethiopia is very disturbed like many nations. They are fleeing to other nations for help. They are even sending apparently to Judah for help. And so Isaiah has a word for this nation excitingly sending its ambassadors over the territory to get some help against the Assyrians and the message that Isaiah gives them is this, "Go home, go home, quietly watch and Jehovah will thwart Assyria." That is what he means when he says, "Woe to the land shadowing with wings", by the way that is because Ethiopia was so full of insects, it is like New Jersey. That is what it means, "Woe to the land of whirring wings". So many insects and mosquitoes in that land that it is known that way, that is Ethiopia. "That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes among the waters." Now eliminate the saying. Beginning with the word "go," is Isaiah's message. "Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and stripped or to a nation tall and smooth."

A revised standard version renders it correctly. Do you know why Ethiopia was known as a nation tall and smooth? Well because their cheeks or their skin, since it was brown, they did not have the beards of the other nations. They were smooth-faced, relatively. And furthermore, the Ethiopians were tall. They were known for that. I wonder if the Ethiopian eunuch was not that kind of man. A tall and handsome man, but they are called tall and smooth. And so Isaiah's message is, "Go tell them, tell those Ethiopian's this," just wait, "God is going to bring victory and he is going to come through the promises that ultimately are related to Mount Zion," as the chapter ends, a great message. Of course, its point is simply this, that it is God who holds the key to our safety. And it is so striking too to me that one of the things that you find all through the Bible is that whenever we get disturbed and schemed and are active, and are seeking to help ourselves, and to win the victory ourselves, it is then that God speaks and tells us to stand still and see the salvation of our God.

That is what we did when we became a Christian, you know. We stopped all of our working for salvation, our churchgoing, our religious life, and our good deeds. All of the various things that we thought we were doing in order to get ourselves approved before God and we looked off to the cross and saw that Jesus Christ had done it. And so we stood still and we saw the salvation of God. But then like so many of us, we forget that, do we not, when we become Christians? We read in the Bible the things that characterize the Christian life and what do we do? We go out and in the energy of the flesh we try to do these things. And so all of our life is just one constant threat when God wants us to discover a new, the principle of stand still and see the salvation of our God.

A friend, Bob Theme calls it "the faith rest technique." That is all it is. And so here among the nations, the same thing holds true. Stand still and see the salvation of God. And you know, Christians whenever you get into difficulty that is what God wants you to do too. When the tragedies of life come; stand still. Let God do the saving. When the problems of life come, stand still. Let God do the saving. And when the time comes

when you must pass from this earthly existence -- do not worry about that even -- he will take care of that too. You will see the salvation of our God. Just like the children of Israel at the Red Sea.

Read next time chapters 19 through 23. You will get a great deal more out of it if you come here completely puzzled because you have read it. Because then I will not puzzle you anymore and may lead you out of it a little bit. Let us look to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for these sections from Thy word which at times seems so difficult to us, but which do enunciate the ancient principles of the word of God, that it is trust in Thee and ultimately in Thy provision through Christ.