



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 26:1 – 27: 13

“Israel Raised From the Dead and Fruitful in the Earth”

TRANSCRIPT

Without further ado, let's open with a word of prayer and then turn to Isaiah chapter 26 and 27.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for the ministry of the word of God. We thank Thee for its wonderful effect upon our lives. We thank Thee most of all for Jesus Christ of whom it speaks. And may as we study the scriptures of the Old Testament that our thoughts go on to him around whom all of scripture gathers. We thank Thee that it is by reason of his sacrifice for us upon the cross at Calvary that we have life, and so we express to Thee the gratitude of our hearts for the salvation which is given to us on the basis of grace alone.

We thank Thee Lord for him who loved us and who has loosed us from our sins in his own precious blood. Now guide and direct us as we turn to the scriptures. May our hearts be open to the truth.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] The subject for tonight is the Little Apocalypse, the second in the series, “Israel Raised From the Dead and Fruitful in the Earth.” Israel Raised From the Dead and

Fruitful in the Earth. Remember in our last study when we came to Isaiah chapter 24, I mentioned that this is known as Isaiah's little apocalypse chapters 24, 25, 26 and 27. Now by this title, scholars and students of the prophecy of Isaiah mean that these chapters remind us of the apocalyptic type of writing that we find in the Books of Daniel and The Revelation. In other words, there is an unveiling of the future in a tremendously significant way, for apocalypse means “an unveiling.” So this is the little apocalypse and in this little apocalypse we noticed last time that Isaiah especially draws our attention to the coming overthrow of the kingdoms of this world.

I mentioned that man does not like to think that God will find it necessary to overthrow the kingdoms of this world. For of course if God finds it necessary to overthrow the kingdoms of this world, that means that He is not satisfied with them and it also means that man is not able to set his house in order. This is why man does not respond too well to the idea of the second coming of Jesus Christ, for the idea that he must come again is opposed to their own sense of achievement, to their own sense of pride. And consequently man has never reacted with a great deal of favor to the idea that Jesus Christ is going to come again. It says that he cannot set his house in order.

Now man has not reacted very well to the cross of Jesus Christ either, for the cross of Jesus Christ proclaims as loudly as it is possible for God to proclaim that man cannot satisfy the claims that God has against him. The cross says in effect that we cannot, apart from the sacrifice of the son of God, have everlasting life; that it was necessary for Jesus Christ to die for the sins of the human race in order that man might have life. Now the cross proclaims an end to our pride, our pride and our sense of accomplishment before God. The second coming strikes a blow in the same way.

Now Isaiah's little apocalypse sets forth the overthrow of the kingdoms of the world, but it also stresses the fact that God is going to restore to supremacy the nation Israel. Now the world of course does not like this either. It does not like to think that ancient Israel, the chosen of God, is going to again become the head of the nations. The

reason is ultimately related to the choice of God. The reason men are anti-Semitic is because they object to the choice of God. That is why they are anti-Semitic. Ultimately all anti-Semitism is an objection lodged against God because He has chosen Israel.

Now we may not be able to define it that way. We may not if we have ever been the subject of this. We may not be able to explain our feelings, may not want to explain our feelings along this way, but ultimately it is related to that fact, and that is why down through the years when anti-Semitism found expression, it was always an objection lodged against the government of God and specifically His election of the Nation Israel.

Now here then we have the overthrow of the kingdoms of the world and the reassertion by God of the supremacy of the nation Israel through her coming messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. What we have in Isaiah 24, 25, 26 and 27 is in one sense then a counterpart of Revelation chapter 4 through chapter 19, for you see that's precisely what we have there. We have in those chapters the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world. They become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Messiah, and we also have the restoration of the Nation Israel to the place of preeminence among the nations in the earth. The two great themes are then judgment on an unparalleled scale and blessing for the Nation Israel.

Now the judgment we looked at in chapter 24 because you remember that chapter began with a statement of judgment and the entire chapter continued the theme. “Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.” And then the remainder of that chapter is a marvelous unfolding in a sense of the judgment that God is going to pour out upon the kingdoms of this world. And strikingly enough we saw that this judgment was not only going to affect this world in which we live, but it was going to affect the whole of the universe because in verse 21 of Isaiah 24 we read “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.”

And I suggested to you that the Bible states that the kingdoms of this earth have their angels as their protectors or their preservers or at least their ministers. We have evidence of this in the Book of Daniel, and we have evidence of it more generally in the New Testament in which the Apostle Paul for example speaks of thrones and dominions and principalities and powers. There are powers which we cannot see, and in the judgment that God is going to pour out upon the kingdoms of this earth, they are not only going to touch the world in which we live, but all of those involved in the carrying on of the affairs of the earth. In other words, God is going to make a new beginning. He is going to bring into existence a new creation. There is going to be a New Jerusalem upon the earth and there is going to be a renewal of this earth during the kingdom and consequently God’s hand is upon everything in renewal.

Now when we talk about judgment, it's a little surprising then to realize that the chapters which had been called by Delitzsch the finale of the great catastrophe are in the form of songs. Notice chapter 25 and 26 and 27. After this tremendous expression of judgment on the part of God, we have some songs and there are four of them. There is chapter 25 verses 1 through 8 the first song and then verses 9 through 12, the second song, and in chapter 26 verse 1 through chapter 27 verse 1, there is the third song. Notice the opening of the 26th chapter. “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah.” And then notice chapter 27 verse 2 “In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine” and so on. So it's rather startling to be told after we have this expression of judgment that now we have these songs in celebration of that which God is going to accomplish when so much of it is judgment.

But you know the earth has in a sense been under the false human government for so long, it's no wonder really in the final analysis that when God finally does reach down in the affairs of men to set things straight that the creation and the redeemed should sing and shout with joy to the Lord because finally this old earth and the redeemed upon it are going to be in and under a government with the Lord at the control.

Now we all look forward to a new lease on life in the United States today. Even if we are not supporters of Richard Nixon, I think that most of us down in our hearts are probably hopeful that the next four years are going to be just a little bit better than the last four have been, and so we look forward with a great deal of hope. Perhaps we shall be disappointed when the four years are over. Perhaps we shall have four years that were worse than the four that preceded it, who knows, but at least there is that sense of hope in the hearts of the people throughout this land that the next four years may give us something better.

Now I think that when the day comes when God intervenes in human history and sets things straight, it's no wonder that even though tremendous judgments are poured out upon the earth, the redeemed shall sing with tremendous exultation because the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Messiah and He shall reign for ever and ever. I am looking forward to that day and I am so happy that when Jesus Christ is inaugurated as Messiah in fact, that we can look forward to something that will really be a wonderful government upon this earth.

But now I want you for a moment, I don't have the blackboard tonight. To tell you the honest truth, I was lazy. I left it in the garage and then I just didn't want to bring it over and have to set it up over here after all of that talk in the other building. So I hope that we are going to have the blackboard that we can use by February the 10th or we are going to move here in one of these other rooms in which we can do it because we need this blackboard, but I would like before we look at 26 and 27 tonight to review the order of events in the future so that you will understand the relationship of these two chapters 26 and 27 to the events of the future.

Now remember the first great event of the prophetic word that is to occur is the rapture of the church. Jesus Christ may come at any moment, the scriptures say and when he comes, the true believers shall be caught up to meet him in the air. That is specifically set forth for us in passages such as 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, verses 13

through 18. The true church all believers, not all Baptists, all believers, not all Presbyterians, but all believers, not all the members of Believers Chapel, all believers shall be called up to meet the Lord in the air. Perhaps there would be some in that company who are not a member of any church. Perhaps do not even attend any church.

I remember when I used to speak on the radio every week, we would occasionally get letters from New Zealand, people who were way out in the country, out in the farms and they would write in and say we do not have the opportunity to hear the word of God anywhere and we are greatly dependent upon the radio and we just want to thank you for the ministry of the word of God. There are such people and there are many who are bedridden who can never meet in the companies of the saints such as we may meet, but they shall be caught up too to meet the Lord in the air. That's the first great event of the prophetic Scriptures, the removal of the true church from the earth. The rest of the church is going through The Great Tribulation or through tribulation. It's proper to say that the church will go through the tribulation if you mean of course the professing untrue church of Jesus Christ.

Now the next event of the prophetic word is the rise of the ten kings. Now Daniel and Revelation both speak of the fact that ten great kings shall arise throughout the earth who shall have dominion over specific territories. Shortly after they arise in power, a great king called by the Book of Revelation, the Beast, referred to generally by Bible students as the antichrist, shall arise as a king and he shall assume authority over the kings. The next thing that shall happen is that the antichrist or the Beast shall make a covenant with the Jews at the beginning of the seventieth week of Israel.

Now that seventieth week of Israel is a seven-year period of time. When it begins, we are not precisely certain. It may begin immediately after the rapture of the church. There may be a little bit of time between the rapture and the beginning of the seventieth week. But the beginning of it is marked very plainly in the word of God by the covenant that the antichrist makes with the Jews, and as far as we can tell it has to do with the

restoration of the worship of Jehovah in the temple in Jerusalem. A temple shall be rebuilt and the worship of the Jew shall be carried on within it and the antichrist shall enter into this covenant permitting them to carry on their worship.

I think it's rather striking that today the old Jerusalem is in the hands of the Jews. They have not done anything about the construction of a temple yet. Don't believe anything that you read in the newspapers of Christians unless you do research upon it. There have been all kinds of reports that stones have been shipped from Indiana to Jerusalem. Why they would need any stones from Indiana, no one has been able to logically say, because they have enough stone in Jerusalem to construct ten temples and they like their stone probably a great deal better than our stone anyway, but nevertheless you hear all kinds of rumors. I do not believe it. I want to see some positive evidence, but the Scriptures are plain that temple shall be rebuilt because the Apostle Paul and our Lord refer to the fact that an image is going to be set up in the temple of God and men are going to be called upon to worship that image. So the temple is going to be built.

The next thing that will happen will be the domination of politics by Babylonian religion. When the religion of the Jews is instituted, apparently Babylonian religion shall dominate politics. We gather that from Revelation chapter 17. I wish we had time to talk about all of the details of it, but we don't. We are just trying to give an outline of what's going to happen. Then the Beast is going to have a supernatural experience. This man whose mouth speaks great things, this great world ruler, who has managed to gain control over the other of the kings who shall arise, is going to have some kind of supernatural experience. He is going to have a deadly wound and that wound is going to be healed, apparently a counterfeit of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, such as to excite admiration and elicit worship from men throughout the world.

You know if men could fall down before John F. Kennedy and almost worship him, what are they going to do before the antichrist, this outstanding character, who is going to be able to move the multitudes of the whole of the earth and then can tie into

that a tremendous supernatural apparently experience whereby he apparently died and arose to life again. I am glad I not going to be here. I might be tempted to worship him myself. Even the elect may sometimes be fooled you know.

Well now that great leader after this experience is going to break the covenant with the Jews and he is going to overthrow with his kings Babylonian religion in the middle of the seventieth week. He is going to set up an image in that temple in Jerusalem, but it's going to be an image of himself and he will do it by means of his right hand man who is called the false prophet and the false prophet will sing the praises of the Beast and call upon men to worship him. There shall be established then an ecumenical religion. All shall worship the Beast throughout the bounds of the earth the Beast and his image. We are all going to be members, not we, I am speaking just as a man, we are all going to be members of the same church. We are going to have the same head and the same object of worship, and everything is going to be lovely because there is not going to be this division among the churches that we find here, so men are going to say.

But as D. Martin Lloyd-Jones likes to say throwing all of the ecclesiastical corpses into one graveyard will not bring about a resurrection and so while there is one great church, one great religion, one great religious system, it has nothing of God within it. God at that moment in the midst of the tribulation when the covenant is broken, begins to pour out of heaven all of the tremendous judgments that are described in the Book of Revelation from the 6th through the 18th chapters. Those chapters unfold you remember the judgments of the seals, the judgments of the trumpets, and the judgments of the bowls; three series of seven judgments and they are poured out from above upon men. God, as we shall see, teaches man in the world righteousness by means of His judgments.

At the conclusion of that period of time, that seven-year period of time, three and a half of Great Tribulation, the Beast is defeated and his capital city is destroyed. His capital city I believe is Babylon and it is destroyed. Man’s city and man’s kingdom is

destroyed by God’s Lamb. It's an amazing thing, isn't it? Who would ever suspect that the Lamb of God would defeat the great wild beast of the antichrist? But that’s God’s way of showing the difference between the Beast pictured as a great wild beast and God’s Messiah as a gentle lamb, but O the power of the Lamb! And Jesus Christ comes again the second time to the earth as the climactic event in the overthrow of man’s kingdom. Now that is in general an outline of what happens during The Great Tribulation period or the tribulation period or Israel’s seventieth week. Now we have put this on the board from time to time as we study Isaiah but that is the general background.

Now let’s look at Isaiah chapter 26 for this song is sung in the moment of triumph at the end of the tribulation just as Messiah is to come and Israel is to enter into the city of Jerusalem as the ransomed of the Lord. Now the city is not yet entered. We read in verse 2 “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth may enter in.” Now the great thought of chapter 26 and this song of divine deliverance is praise for deliverance through judgment to national restoration, praise to God for deliverance from the great tribulation by means of divine judgment with the end in view national restoration.

Now as you read the 26th chapter, you will notice that the prophet speaks from different vantage points, but I think this is the great vantage point of the chapter, the moment of triumph at the end of the tribulation is at hand. Now as we read through, I am just going to hit a few of the high spots in chapter 26 now. “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city.” I think that what they mean by this is that we are about to enter the city of Jerusalem which has been won for us by the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. “We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation (that is Israel now redeemed by their recognition of the person in work of our Lord Jesus Christ) that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth may enter in.”

I may now stop for just a moment and say something about this. The reason that Israel is referred to here as the righteous nation is not because they have become righteous by means of their good works. The reason that they are called the righteous nation here is because they have been converted, they have come to recognize their own unrighteousness, and that Jesus Christ has borne that unrighteousness and that he is their savior and that through him, they may have a righteousness that is imputed to them. They are righteous because of what Jesus Christ has done, not because of what they are in themselves. And we must understand it that way and you will notice in the words that follow the evidence of this. Notice for example the fourth verse “Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord God is everlasting strength. For he bringeth down those that dwell on high” and so on. So it is the Lord who is to be trusted in. So the righteous nation is a nation now that having looked upon our Lord Jesus, the spirit of grace and supplication led them to confess him as the one who had died for them and they had bowed down before him and had received from him the righteousness that God wanted to confer. So they are called the righteous nation.

Verse 3 “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee.” Now what a great text this is. This is one of those great texts of the scripture that men like to extract from the context and use as a text for peace or use as a text for trust in God or use as a text for a sound mind, and all of this is useful, but you will notice the context of it is in the song of the ransomed of Israel as they reflect upon what God has done for them through the Second Advent of their Messiah and all of his climactic triumph at the end of that tribulation period.

But let’s notice the theology of it. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” I think I can notice an order in this text and the first is of term mind. Did you notice that “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.” That seems to me to be fundamental, the mind. Jehovah does not keep the mind. Jehovah keeps as the text says him whose mind is

stayed on thee. What keeps the mind? Well, the truth of God. That’s what keeps the mind. When the truth of God comes to the mind of man and man responds to it, the text says God will keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on the truth of God or on the Lord.

Now that’s so that I think you can see that it is tremendously important that we fill our minds with the word of God. You know I don’t want to pose as a great counselor because you probably if you ever came to me for any counsel, you would be greatly disappointed, but it is my privilege to counsel a lot of people and I have noticed this through at least my limited experience that it is the heartiest thing in the world to get people to turn to the word of God and to find their solutions to their problems in the scriptures. They want some quick word of advice, some little catchy statement that the counselor may make that will deliver them without any of the really seeking of the mind of God from the Scriptures which is so necessary. I do not think it is possible for us to live a fruitful life if our mind is not stayed upon Him as He is found in the word of God. Someone came to me tonight after the theology class and expressed a great desire to know the truth of the Scriptures. Well if that desire is followed out, there shall come great peace of mind and heart because it comes from the word of God. That means that everyone of us should make it the first thing in our life, I don’t mean in the morning necessarily, but the first thing in our life that we sit down with the Scriptures and spend some time in them.

May I ask you a little question, what about today? Has there been any time when you took the word of God by yourself and just pondered it a little bit and gave God a chance to speak to you? Did you sit down in your chair or at your breakfast table or in your office on bosses’ time and read the word of God? I don’t want to joke about this because you know this is the most important thing in the Christian’s life. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.” O how important the word of God is!

Now if mind is first, trust is next because you see it is through the mind’s fullness of the word of God that trust in God follows. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee” for you see to fill our hearts and minds with the word of God leads to trust in Him. Remember what Paul says? Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Do you want to have great faith? Do you want to have the ability to trust God? Well you don't get it in prayer. Don't kneel down by your bedside and say O God, give me faith! Open the Bible, begin to read it and faith follows naturally, for you see it's through the Bible that we have fellowship with Jesus Christ.

If David Simpson who is sitting up here in the second pew, were the kind of man that you could completely trust, he isn't because he is a man, but if he were the kind of man whom you could completely trust, the more you knew him, the more you would profit from it. The more you would know about him, the more you would know the ways in which you could trust him. Why it is through the word of God that we come to know Jesus Christ and the more we know of him, the more adequate we discover that he is for our needs. We neglect these very simple little things.

On the way to Nashville Sunday afternoon, I got on the plane at 1:20. I was very disappointed because you see it was the time of the super ball game and I thought I was going to miss all of it, but I managed to by the providence of God, [laughter] get to see the last half of that game in Nashville. But you know there had been on the Saturday before that Sunday two hijackings to Cuba. And so I went end with Mary and we sat down with three seats. Now you thought I traveled first class, didn't you? Well, I don't. I ought to; at least that's what I tell the Lord, but He only gives me the money to pay for a tourist fare.

So anyway my wife and I were sitting and she had to be by the window. She has claustrophobia. And so she sat by the window and I sat in the middle seat and so I wondered who was going to come to sit by my side. And I looked up and there was a

man coming down, a great big fellow and just as Mexican looking as you could possibly imagine a man to be and I said, we may go by Havana, Mary, to Nashville. So he sat down by my side and I didn’t know how in the world he was going to [indistinct]. I had no idea what might turn. I really was thinking about that two hijackings in one day you see and so I had the notes of the message that I was going to preach that night out. He looked over and he began to read and I thought let me do him some good. It may keep his pistol in his bag.

And so he looked at my notes. I noticed he was kind of interested and then finally he said, Are you a minister? And I said well I am going to preach tonight in Nashville. He said, well that’s interesting. He said I am a student in a Roman Catholic theological seminary. So we had an interesting discussion on the way to Nashville. And I asked him a few leading questions to hear what he would have to say. I said why did you go to theological seminary? He said well, I was looking for a meaning in life and so I went to my pastor -- his priest; called him his pastor -- said I went to my pastor and I asked my pastor about it, and my pastor said if you are looking for a meaning in life, why not try the priesthood. Said you can at least try the priesthood and if you don't find anything in the priesthood, then you can try something else. So he said I am studying to be a priest hoping to find meaning in life.

And so I proceeded to give him my testimony, and tell him how I was in business and how I was converted, how I found meaning in life through the Scriptures. I tried to explain to him the way of salvation. We had an interesting discussion. The only thing is that Nashville is only an hour and fifteen to twenty minutes away, so we couldn’t cover everything. I did check him out on his Greek. He was rather poor in Greek. [Laughter] In fact, he was poor in Latin too. He said he didn’t like either one of them. He was going back to El Paso and he was going to be just a pastor out there.

But you see that young man’s great problem is that he doesn’t know anything about the word of God. You cannot even talk to him about scriptural things because he

hasn’t the slightest idea what the Bible contains and consequently he has no peace because he doesn’t know why he is here. He doesn’t know from whence he has come, and he doesn’t know where he is going. No meaning in life whatsoever because he doesn’t know the word.

Now that principle applies to Christians. Christians who do not study the Bible will be just as swept by every wind of doctrine and every wind of opinion and by every experience of life, disturbed and bereft of any sense of stability because that comes through the word of God. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” That flows out of mind filled with the word of God. The mind filled with the word leads to trust in God and naturally that man has peace. Things may come in his life but he has peace.

I went on to Charleston on Thursday. I saw my father who had had a stroke in September. My father is a Christian man. He is a Presbyterian Christian. He believes in the providence of God. He believes in the sovereignty of God. I don't think that he could point me to any particular text, perhaps Romans 8:28 a few very common ones to prove his doctrine, but there are many good old things in Presbyterianism that give a man a solid underpinning in times of trouble, but he is quite disturbed. He is 81 years of age and almost all of his disturbance which is relatively minor I presume, but almost all of his disturbance is related to the fact that he has never really had anyone to teach him the holy Scriptures.

He has listened to the kind of preaching which in our church in Charleston was not anti-scriptural, it just is without a scripture. It's the kind of preaching of a text here and a text there and a text over there and another text taken out of a context over here and certain ideas are presented but no real acquaintance with the doctrines of holy Scripture, and now when the trials of life come, there are no anchors to hold you fast, and so he is disturbed one moment and satisfied the next and disturbed the next and satisfied the next and.

I wasn’t there but just a few nights but every night, we read a chapter from the Bible. And I had a word of prayer with my mother and my father. And I would read the chapter. We started at Matthew they had been reading, just finished Mark and they were going to read Matthew now and so I read Matthew chapter 1 and when I got to chapter 1 verse 18 through verse 25, I commented upon the fact that our Lord is called Jesus because he shall save his people from their sins, and I said, you notice that’s the human name of our Lord, Jesus. It’s the name that marks him out as the man who was born in Nazareth, possessed a nature like our nature, and also it’s the name that is identified with his office of savior because to save us, he must be one of us. It’s the name that suggests that he knows our feelings and sympathizes with us.

And then we read on a few verses and we came to Immanuel and I commented upon the fact that Immanuel means God with us. And I said that’s the name that stresses His divine nature. We read the chapter and we had a word of prayer. They thanked me very profusely. The next morning I was sitting by my father’s bed and he said, What was that you said last night about Jesus and Immanuel? Go over that with me again. You know I thought that was very sad [voice breaks slightly]. He is an elder in the First Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina. A man who is an elder in a church ought to know the Scriptures. He not only ought to know the Scriptures so as to be comforting himself, but should be able to comfort others with the comfort wherewith he has been comforted of God.

“Thou wilt keep him.” You know Isaiah seems to think that this peace that comes is such wonderful peace that there is no way to express it and so he puts it in Hebrew like this, thou wilt keep him in peace, peace, shalom shalom. That’s just the way he has of saying the great and deep peace that comes from a man whose mind is filled with scripture which leads to faith and God’s keeping power. Now you see why preachers talk about the text all the time.

Let’s read on. Verse 5 “For he bringeth down those who dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low.” That’s Babylon, Babylon that is rebuilt overthrown in the coming of our Lord Jesus. “He layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.” You will notice apparently the poor and needy are reference to the remnant in Israel. Apparently they have some part in the destruction of the city of Babylon. They cooperate with God.

“The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.” I wonder what tune they are going to sing this song to. You know I would like to be there and hear them sing it. It’s going to be tremendous exultation in that day. I am often with young people’s groups and you know when you get a young people’s group in which a lot of them have been converted recently and they sing some great hymn, I will tell you there is a thrill but that’s going to be nothing compared to the day when all of the ransomed of Israel who have been so wayward are going to be brought to faith and trust in our Lord Jesus. There is going to be so much weeping, joyous weeping, so many tears shed. It’s going to be a very, very, an experience full of humidity I imagine.

“Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.” Now notice the last part of verse 9. “For when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” What a sad thing! Wouldn’t it be wonderful if the earth would learn righteousness because His word is in the earth. Here it is.

Everybody can put their hands on a Bible in the United States. Throughout the Western world, a Bible is the easiest thing to come upon but men will not learn righteousness. They will not turn to the word of God and so finally in order that God may accomplish His purposes, it is necessary for Him to pour out all of the judgments of that tribulation period and when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the

world will learn righteousness. In the process of course, the great majority are lost forever. Verse 10,

“Let favor be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.”

Now notice this. Israel is speaking about their past. “O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish.” The nations of the earth that are lost in the judgments of God and the future. “Thou hast increased the nation, O lord, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.” You remember the promise that was made to Abraham. I will make thy name great. I will bring you into land which I will show you. In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. And here is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises.

Now in verse 16, hear the agonies under the antichrist. “Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. As a woman with child who draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not brought forth any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.”

Now the 19th verse, I want to stress for a few moments, this is one of the great verses of the Old Testament because in it, the national resurrection of Israel is set forth by

figure. Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall arise. That should be rendered. “Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is like the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” This is one of the clearest texts of the Old Testament which state that Israel as a nation shall be restored to her place of preeminence. Now I do not think that this refers specifically to the resurrection of individuals. In verse 14, he had referred to the nations. They are dead, they shall not live. And here he refers to the Nation Israel and so national resurrection is referred to.

Let's continue. “Come, my people” the prophet now gives some advice “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment.” Now you know if we had this on the board, I would like to just point to the coming of our Lord to the air and the church rapture, the beginning of the tribulation period, seven years to be shortened at the end and the advent of the Lord Jesus to the earth and this little expression for a little moment is Isaiah’s way of referring to that three and a half year period after that Great Tribulation when Israel is in the midst of the great judgments that ultimately shall bring her and many gentiles to salvation. “Hide thyself as it were for a little moment while the judgments of God as recorded in the Book of Revelation are poured out until the indignation,” the *za’am*.

That word by the way in Hebrew *za’am* is a word that is used in the Old Testament in the Book of Daniel and in some other places of the tribulation period. It's the indignation. It's the time when God's wrath reaches its white hot fury and so Israel, the believing remnant, is told to hide from it. Now you should put in your notes Revelation chapter 12 here because in that chapter, there is described the words through the words of John the Apostle, Israel's attempt to hide herself from Satan who cast out of heaven and comes down to earth for a little while to seek to destroy by flood the woman.

Verse 21, “For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” You will notice it says for behold the Lord cometh out of His place.

And that He is coming, He shall overthrow Assyria, Babylon and Egypt and of course he means the territory described by these names and that is described in the first verse of the 27th chapter by a figure. “In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan” and that is a reference to Assyria “the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent;” that’s a reference to Babylon “and he shall slay the sea monster that is in the sea” the *tanim* and that word is used of Egypt, not only in Isaiah but elsewhere. These three great world powers, they are all going to be destroyed when our Lord comes.

Now the song of the fruitful vineyard, verses 2 through 6. Here the vine which is Israel is visited and is now fruitful and the climax is in verse 6. You know back in chapter 5 of the Book of Isaiah, do you remember when God had His controversy with Israel and He spoke about how He had planted the vine and how He had nurtured it and the vine instead of bringing forth fruit had brought forth unrighteousness. He said He looked for *tsdaqab*, and He found that it produced *tsa’aqab*. He looked for righteousness and he found a cry. Isaiah loves those plays on words you know.

Now listen to what we read here. In the meantime, the vine is called out to God for deliverance and the vine Israel in a figure has become fruitful. Listen,

“In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me. He shall cause those who come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.”

Isn’t that a tremendous statement of the blessing of Israel? Israel not only a blessing because converted to the Messiah but a blessing to the whole of the earth shall fill the face of the world with fruit. That’s the climax.

Now the chapter concludes with the prophet’s reflection upon the divine ways with Israel. Verse 7 “Hath he smitten him, as he smote those who smote him? or is he slain according to the slaughter of those who are slain by him? In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.” These are figures of speech and I presume that most of us have a little difficulty reading these passages and discovering precisely what is meant, but some of the expressions are key expressions and that one in measure is a key expression.

What the prophet is saying is God hasn’t treated Israel as He has treated the world. He has chastised Israel. He has punished her in measure because she is His chosen. Verse 9 “By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, so that the idols and images shall not stand up.”

Now let me stop here for just a moment. You will notice that what he says is simply this. By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; this is all the fruit to take away his sin. In other words, the only thing I require before their sin is taken away is that they make like chalkstones the stones of the altars upon which they worship the idols and images. In other words, when Israel does away with her idolatry, I shall purge her from her sin and restore her to myself. The only thing that I require is that Israel turn to me.

Now I am not going to read the rest of the chapter because our time is up. I just want to turn now to one passage in the New Testament and show you how the Apostle Paul read this same chapter and how he got out of it the truth that we have been talking about. Will you turn to Romans chapter 11 for just a moment. Oh, there is one other thing I must say. I am sorry I must keep you two more minutes. Romans chapter 11 and verse 25. “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye

should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.”

When the full number of the Gentiles be come in, then all Israel shall be saved. Verse 26, “As it is written, “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” Where did he get that expression? Turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Where did he get the expression “For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins”? Do you know where? He got it from Isaiah chapter 27 and verse 9 “By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.” The only thing I require is that Israel turn to Me.

Will you notice verse 23 of Romans 11. “And they also (Israel), if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.” Now the last thing I wanted to say to you in verse 12 of Isaiah chapter 27 “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt.” What river is that? The channel of the river. Well that’s the *Wadi el Arish*, that’s the river of Egypt and you remember when God gave promise to Abraham, what did he say? I am going to give you all the land from the river of Egypt to what? The great river, Euphrates. All of that territory is going to be Israel’s.

Notice verse 12 “It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river (the Wadi el Arish) unto the stream of Egypt (I should have said the channel of the river Euphrates unto the stream of Egypt the Wadi el Arish), and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.” Now what is he saying? You know there were two ways in which you gathered fruit. One was certain types of fruit, you brought all of the fruit in and you put it on a thrashing floor and it was thrashed because it was the kind of fruit that could bear it, but then there were certain types of fruit that if you struck them in the wrong way, you would bruise the fruit itself. Now in that type of fruit, you had to treat it a little differently. You had to beat it off in a different way.

“Israel Raised from the Dead and Fruitful in the Earth” by S. Lewis Johnson
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Now what Isaiah is saying is simply this. The time is coming when Israel is going to be in the east from the Wadi el Arish to the Euphrates, but some of them are going to be believers and some unbelievers, and I am going in among them and I am going to separate the remnant from the majority. I am going to gather them one by one. Do you know what this implies? This implies that Israel is going to be back in the land in unbelief. [Tape ends]