



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 54

“The Glory of the Covenant Nation”

TRANSCRIPT

Let's begin with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for the opportunity to study again the great prophecy of Isaiah and as we consider this wonderful section we pray that the Spirit may direct us again so that our thoughts concerning Thee may be true to the Scriptures and that we may be edified in the things that we hear and make us Lord students of Holy Scripture for we know it is our food and our bread. We commit the hour to Thee in Jesus name. Amen.

[Message] The subject for tonight in Isaiah chapter 54 is the glory of the covenant nation. To a nation battered and beaten through the centuries by both man and God, this chapter should be an invigorating and uplifting breath of heavenly air. And Israel surely has been beaten by both men and God.

Listen to what Adolph Hitler said, “I believe today that I am acting in the sense of the Almighty Creator; by warding off the Jews I am fighting for the Lord's work.”

Listen to Pope Pius the IV, "We order that each and every Jew of both sexes in Our Temporal Dominions and in all the cities, lands, places, and baronies subject to them, shall depart completely out of the confines thereof within the space of three months and after these letters shall have been made public.

Listen to what Martin Luther said, "Jews and Papists are ungodly wretches; they are two stockings made of one piece of cloth.

It is no wonder that Israel Zangwill wrote, "The Jews are a frightened people. Nineteen centuries of Christian love have broken down their nerves."

And now in the 20th Century, we have Nasser saying something about the Jews. This is what he said, not too long ago. Egypt will be glad when our army and that of Syria will meet on the ruins of this treacherous people, the Zionist gangs. We want a decisive battle to annihilate that germ, Israel. We will launch a full-scale war when the right moment comes. All these are from speeches in Alexandria or Radio Cairo. Our aim is the creation of a unified and continuous Arab region from which Israel will be eliminated. The National Arab Goal is the eradication of Israel. We aim at the destruction of the state of Israel. The Arab people want to fight. We have been waiting for the right time when we would be completely ready. Now the war will be total. Its objective will be the annihilation of Israel. Israel's very existence is aggression. These were things he said before 1967.

This is what he said after 1967. Now you would think from reading some of our newspapers that Israel was an aggressor. And that they really were in the wrong in that six or five-day war. This is what Nasser said afterwards, "No peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel. The war has not ended. It has only begun. When the time comes we will strike. The Arab nation has decided to embark on the path of war. We will move on to the containment of Israel and after that to its eradication, which is last year. If you were an Israelite living in Israel would you feel really comfortable and secured? No recognition of Israel. No negotiations. We aim at the

destruction. The Fatah fulfill a vital task in sapping the enemies strength and draining his blood. The UAR appreciates the attitude taken by the Palestinian organizations in rejecting the security counsel resolution of November 1967. This resolution may serve the purpose of eliminating the consequences of the aggression and lead to total Israel withdrawal but it is inadequate for determining the fate of Palestine. The UAR places all its resources at the disposal of these organizations. The six-day war was an actual fact that prelude to a war that has not yet ended.

Now you know if I were an Israelite I think I would enjoy turning to Isaiah chapter 54 and reading what is said here. Let us read the first 10 verses,

“Sing, O barren, Thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, Thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of Thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen Thy cords, and strengthen Thy stakes; for Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for Thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be Thou confounded; for Thou shalt not be put to shame: for Thou shalt forget the shame of Thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of Thy widowhood any more. For Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and Thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called Thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when Thou wast refused, saith Thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from Thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord Thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the

hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”

We have just finished the study of Isaiah chapter 52:13 and 53:12 in which Isaiah has set forth for us the ministry of the suffering servant of Jehovah in the great and final and climactic passage in which the servant is set forth as the one who shall suffer and be raised from the dead for the justification of many.

Now that is in a sense the summit of the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 53. Everything else flows downhill from chapter 53 on. And in this 54th chapter Israel or Zion is pictured as in the Book of Revelation as a bride and a city of Jehovah. The servant’s work his life, his sufferings, his resurrection has solved the problem of the restoration.

You will remember that in the 53rd chapter we read in the 10th verse, “He shall see his seed as a result of his sufferings.” Well, now in the 54th chapter, the seed has come to be and it is so numerous that the tent pegs of the dwelling of Israel have to be enlarged to take care of them and further we read in the third verse that Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and so the seed that Messiah shall seed turns out to be a large number of Israelites, citizens of Zion, and who are also those who ultimately inherit the Gentiles as well.

In chapter 53 and verse 11, we had read, “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; and here the many have turned out to be a tremendous multitude. It is very interesting I think to notice the connection between this 54th chapter and 53rd. In the 53rd we have the sufferings of the Messiah and then in chapter 54, we have the results of his suffering that is Israel is brought to him. It is as if in chapter 53, we are told of the Messiah but in chapter 54, we are told of the value and efficacy and product of his suffering and so there is a very logical relationship between the two, in the one the

sufferings of Christ, in the next the glories that follow in the possession of the people both Jewish and Gentiles but particularly Israel is stressed.

Now these 10 verses set forth Zion as the bride of Jehovah and what a tremendous figure that is. Remember that in ancient times marriage was quite a bit different from marriage in the 20th Century. Marriage was the kind of figure that you might expect a prophet to settle upon to show the relationship between Israel and her God because marriage in those days was the marriage of a man who was the complete head of his home to a woman who knew that she was not the head, not only did she know that she was not the head but if anything she was perhaps overly subservient to her husband. In fact she was almost in ancient society a piece of property like chattel.

I am not contending for that. I am contending of course indirectly for biblical submission and subjection. But you see this relationship of husband and wife then formed a beautiful illustration of the relationship between a person and his God. And so here it is natural that Isaiah should turn to represent Israel’s relation to God to the subject of wedlock. And so just as the husband is the head of the wife and just as the wife is submissive to her husband so Israel is to Jehovah. We read in the 5th verse, “For Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name.

I think also there was another reason why Isaiah chose this figure and he is not the only one who chooses it; others do as well as you probably know, but there is another reason that Gods of the heathen were immoral Gods. The religions of the heathen were immoral religions and in order to express the relationship of the adherence of Baal and other false gods in order to express the allegiance of the adherence of those false religions to their God, ancient religions engaged in the nudist of practices.

For example, attached to many of the sacred temples were prostitutes and so fornication and adultery was engaged in as a religious exercise as an expression of union with the God and so that which was contrary to the will of God which was evil and iniquitous became in the false religions the expression of a spiritual true union with God

and so it was natural I think too that Isaiah should choose wedlock in the proper sense, in the holy sense in which a woman and a man should be united to express the relationship between Israel and their God. And so here in Isaiah chapter 54, Zion is looked at as the bride of Jehovah, subject to him as brides should be to their husband but also subject to him in holiness and in righteousness contrary to the religions of the heathen.

Now remember that while Israel is the wife of Jehovah put away because of her disobedience she is never divorced. So far as I can tell in the Old Testament there is no evidence that God ever divorced Israel. He put her away for her disobedience, for her spiritual adultery, but he did not divorce her because Israel is to be returned to her husband.

Now let us read beginning in verse 1, Sing, O barren, Thou that didst not bear; this is Zion of course, break forth into singing, and cry aloud, Thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. In other words when you were really my wife, and living with me in fellowship, there were great blessings that came to Israel.

Think of the golden age of David and Solomon and the blessings of God upon Israel when they came out of Egypt and many were the products of the relationship that Israel had with God when they were happily in love with one another but the time is coming in the future when there are going to be more children from the desolate Zion of today than they were of the married woman in the past. In other words, he is saying the future is going to be far brighter than anything in the past even though at the moment Israel is out of fellowship with God. For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. In fact it is going to be so great and he uses the figure of a tent in which nomads and others lived in those days, Enlarge the place of Thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen Thy cords, and strengthen Thy stakes. The cords of course were the cords that held up

the tent and the stakes were the tent pegs. In other words, make a bigger tent, you are going to need more in order to take care of all of the people that shall be the product of the blessing of God. By the way this text is very interesting in the history of missions.

Many of you may not know it but William Carey was the father of modern missions. Men did not really believe in missions until the day of Carey and that was the day of almost the 19th Century, 1792 is usually regarded as the birth time of modern missions. Carey, you know was a preacher. He had grown up in the established church in England. He had been converted and became a Baptist and he was a preacher in a little Baptist Church but he also in order to live had to work as a cobbler. He worked with shoes and he studied the word of God and he studied languages. He learned a number of languages because he wanted to serve the Lord better and increase his education.

He was a self-made man but in one meeting of the society, he once suggested that perhaps he read a little paper as a matter of fact he suggested in this paper that it should be the duty of the Christian church to reach out to the heathen and the man who was the head of the meeting called him down and told him to keep quiet when God wanted to convert the heathen he would convert them and he would convert them whether we did anything about it or not. That was the attitude that prevailed and finally Carey under the burden of the lost, preached his famous sermon in which he said, Remember things like expect great things from God, attempt great things for God, and the text that he used was lengthen Thy cords and strengthen Thy stakes.

Now I just showed you what God can do for a man who takes the wrong text because this text does not really have anything to do whatsoever with the modern missionary movement but the idea expressed in Carey's sermon was a biblical idea. What God means here of course is that Israel in the future in the days that surround the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ again is going to be so blessed that there are going to be a multitude that come to know the Messiah in those days. That's what the text really means

but God overruled it and every time I read Isaiah 54:2, I am inclined to think of William Carey before I think of the kingdom of our Lord because of what happened.

Now verse 5, we read, For Thy Maker is thine husband. This is the reason that God will bless. Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name. God is willing to do all of this. He can and will bless because he is the Lord of hosts and because he is the Lord of hosts, he controls everything. He is the omnipotent Lord. Do you have any problems? Or you don’t have any problems, do you? But some of you may have a problem or two. It is very comforting to know that our problems may be solved if we just reflect upon the fact that the person who stands with and for us is the one who is the Lord of hosts. That’s Isaiah’s way of saying, he controls everything. All of the hosts of heaven are at his disposal and when we face the problems of life, it is very encouraging to know that the Lord of hosts sustains us too. He is the same God who sustains Israel. I think that’s the application of this text.

Now he continues in verses 7 and 8 and he says that for a small moment have I forsaken thee, I think he refers to this time, which is the time of the captivity for a small moment have I forsaken Thee but which now has stretched forth as a result of Israel return and consequent disobedience and now they are scattering to the four corners of the earth, this small moment has become quite a moment. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from Thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord my Redeemer. In other words a little wrath for a little moment issues in great mercies and everlasting kindness.

There is a text in the New Testament that I think is parallel with this. Will you turn over with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 17? It is rather striking you know when you study the Bible and notice how the things that are seen in God’s dealings with the nation Israel are things that are seen in his dealings with us and Paul in writing to the

Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 17 says, For our light affliction, which is but for a moment. Notice that, our light affliction, which is but for a moment.

Now if you want to know what Paul’s affliction is will you turn over a few pages and let us begin reading at verse 23 of chapter 11, this is his affliction, it is light by the way, so I am sure you will look down on the Apostle Paul, you have suffered a lot more than he, his was only light.

“Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. How many times have you been beaten? Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, I know you have got caught in the traffic jam the other day, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, you think you live in a day of violence, listen to Paul, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, that is in perils in the city, the zodiac killer, in perils in wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

And that was not the least, I don’t think. Now Paul says back in verse 17 of chapter 4, For our light affliction, our light affliction, so you have had it bad, have you? Our light affliction, but notice which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And so we do have to pass through some times of trial but they are light in comparison with eternity and while we must suffer for a time eternal glory with all of its heaviness, that is what glory really is, becomes ours then.

Now then verse 9, For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; that is the Noahic Covenant for you systematic theologians. So have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. In other words, the ground of the everlasting kindness is his oath of the future that he will never again show them wrath.

Verse 10,

“For the mountains shall depart, the whole world shall be upturned upside down before his mercies fail and then he mentions the covenant of my peace that is the everlasting covenant of redemption it would seem to me, the promise that he will bless those the son has died for.”

Now that is Zion the bride of Jehovah, verses 1 through 10, but let us now look at Zion, the city of Jehovah. Here is the second figure of the chapter.

Zion is the bride but Zion is also the city. So Isaiah describes the beauty of Jerusalem in the kingdom but it is God who is the architect. Notice, Oh Thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay Thy stones with fair colors, and lay Thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make Thy windows of agates, and Thy gates of carbuncles, and all Thy borders of pleasant stones. And so it is God who is the architect of the city of Jerusalem in the future. It is the God who has redeemed Israel. It is the God who has become her husband. It is the God who promises the everlasting kindness and it is the same God who is going to construct the city of Jerusalem in the millennial kingdom to be the place where his bride is shown to her greatest advantage. By the way I think in this text which so greatly stresses the activity of God we have implicit the answer to the question of how society shall be saved.

You know we hear a lot of nonsense today over the radio, TV. Or you open up any of the newspapers or any of the magazines you take, almost all of them are filled with

nonsense. And when the question of the salvation of society is discussed, it is amazing the kinds of answers that we get. And surprisingly we get some of the most ridiculous answers from men of the cloth.

A couple of years ago, Dr. Robert Bilheimer, executive director of the International Affairs Commission of the National Counsel of Churches, do you ever heard of that organization? He expressed this viewpoint on the question of man’s need in society. He said, “It is folly to seek to answer man’s need for community with an individualistic interpretation of salvation. It is folly to say that society would be helped if we preach the gospel to them. Much of the mass evangelism now being carried on appeals to people in these terms and is therefore likely to do more harm than good.”

Now there are lots of things in Billy Graham’s campaign that I am not happy about. Some of the people that Billy has on the platform disturb me, Bishop Kennedy and others, they disturb me, but Billy has his reasons and he expresses them. He is very forthright about it. I don’t agree with him, but I surely would not want to say that Billy Graham has not done a tremendously commendable job in preaching the gospel and that many people have been converted everyday it seems. I ran across someone who has been influenced by the preaching of Billy.

But listen, this man says that will do more harm than good, “Failing to offer a form of community that seeks to be adequate to our time this evangelism offers instead a stone and a serpent, not a loaf and a fish. Furthermore it is shear disobedience to offer a merely traditional idea of Christian community to people who are searching for community and societies of our time.”

In other words, it is not only bad to preach an individualistic gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ but it is shear disobedience to do that. We ought to bring our gospel up to date. That is what he means by this. In case, you don’t understand this theological jargon that is what he really means. When our evangelism whether in a mass form or in a less spectacular manner, offers an individualistic salvation which then is to be worked out

within a community designed according to an arcade pattern, that is the old-fashioned gospel you know, the disobedience is compounded.

Now this mind you is a man who is a clergy man, this man is an official in the National Council of Churches, and this is a diatribe against the gospel set forth in the Bible. But it is rather interesting to me that not only is this man wrong theologically, but this man is wrong psychologically and economically.

A couple of years ago, a British economist by the name of John Jerwkes of Oxford published a book called Public and Private Enterprise, in which he pointed out the contrary to socialistic minded critics, individualistic private enterprise has contributed to the development of cultural value. Ludwig von Mises demonstrated that socialism causes wars and that genuine free market capitalism produces peace. One could go beyond Jerwkes. It is rather interesting that in the societies in which we have socialism, we have ordinarily a low morality. What is the shining light of socialism today? Sweden and if there is another, a second place, it would be England, and in both of those places the condition of public morality is fantastic. If you ever been to Britain, you will understand that. I have set foot on Swedish soil but I was not there long enough to observe anything. But Dr. Bilheimer’s book, which is an attack on individualistic salvation, is only a minor phase.

Now this holds struggle. If you were to ask the question what must society do in order to be saved? Well, I don’t think you could give a better answer than the one Paul gives the Philippian jailer such a society should encourage its members to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and if they did there would be a change that would reflect itself not only in their public morality but also in many other ways. So I do not feel that our dear friend who speaks for the National Counsel of Churches is speaking the truth. I think that he is speaking error and as far as the Bible is concerned, the solution to the problem of the salvation of society will not come until Jesus Christ comes again. And that is what we have set forth right here. God is going to deck out the city of Jehovah in jewels,

sapphires, agates, and carbuncles, in order to express the glory of his activity and notice he is the one who constructs the city. He is the one who saves Israel. He is the one who saves the Gentiles. He is the one who is responsible for the New Jerusalem. The salvation of society comes when individuals in society are saved. And that's what we have here implied.

By the way I think it is rather interesting the way that he refers to the stones of that city, the foundations, it is almost as if he were constructing a building, and I wonder if perhaps he is not also having in the back of his mind the construction of the temple of that city. The status of the temple in Jerusalem today is a most interesting thing. We won't get off on that.

Let's look at the last part of this chapter. Here we have Zion, the object of divine grace and protection. Now the outward physical glory that he has just described is the reflection of the inward spiritual glory, which he now describes. Now notice verse 13. This is by the way a text that Jesus referred to, And all Thy children shall be taught of the Lord. What does that mean? What does that mean? All Thy children shall be taught of the Lord. Does it mean in the kingdom there are going to be Bible classes for everybody? No, it means more than that.

You know how we know there is more than that for this? Well, we know it because our Lord expounded this text for us in the New Testament. So, let us turn over to John chapter 6. John chapter 6. Let's begin reading at verse 35. You know whenever I get a chance to turn to the gospel of John chapter 6, I want to say let us begin at verse 1, this is such a great chapter. But in verse 35 in the midst of his sermon, we read, And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. Isn't that encouraging? All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. That's right. Every elect person shall come to Jesus Christ. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. Just

getting such a blessing now that almost lost into place. And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

You know that text means a lot to me. When I was converted in Birmingham, Alabama, through the preaching of Dr. Barnhouse, like most Christians I was really thrilled and then there came a time I guess it as most of us has happened in most of our lives, I came to the place where I really wondered if I were saved? And I ran across this text. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out and I can still remember getting down by the side of my bed in Birmingham, Alabama and saying to the Lord, Lord if I have not come to Thee, I come to Thee now and I thank Thee for that wonderful promise, Him that cometh unto me, I will no wise cast out and I am not going to worry anymore about my salvation and I never have worried since about it. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

Now, For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. All that come to me, the Father has given shall come to me and furthermore all that come to him he shall raise them up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. Isn't it interesting? On the divine side, it is the gift of the father to the son and the son's raising up that person at the last day that determines the salvation. On the human side, it is everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him. All who believe will come to him and he will save them and will not cast them out. Because that's the human response but that belief is brought by God.

Verse 41,

“The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and

mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me.”

Did you see that? No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God.

Now if you just refer it for a moment when he said, they shall all be taught of God is he talking about Bible classes. He is not talking about Bible classes. Is he talking about the outward preaching of the word. No, he is not talking about the outward preaching of the word. He has just stated no man can come to me except the father which has sent me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day. He is not talking about the outward work of preaching. He is talking about the inward work of the father in drawing. That’s the instruction that he has in mind. It’s the education of God the Father as he works effectually in our hearts to bring us to him.

By the way that word draw is a word which J. H. Bernard who has written perhaps one of the most critical of commentaries on John in the good sense. Bernard says this word draw is a word that implies opposition. In other words, when you draw someone, you draw them against their will. As a matter of fact, it is the word that is used in John chapter 21 for dragging the net with the load of fishes to land and those fish are not too happy about going ashore either. No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him and most of us testify to we have been saved we have been dragged screaming into the kingdom against our wills.

We didn’t want to be saved. We resisted it. Did we not? I resisted. Most everyone that I had ever talked to will acknowledge I resisted, I resisted, I resisted until a certain time and then suddenly some transformation occurred and now they want what they have been resisting. Well, that’s the explanation. Did you get any better? No, you didn’t get any better. Something happened within. A father began to draw you. And

finally by the wooing of the Holy Spirit and the word you are brought to desire what you resisted.

Now then Jesus said, it is written in the prophets, all Thy children shall be taught of the Lord. What does he mean? He means that everyone of us is going to be effectually brought to God by him. That’s what he means. He is talking about the effectual grace that God uses in bringing us to Christ. This is a great passage here you know. So and all Thy children shall be taught of the Lord. You don’t like that exposition, do you? Do you know who gave it? Jesus Christ. That’s the way he understood this passage.

So I presume then that what this means is that in the kingdom of our Lord upon the earth, he doesn’t mean there are going to be a lot of Bible classes. He means that everybody who enters the kingdom is a person whose heart has been touched by God and who has been effectually brought by the grace of God to a belief in Jesus Christ – [a] society has been saved by God. That’s a great passage. Augustine loved that passage. He liked to use that against the Palegians who felt you know that the way he was saved was by hearing the gospel and then your will chose Jesus Christ. And Augustine liked to draw attention to the fact that our salvation is not by virtue of the fact that we willed to be saved, as if there was some virtue in our wills. As the text of Scripture says it is not of him that willeth nor of him that willeth but of God that showeth mercy who were born not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God, all Thy children shall be taught of the Lord. That’s the thing that distinguishes a genuine Christian. He is a person who is the recipient of the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart and oh that sense of gratitude that every genuine Christian has because of what God has done against his will.

You know I am a Calvinist. Israel and the church are built upon divine education. God is our teacher, basically my teacher. Great shall be the peace of Thy children of course because I have been brought by God to faith in Christ. And when I am brought by God to faith in Christ great is the peace of Thy children. When I look at this passage, I think of the New Testament.

“Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God. In righteousness shalt Thou be established: Thou shalt be far from oppression; for Thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against Thee shall fall for Thy sake and of course this is a tremendous promise for protection and notice how it leads up in the 17th verse to, No weapon that is formed against Thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against Thee in judgment Thou shalt condemn.”

This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord. You know we can talk for an hour on this last verse you know why? Because there are three great truths here. Notice, No weapon that is formed against Thee shall prosper. The divine protection that is over every believer. We are kept by the power of God, Peter says. Now an author is speaking of Israel but the same thing pertains to us that pertained to them for we have the same God. No weapon that is formed against Thee shall prosper and then I think that the mention of the tongue is so significant because you know the tongue can hurt us more than anything else often.

I think that is why he says, and every tongue that shall rise against Thee in judgment Thou shalt condemn. Many of us can take all kinds of physical punishment but we cannot take the slander of the tongue. When someone says, he is odd, I know, she is a fanatic she goes over to Believers Chapel, whatever kind of church that is, I am not sure it must be worse than Pentecostalism and what that can really take the wind out of your sails, can't it? I often have people come to me. I have been through the same thing so you just keep on coming, I sympathize. I often have people come -- what do we say when people say what church do you go to? What kind of a church is this? What do you say?

There is nothing really that you can say except just to say the truth, and then if you get strange reactions you remember promises like these, they are encouraging. He says this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord. Did you notice that in the 53rd chapter, he has been speaking about the servant of the Lord, singular, but now the servants of the Lords, for you see those who believe in the servant, are identified with him and becomes servants of the Lord and isn’t a wonderful thing that God calls us servants of the Lord, the same thing that he calls his own son, the servant of the Lord and then he said, there are really four points here, are they? Their righteousness is of me, of me, the source of it. Why not? All Thy children shall be taught of the Lord and if we are the product of the salvation of God, how more accurately can you state it than their righteousness is of me.

Well, that’s going to be a great day when Israel shall know their experience in truth of this. Israel is so confused today. Israel does not even know who is an Israelite today. Did you read about two years ago, the account in one of our national magazines of a trial that is going on in Israel? I don’t know whether it has been settled yet or not. I doubt that it has been settled so far as the issues are concerned about a young Jewish man a Sabra, that is he is one who is born in Palestine, a Jew married a Scottish girl, both of them were atheists. When their children were born, they are required to register those children. And so they registered the children as Jews as Israelis but they registered them also as being children of atheists and that threw Israel into a panic.

Because you see, what is a Jew? Is a Jew a person who believes in the Jewish religion or is a Jew one who is the son of a Jewish man and a Jewish mother or is a Jew perhaps one who lives in the land? What is a Jew? And Israel will not make the decision because you see that Jew really is a religious position. How can he be a Jew and deny Judaism and so the courts have been passing this back and forth like a hot potato.

No one really knows what a Jew is in Palestine. That is there is no settlement of this issue. The orthodox have a certain viewpoint and the liberals have a certain

viewpoint but their courts have not settled this yet. Striking. There will be no question in those days of who is a Jew. Everyone will know. When is all this going to come to pass? What are the signs? Well, some of the signs that the Bible sets forth for the provision of these things are apostasy in the professing church. Is the professing church today apostate or let us put it this way because that may be too harsh a judgment to say the professing church is apostate. Is there apostasy in the professing church? I think even the kindest of critics would acknowledge that. Another sign is the return of Israel to the land. Is there an Israel in the land? Yes, since May 1948, there is an Israel in the land. Over 20 years now.

And then one last thing that the Bible sets forth as one of the signs for the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth is unity among the nations. Did you notice what happened this year when our friend with a long nose in France was finally ousted? Do you all remember what was expressed immediately by Pompidou and those who associated with him in government? Well, they said that they wanted to seek new members for the common market.

In *Time* magazine, there was an article, July 4th 1969, entitled Europe’s dreams of unity revive. When the De Gaulle was gone, the President said we are ready to go as fast and as far in the quest of European unification as our partners. France is ready to participate in a meeting of the chief state or chiefs of government of the six nations of the community. We needn’t go into all that is said here but I noticed one paragraph that is very interesting. Denmark, Ireland, and Norway seek admission in addition to Britain. Meanwhile, Austria, Sweden, and Switzerland all want various forms of associate membership -- should all go according to the most optimistic schedules the common market can some day can expand into a 10-nation economic entity through its industrial might would far surpass that of the Soviet Union. A 10-nation economic entity. Isn’t it striking?

Daniel gives us a prophecy in the second chapter of a great figure. It was a vision that Nebuchadnezzar had and that vision was of a great giant figure that was composed of gold and silver and brass and iron and clay and that figure had 10 toes and those 10 toes are defined as 10 kings who shall give their authority to the beast. Now we look at Scripture correctly. The beast is one who is to be head of a Roman Empire for it is from his domain that they come who destroy the city of Jerusalem and we know that the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by Romans and so in this revival of an ancient empire like the Roman there is to arise a man who is over a 10-kingdom domain represented by the 10 toes. Isn’t it striking that we are reading about in the paper things that we do not know? We cannot know that this has anything to do with the fulfillment of that promise, but you surely can see how those prophecies can be fulfilled. It is striking.

You know we may be living actually in the very last times, the coming of Jesus Christ may actually be for the church, may actually be at any moment, perhaps tonight, and then begin the great events of the tribulation period that lead up to the fulfillment of Isaiah chapter 54 when Zion shall be the restored wife of Jehovah and have a city constructed by God and in which all both Jew and Gentiles shall be taught of the Lord. I think that should mean something to us in our Christian lives too. It shall give us a sense of urgency in our evangelization for we are instruments in our great sovereign God we are seeking together all of the elect, all of our Lord’s sheep into the fold.

What a great privilege it would be down through the ages of eternity to know that I have been responsible for one of the sheep of our Lord coming to him. I have been the instrumentality. He would come but I had anything to do with it or not but perhaps by obedience to him, I might be the instrument. You know I think I am going to be grateful to Dr. Barnhouse down through the ages of eternity for what he did for me. Won’t you like to have someone grateful to you? Let’s close in a word of prayer.

“The Glory of the Covenant Nation” by S. Lewis Johnson
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Next time, by the way we are going to try to cover three chapters, 55, 56, and 57, two of them real short, I think we can do it, it is next Tuesday night, next Tuesday night at 8 o’clock. Let’s close in prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for Thy word. And we thank Thee for these great and glorious promises and we thank Thee too for the principles that are illustrated in them. Enable us Lord to be faithful in the days in which we live.

For Christ’s sake. Amen.