



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 63 – 64

“The Advent in Judgment”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Let us begin our class with a word of prayer. Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the word of God, and we ask Thy blessing upon us now, as we turn again to the prophecy of Isaiah. Guide and direct us in Jesus name. Amen.

[Message] Tonight, we are coming to the sixty-third and sixty-fourth chapters of the prophecy of Isaiah and only two more chapters and then we shall be through. And I for one have enjoyed Isaiah so much that I would like now to begin a serious study of the book. But I am not going to do it with you. The subject for tonight is the advent in Judgment and the appeal for return and redemption. Isaiah 63 and 64.

Nikita Khrushchev is reported to have said, with reference to Russia and its relations to the United States, we will bury you. I noticed this past week that the state department has been doing a little research about that famous quotation by Khrushchev and there is now opinion in our state department as a result of its researches that it is possible that Khrushchev did not say that. And that if he said it, he may have meant something different. Well I do not know enough to know whether he said it or not, I was

not there. It sounds, as if he could have said it to me, from what I know of Nikita Khrushchev, but nevertheless we do not know.

In our passage that we are looking at today, which is the counterpart of Revelation, chapter 19, and its great picture of the return of our Lord in glory, we learn who is going to be the final undertaker for humanity, and it is not Khrushchev. It is our Lord. It is he who shall bury the enemies of God. So it is not Nicky, who is now as the Russian say Coronet. He is in obscurity. He has disappeared. It is our Lord who shall do away with all of the enemies of God. Now, I am going to ask you, if you will, to turn to Revelation, chapter 19 and read with me the verses beginning with the Eleventh verse through the twenty-first, because we want to see how this passage in the New Testament is taken from the Old Testament passage that we are going to study. Revelation, chapter 19 and verse 11,

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.”

Now notice that. We shall see that that is taken from Isaiah 63, and his name is called the word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Notice that statement, and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, like

Khrushchev, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

That is the final undertaking before the kingdom and it is our Lord who carries it out. It is he, who can really say to the enemies of the throne, we will bury you. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth. And all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

The prophet in Isaiah, chapter 63, looks forward to the time of the future, the time of the trabeculation, the time of the Second Advent, the time of the antichrist and the enemies of our Lord and the last rebellion that shall be raised before the time of the Jesus Christ’s coming. He has just stated in Isaiah, chapter 62, in verse 11, behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world. Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, Thy salvation cometh, and now he crystalizes this prophecy of the coming of salvation in this visitor that he sees coming from the Land of Edom. I opened up the *Reader’s Digest*, which has just come to our house and I notice that one of the first articles in the book is entitled Zero Hour for the Middle East. Is not striking that in the 20th Century now after so many centuries, not only is Israel in our newspapers, but on the front page, the lead articles in our magazines, they are talking about Edom, they are talking Palestine, they are talking about Syria, they are talking about Lebanon, they are talking about Egypt, they are talking about the lands of Mesopotamia, they are talking about the very things that the Bible talks about, which a generation ago seemed so far and away from us that it almost

seemed as if we fairy stories when we read the Old Testament but now we are reading things that are just is up-to-date as tomorrow.

Isaiah, chapter 63, verses 1 through 6, contains the dialogue of the divine savior. The prophet looks toward Edom, and he looks toward Edom not only because Edom was typical in the old testament of the hostility of the world, Babylon of the tyranny of the world but because Edom may be the place from which the Messiah shall approach the City of Jerusalem or at least the place where he shall be prior to the Messiah’s going out to fight the antichrist. And I think, I said Messiah, when I meant to say antichrist, but apparently from certain passages in the Bible, the Messiah shall go out and the last battle that shall be fought shall involve Edom and he shall make his return as the victorious Messiah by way of Edom. So the prophet looks out and looks toward Edom, the place from which the ancient armies of Israel returned often victorious, some times defeated for Edom was Israel’s congenial and perpetual fold, and now he looks out and he sees not an army returning, but surprisingly he sees a lone solitary hero, and that is the remarkable thing about these verses.

Let us look now at the first question, and this is capital “A” in our outline of the dialogue of the divine Savior. “A” the first question, the prophet now in the form of dialogue says, “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?” Bozrah is a city of Edom. “This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? Who is this? He sees a proud and mighty figure with scarlet garments striding along, as if he has won a great battle, and the question is asked and then there comes the answer in the last sentence of verse

One, and the one who approaches is the one who answers. This is dialogue. The prophet has said, “Who is this that cometh?” Here comes the answer, “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” The saving word, I that speak in vindication. Now did you remember when we read Revelation, chapter 19, that the name of our Lord given to him by John, the Apostle, when comes to the earth the second time is the word of God.

And what he does is to execute judgment. He comes in righteousness; John said and executes judgment upon the earth. And so here the prophet says, “Who is this that is coming from Edom, and the answer comes, I that speak the word of God. I that speak in righteousness, in vindication of the work and will of God, mighty to save, mighty to deliver, for he comes to deliver his people from the dominion of the antichrist and the forces, which are his under that beast.” Now that is first answer.

Now we have a second question in verse 2. “Why art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” Now do you remember what we read in Revelation, chapter 19? In verse 16, was it not that we read verse 15 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? What has stained Thine apparel? Why do your garments look so red? Why the stains? And now in verses 3 through 6, the answer.

“I have trodden the winepress alone, of the people there was none with me, for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. And so this lone solitary figure, the hero who has come out of the east with blood on his garments, says that the nations have been cut off just like you cut off the clusters of grapes. Those grapes have been taken and the grapes of the nations have been placed in the winepress, just as you take your grapes and put them in the winepress; and I have trampled upon the nations, just as you trample upon your grapes in order to make wine, and that is why my garments are red.”

Now you can see from this that the picture that is given of our Lord is not the picture of the Ministry which he accomplished in his First Advent. In his First Advent, he came to die. In his Second Advent, he comes to be the undertaker for the nations. In the

First Advent, it is he who suffers. In his Second Advent, it is the nations who suffer. And while he is stained with blood in both advents, it is his own blood at his First Advent that stains his body. At his Second Advent, speaking of course here by figure, it is the blood of the nations that stain his garments. So this then is a picture of the coming of our Lord Jesus at this second coming, when he exercises his final destruction of Gentile powers.

Is not it striking in the light of this that this passage is often read in churches, which lethargically reads certain passages in Easter Week, in the Passion Week? Of all the passages of the Old Testament to select, to read in Passion Week, this is the least likely; and yet that has been chosen. The passage we should read is Isaiah, chapter 52 and chapter 53, and that of course is read or Psalm 22, but this passage and the blood of it is entirely different from the passion which our Lord accomplished at his first coming. This is the judgment of his second coming.

Now he states in verse 4, for the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. In other words, I have come to execute judgment, but I have also come to deliver those who belong to me, the nation Israel. Now if you look back at chapter 1 for just a moment, reading verse 1 and 2 again, you will notice this clause, for the day of vengeance is in mine heart, is repeated. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of this prison to them that are bound to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

And remember we pointed in our study two weeks ago that Jesus stood up in the temple in Nazareth and he opened up the Scriptures and he read Isaiah chapter 61, verse 1, and he read verse 2, and stopped after he said to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. He closed the book and he sat down. And then he began to unfold the meaning of the words that he had uttered, saying this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your years, but he did not say the day of vengeance of our God. He did not read that, for you see that was not fulfilled at our Lord’s first coming when he stood up in the synagogue. That

would be fulfilled and is to be fulfilled at his Second Advent and our Lord, who knew the ages and knew how to read the Bible, knew when to stop reading, what to apply to himself and what not.

Now in his Second Advent, he says in verse 4 of chapter 63, “For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.” Then he adds, “And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.”

Now in the light of the fact that it is the Messiah who speaks these words, who is our Lord Jesus Christ, is it not a strange thing when some of our contemporary theologians tell us that the God of the Old Testament is not the God of the New Testament? The God of the Old Testament is a traveled deity, who is not satisfied unless he is able to drink the blood of his enemies, but Jesus came and he told us about a better God. As the years unfolded, the men’s ideas of God began to evolve just as they evolved, and just as we got better and better down through the centuries, so our gods got better and better, and finally Jesus came on to see in and he told us about a God of Love, not a God of War, as Moses wrote, but a God of Love, a God of gentleness, a God who was just as tender as a little child. How ridiculous all of that is in the light of the fact that it is the same Messiah who speaks and here he speaks in those tones of judgment, which are so apropos to the Old Testament, but which are yet to be fulfilled and it may be after all from the present time.

Well now that was the dialogue of the divine Savior. We want to look now at the second division. I know this is a very bad message tonight. Do you know why? It only has two points, and now we are told of course in seminary in homolytics that you should never have anything but three points, unless you have seven. Seven is the divine number, and it is possible to have seven.

And have you noticed how often that outlines have seven? It is hard for me to get away from what I was taught, but tonight I feel like a one-legged man, I have a two-point sermon. And the second point is the prayer of the remnants represented in 63:7 though 64:12. In chapter 60, 61 and 62, we have been told that Zion is to have a future glory. We have been told of the grace of Zion’s Messiah. And now in chapter 63, verses 1 through 6, we are told that he is to have his advent in power; and he is to judge the nations. Why not end on that note? Why not end on the note of the glory of Jerusalem, the glory of Israel, and the glory of the Israel’s Messiah in his coming; and the fact that he has come to redeem his people? Why not then just say, “Amen,” and close and not write several more chapters?

Well I think that the answer is this that Isaiah was writing people whose hearts were not ready, and he senses that those who are to read this message are not ready; and because the people are not yet ready, he himself must offer and intersensory prayer; and he offers it as the representative of the believers among the company of Israel.

Now as incentives for prayer, he turns to the Old Testament in Exodus, and speaks of the mercies that God exhibited for them in the past. And you know this final prayer is such a wonderful prayer. It begins in 63, verse 7 and does not close until chapter 64, verse 12. It is such a wonderful prayer that it reminds me of a symphony. You will notice that as you go along, there are certain elements that have appeared in the Book of Isaiah from time to time, that appear again, and it is almost as if we have reached the end of a symphony in which all of the melodies and movements are gathered together in one final climactic lyrical close. And that is like the section that we are looking at. And as he offers this prayer, it is a prayer that is based upon past mercies. It looks forward to future mercies, and also concludes with this present appeal.

Let us look at some of the things beginning with verse 7. This is really the theme, I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord. You know in the Hebrew text that is very interesting. It is the loving kindnesses of the Lord, I will

mention them; and he goes on to speak of them in that way, as if to say this is the theme of my prayer. I am looking back now and I am thinking about what God has done for Israel. By the way, you know when we pray, one of the best ways to pray is to begin with a recounting of the mercies of God, which he has wrought in our behalf, that really as the basis of the prayer.

What he has done in the past, further, it is an encouragement for us. What a tremendously encouraging thing it is, to go over the blessings of God from the day that he brought us into the faith; and on the basis of what he has done in the past, express our petitions to God, knowing that he who has wrought in the past is able to work in the present again. And so often in the Old Testament, you will find that when the prayers of the Old Testament are uttered or when the aspirations of Israel are expressed, they are aspirations that are based on what he did for them in the days of the Exodus when he wrought those mighty miracles in their behalf. And so in your prayer life, it is not wrong at all to begin with a recounting of what God has done for you.

As we sing in the hymn, now we do not sing it here too much because it is a good Baptist hymn. Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done, but it is a good sentiment even if it is Baptist. Vernon McGee was playing golf last year, believe it or not, with a friend of mine; and do you know what he said? He is a former Presbyterian, now independent, and he got on one hole off by the side of the green and he was there in two or 10, I do not remember which it was, but he was over there and he chipped up and it went in the hole; just this year, just this past spring. And my friend was playing with him, said that Dr. McGee took his club and he threw it up in the air like this and he said, “I love everybody, even the Baptists.”

Now I say that is a good Baptist hymn, but it is a good sentiment. Count your many blessings, and in prayer. You know you can learn a lot even from an Old Testament prayer about the future of Israel; the great principles that God works by. I will

mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord and the praises of the Lord; according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us. You will notice he is praying as a representative for the people and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses, for he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie, so he was their Savior. In all their affliction, he was afflicted.

Now let me stop. You will notice this statement, in all their affliction, he was afflicted. In the Hebrew Text, there is a slight problem, but this is probably the rendering, the [Hebrew indistinct] reading is probably to be preferred. Now I know you did not understand what I was saying, but to tell you the truth, I was saying this for in case some Hebrew scholar was listening to the tape six months from now. In all their affliction, he was afflicted. Now this is how he proved himself to be the Savior that he has just stated that he is in verse 8. So he was their Savior and he proved it by in all their affliction, he was afflicted.

Now you can see from this that the New Testament teaching of the identification of the believer with Jesus Christ is not just New Testament teaching. For the Savior of Israel was identified with them in the Old Testament. It was he who was with Israel in the wilderness. It was he who led them up out of Egypt. It was he who brought them into the Promised Land. It was he who was there when David was king and Solomon was king, and finally when God departed from them, it was he who departed; but he proved himself to be their Savior by the fact that he was afflicted in all of their afflictions. Now that is what he does for us individually in the 20th Century, in all of our afflictions, he is afflicted with us.

Do you remember when Paul met him on the Damascus Road and Jesus said to him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest Thou me? As I pointed out to you not long ago, why could Jesus say, Saul, Saul, why persecutest Thou me? Because Saul was persecuting the body of Christ, and the church is our Lord. He is the head. Every time one of the

members of the body of Christ is touched, he is touched. In all their affliction, he was afflicted; and in all our affliction today, he is afflicted. Whether one member suffers, all the members suffer, Paul says. When one member rejoices, all the members rejoice. This is the body of Christ, not just Believers Chapel either. It includes all the Baptists, who had believed, all the Presbyterians who have believed, even a Roman Catholic if he is a believer. Whoever he may be – it – true believers in the body of Christ. Now he says, and the angel of his presence saved them.

Now I want you to turn back with me for a moment to Exodus, chapter 23, because it may slip by you just who this angel of his presence is. In Exodus, chapter 23, Moses is describing some of the words or giving some of the words of God to Israel in the beginning of their dealings with him, and we read verse 20, Exodus, chapter 23; behold, I send an angel before Thee, to keep Thee in the way, and to bring Thee into the place which I have prepared.

Now remember God gave them the pillar of cloud in the day and the pillar of fire by night, but more than that, he sent his angel before them. Did you ever notice that? By the way, did you notice in the King James Version, it is capitalized? I send an Angel before Thee, to keep Thee in the way, and to bring Thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. My name is in him. What does he mean when he says, my name is in him? Well the name of God is all that God is. All that God is, is in him. This is the angel of the Lord. It is the preincarnate Christ.

We read, for mine angel shall go before Thee, and bring Thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites the fortworthites and so on, and I will cut them off. But my name is in him, my angel. Now there are several other places in Exodus, where this is referred to, but we do not have time to look them up. Exodus, chapter 32, verse 34; chapter 33, verse 2. But I

want you to turn back now to Isaiah, chapter 63, and let us notice this statement, “And the angel of his presence saved them.”

Now that is a striking statement, and the angel of his presence saved them. I looked that up in the Hebrew, as I was preparing this message going along with my Hebrew Bible and I end up seeing this; I knew this, I had read this before, but it came home to me with a great deal of force. Actually the Hebrew says, “And the angel of his face. It is the *malak panyow*, the angel of his face saved them; the angel who stood before his presence; the angel who stands before him. And you know, John begins his gospel by saying, in the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and that Greek word *pros* in that expression, *proston theon*, is a word that has as a truth meaning facing. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, in the sense of facing God, having fellowship with him, and here is the angel of his face saved them. It is the Lord Jesus. He is the face of God. He is the way where about we know God.

You know the story that Rufus Jones, the Quaker philosopher, used to tell about the little girl who was troubled about the dark, and she was explaining to her mother, she was afraid of the dark. She was afraid, did not want to go to bed, and mother finally said, “Go ahead and go. It will be all right. God will be with you.” She said, “I do want God. I want someone with a face.” We all know what she meant. Jesus Christ is the face of God. No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten son who is bosom of the father; he has declared, he is the face of God. If you want to know what God is like, you look at Jesus Christ. He was the angel of his face, and the fullness of time he came forth and men now know what God is like, because they know Jesus Christ. They know other things, but he is the revelation of the father.

Now we read on, and in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. Oh, would not it wonderful to talk about all the ways in which the angel of his presence who dwelt apparently in the cloud, because in these statements, the same statements are made about the angel of his presence going

before them, as are said about the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud. We read for example in the New Testament that Moses smote the rock, remember; and then when he was told to speak to the rock, he smote the rock twice.

Paul alluding to the first of the incidence in the apostle to the Corinthians, the first one says, and the rock was Christ. Now he was with them, as they made their journey from Egypt into the Promised Land. He was the angel of his presence and he went before them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. It is a picture of someone who has brought forth someone in birth. He begot them and then who carries them along, just like a mother and a father, bring forth a child and then care for that child, so he did. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.

Now here we are in the Old Testament, when we are not supposed to have the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament, but we have the angel of his face that he is referring to God, and we have the angel who is a reference to the Preincarnate Messiah and now we have the Holy Spirit; and they have vexed his Holy Spirit, and so here in the Old Testament where we are not supposed to have the Trinity, for the second time in the book of Isaiah we have the Trinity. A remarkable passage, isn’t it? Did you read that? Did you get there as you read? Now of course you did. You have depraved minds. [Laughter] But you see, you are learning how to read the Bible; and in the process, you are discovering I hope, the sanctifying Ministry of the Spirit, but they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.

Paul takes this passage over in the New Testament and says, grieve not, the Holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. There are three responses to the Spirit. As an unbeliever, we may resist him; as they did the spirit by which Stephen spoke. As an individual, we may grieve him; by doing that which is contrary to his will.

Grieve is a love word, you know. If someone, for example in this audience, whom I do not know very well, should do something that was contrary to my desires, I would not be particularly grieved, because I do not know you yet well enough to love you. But if I should love you, and you did something that was contrary to your best good, I should be grieved. Grieve is a love word. I am so thankful for that, you know. Grieve not the Holy Spirit. We grieve him because he loves us.

The third word is quench. That is the word that is addressed to the church, not to an individual. First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 19, makes that very plain, just read the context. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. In Thessalonica, there were men who were able to get up in the meeting and bring prophecies, others brought teaching, others gave exhortation; they had freedom of freedom of utterance in the meetings of the early church. But in Thessalonica, some did not like what they were hearing and they began to step on certain ones; and so Paul had to say, Despise not prophesyings. If he gets up and prophesies something that is contrary to what you think it ought to be. Do not despise the prophets. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not quench the manifestation of the spirit in the meeting of the local church. And if I may say so without being a secretarian, that is one thing that the Christian church did centuries ago and which they have been doing ever since.

We largely have a quenched Ministry in the church of Jesus Christ for the spiritual gifts that are resident in the body of the Christ do not have free expression in most of our churches because of the way by which we are organized. Quench not the spirit, a word addressed to the church. Grieve not the Spirit, a word addressed to individuals. Now we continue, verse 11, then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying,

“Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting

name? That led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, to rest there, the spirit of the Lord caused him to rest. So didst Thou lead Thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.”

Now you know, I have told this a number of times, but one of the things that has interested me in the last 10 years, almost more than anything else in Bible study, is the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. And I am going to ask you now, if you will, to turn with me to the Thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; and we are going to see I hope before the evening is over in about six minutes, how the New Testament author uses this very passage from Isaiah, chapter 63, as the basis for one of his most astounding statements in the New Testament. It is Hebrews, chapter 13 and it verses 20 and 21.

Now the God of peace. Isn't that an interesting statement, now the God of peace? Has not he said, as a beast goeth down into the valley, the spirit of the Lord caused him, Israel, to rest; he is the God of Peace. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep. And back in Isaiah, we read, then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, “Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock?” But here is Jesus that great shepherd of the sheep though the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ, to whom the glory for ever and ever and twice in this section in Isaiah he has said to make himself an everlasting name. To make Thyself a glorious name. To him be glory forever and ever.

Do not you see what the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews has done? He has looked back reading the passage in Isaiah, chapter 63, and he has seen that that passage had had to do with Moses in the Old Testament. How God took Moses and the children of Israel, and how he took them down into the Red Sea, the whole company of them.

Moses was their shepherd. He was leading them. They went down into the waters, waters on each side of them, waters above in the Pillar of Cloud. They were surrounded by water. As Paul says, they were baptized unto Moses and unto the cloud. They were immersed in liquid. They went down into the water and they were led up by their Shepherd through the water, to the other side, in the mightiest manifestation of the power of God in the Old Testament; the thing that is looked back throughout all of the Old Testament as the measure of the power of God.

Now the New Testament author using that as the type says, now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep. Moses was the shepherd of Israel, but he is the Great Shepherd of the Sheep. Moses went down into the Red Sea; Jesus went down into death, into the sepulcher. Moses led up the redeemed of Israel to the other side and the salvation of that side, so that they shouted as in the 15th chapter of Exodus, the praises of the God who had saved them. But our Lord has gone down into death with his people; those who belong to him, the sheep of his flock; those given to him by the Father and he has brought them safely up on the other side, to him be glory for ever and ever.

So, “The God of peace who brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his side, to him the glory for ever and ever.” So the Great Shepherd has gone down into the depths of death. He has flung the sheep over his shoulder, and he has taken the sheep out, so that we are safe. Isn't it magnificent? Now the authors of Scripture, so suffused with the word of God, that they are able to apply to the great redemptive works of our Lord Jesus Christ. I love that.

Now he speaks of the future mercies and I am just going to read on a few verses noticing one thing before we close. Verse 15, look down from heaven. Here of course is the prayer, the petition. He is praying, offering I feel that will be prayed in the future, Israel shall look up and shall pray for the Second Advent that they might be delivered

amidst the tribulations and the antichrist. “Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of Thy holiness and of Thy glory, where is Thy zeal and Thy strength, the sounding of Thy bowels and of Thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained? Doubtless Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not.” In other words, Abraham and Jacob are no longer here, but you are still our father. This is of course our father in the national sense.

In the Old Testament, no one ever calls God Father in the individual sense. That is why when Jesus came and said, now I want you to pray our father, which far did not happen. As an individual Father was so astounding. That is why when Jesus spoke about his Father, the Jews took up stones to stone him because he made himself equal with God. That was unheard of. No where in Palestinian Judaism does any one with one possible exception ever speak of God as his own Father. That is so common to us today that we hardly realize that that was a revelation that came from our Lord Jesus Christ. God was father to Israel as a nation. “Out of Egypt, have I called my Son, but not as an individual.” He is speaking nationally here.

“O Lord, why hast Thou made us to err from Thy ways, and hardened our heart from Thy fear?” Well the reason was simple, it was judicial blinding. You have refused my word; and if we continually refuse the word of God, continually refuse, finally the judgment must come. O Lord, why?

Verse 17, second sentence, “Return for Thy servants' sake, the tribes of Thine inheritance.” Notice the two appeals for returning are, we are servants of Thine and we are chosen. We are Thine inheritance. Election is a great doctrine, you know. When you get down into the depths of trial and disturbance, you can always pray, oh God, do something for me because I am elect. That is the kind of prayer that God must answer because he cares for his elect.

“The people of Thy holiness have possessed it but a little while; our adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary. We are Thine. Thou never barest rule over them;

they were not called by Thy name.” Now notice the prayer of chapter 64, verse 1, “Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence.” This of course is the prayer for the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. He goes on to speak about the things that he has prepared for them, statements that Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 4, “For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.”

And then the final part of the section, verses 5 through 12, the present appeal, confessing their sin they appeal for redemption and notice how they confess their sin. In one of the statements, which is one of the most amazing statements, I think in all of the Bible, is a confession of sin: four fantastic figures of speech to express our sin. If you read this text and you did not come away from it, believing in the total depravity of men, you have misread it. Listen to it,

“We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as menstrous rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee. For Thou hast hid Thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever. Behold, see, we beseech Thee, we are all Thy people. And they say finally, wiltThou refrain Thyself for these things.

Jehovah’s compassion is like Joseph’s tears. They finally came in the presence of his brethren and finally Jehovah’s tears for Israel shall issue in their redemption and Jesus Christ shall come when they make confession of sin. I was amazed by what I read in *Time* magazine this week or the past week perhaps. Did you read the account of the My

Lai Massacre and there were six or eight pages in *Time* magazine devoted to this and in the midst of it, there was an article on the evil of the human heart. It was entitled, “On Evil: the Inescapable Fact.”

Now there was a lot of nonsense in this. For example, I wondered how it would be possible for anyone to blame the United States’ sins of optimism on the Puritans, but they managed to do it. The Puritans can be blamed for almost everything, and surprisingly the Puritans are blamed for optimism that Americans have with regard to human nature, when if you know anything about theology, you know that the Puritans had the deepest sense of man’s sin of almost any group of Christian men. But they managed to do it. They managed to say that somehow or other this puritan concept of sin led to the idea of a chosen remnant and therefore everybody in America thinks they are elect and therefore good, and so everything is because the Puritans believed in the doctrine of election. That is why Americans think they are so great.

But thing that really came home was the fact that in the article, there was at least a facing up to some extent of the fact that we may not really be all righteous. If we could ever come to that place, we should come to the place where God can begin to work in our hearts. Time is up.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for Thy word. We thank Thee for this great Book of Isaiah; for the truths that are found within it, for the aspirations of the prophet as he spoke for the remnant of the future. We long Lord to see the day when all of the purposes of God stand completed, and Thou art vindicated as the great, just and holy God who is our Savior and Lord and motivate us in the days that remain to each one of us for Jesus sake. Amen.