



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 66

“The Seat of the Scornful in the Day of Salvation”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Let's begin with a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the ministry of the word of God through the prophet Isaiah and we ask now as we consider the last chapter of this book that some of the great themes of this book may become meaningful to us and may as we conclude our study, we conclude with the sense of the greatness of Thy word and of the salvation that is contained within it. We thank Thee for the hours that we have spent together and for the spiritual profit from them and now may Thy blessing rest upon us as we conclude and we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

[Message] We are turning to the last chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah and in one sense, I am glad to be through. I never knew if I would live long enough to finish the Book of Isaiah but then in another sense, I am sorry because I feel that we have only touched the high points of this great book. And I wish I could get about 50 people together, and I wish that I had the time, and we could sit down and begin again at chapter 1 and go into greater detail because at least it has come home to me that this is one of the great Books of the Bible.

And I am not surprised when I read the New Testament to discover that of all of the sections of the Old Testament that the New Testament authors use, this Book of Isaiah stands right at the top of the list. Of the Books of the Old Testament quoted in the New Testament, the three great sections that the New Testament authors used are the Pentateuch, I am putting the five books of Moses together, the Book of the Psalms and the Book of the Isaiah. So it is a book that was studied constantly by the apostles who have largely given us the New Testament.

Therefore, I would think that what you should do throughout the rest of your life is be sure to include a reading of the prophecy of Isaiah frequently in your study of the Bible. Isaiah concludes his book with one of the emphases with which he began it. God’s hatred of ritual without reality. And before I read the first four verses of chapter 66, I am going to ask you to turn back with me to that first chapter and will you listen as I read verses 11 through 15.

Isaiah chapter 1 verse 11 and notice how Isaiah rebukes ritual without reality. “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?” Now translating that into modern times, it would mean to what purpose is the multitude of your church going to me. To what purpose is the multitude of your attendance of church meetings, even Bible studies unto me. “Saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.”

And remember it is God who requested that Israel bring the lambs but it is possible for us to do what God requests in a sense of performing a ritual and when we do that, it not only becomes disagreeable to God but in a moment we shall see that he hates it. He is actively full of animosity toward the person who carries out his spirituality without any real reality to it at all. Listen, “When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?” Now to tread the courts of the temple is to walk in the rooms of the local church building. “Bring no more vain oblations; incense

is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.”

In other words, it is possible for us not only to come into a meeting such as the ministry of the word service and to come in with no sense of reality in our life. It is not only possible that that should be iniquity in the side of God but it is possible for you to sit on at the Lord’s Table. And to be so out of fellowship with God, that it really is a sin. Now that’s a terrible thing to think about. And I think all of us or at least I am speaking for myself, not for you.

But at least in my life there still come times when I catch myself attending meetings with no sense of reality at all in my activities before the Lord. I come to meetings because I have to. I come to meetings sometimes because people would be surprised if I didn’t show up. They would say where is Dr. Johnson? Why isn’t he here? And sometimes the only reason I am there is because I want to be sure that one of my brethren does not see me afterwards and say, why weren’t you there? Now the Lord says that’s iniquity.

Notice verse 14, “Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.” So you see it is possible for us in our meetings, even in our prayer sessions to be actually the objects of the animosity of God because all that we do is unreal. You know what I often do when I get down on my knees. I confess first that I do not really want to be on my knees and I confess and then I ask God to bring some reality into my prayer in my prayer life.

Now let us turn to Isaiah 66 and you will notice that as we read these four verses that begin this particular chapter in which we have warning to the wicked, at least some truths that we have been talking about reappear in this last chapter. Warning to the wicked.

Now remember the historical context Isaiah is looking forward, writing of the Babylonian captivity, he sees the nation in captivity 150 years from his day. He knows

that the great number of the nation is going to be disobedient to God. The great number are unbelievers but he also knows that there is a faithful remnant, he knows this by the spirit, that they wish to return to Jerusalem and build a temple again.

And remember we have said that while this is the local historical background, again switch the prophet rights, that in his language he goes far beyond that, even beyond the cross, on beyond our present time in 1970 and he goes on into the time of the tribulation and the second advent of our Lord just before his coming. So he writes of a local historical situation that is to come shortly but that is the background for something many hundreds of years beyond it. Now notice what he says,

“Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? (the temple) and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, I have made the heavens, I have made the earth and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; (now he is talking about killing an ox for a sacrifice) he that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; (In other words, your sacrifice is to me, because of your unreality, your sacrifice that you are bringing is as if you are murdering a man. So I hate your sacrifices. It’s sin.)

“He that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.”

Now notice the first verse in the statement “The heaven is my throne.” What he means is simply this. Men can do God no service by building him a temple. He has the

grandest temple of all. What are you talking about going back to Jerusalem and building me a temple as if that is a pleasure to me when you do not care anything about my word? What do I care about the gigantic building that you are thinking about constructing for me when you are hard. It is not mine. What do I care about all of your material activities for me if there is no spirit to them?

Translated into the 20th Century, what do I care if you build a church and call it Believers Chapel as if your worship is of me when you really do not care for me? Why, I have the grandest temple of all, I don’t need your temple, I do not need your little building. I do not even need your grand St. Peter’s in Rome. Why listen, heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. All of creation is my temple. I have already constructed my temple and it is grand and more magnificent and more spacious than anything you can possibly build. I think I am interested in, it is not the outward building, I am interested in the heart. So he says at the end of verse 2, “But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.”

The thing that God is interested in is worshippers in spirit and in truth. In John chapter 4, the Lord Jesus expresses this. He says that God is spirit and God is truth and that he is seeking men who worship him in spirit and in truth. In fact, that is the constant search of God. He is looking for individuals who will worship him in truth and in spirit. That is, in the spiritual sense, not in the material, not in the outward, but will worship him in the inward man as well as in the Holy Spirit but also worship him in truth.

Now that is why it is so important that in our worship of God, we be in harmony with the word of God. We cannot worship God if we worship him in error. That is why it is so important that in all of our worship, we must have the word of God as our standard. I think in the local church, the local church should meet and worship in accordance with the New Testament. We should be able to say this is the word for our worship. For all of our activities. For we are to worship God in truth. And it is not enough to be in truth.

I know some churches which to my understanding of the Bible are meeting in accordance with the word of God. They can point to the Scriptures and say this is the way that we should meet. But those churches, so far as I can tell, I had met that I am not a perfect examiner of local churches but to my mind it seems as if they are very dead. In other words, there is no reality. There is the outward sign. The outward picture of that which is scriptural but the inward reality of vital Christianity is missing.

Now God is not happy with worship that is in accordance with the truth but that is not in spirit. Nor is he happy with witness that is in spirit and not in truth. I know many wonderful churches in which there is vital Christianity. But it has often misled Christianity. It often is guilty of things that are dishonoring to the Lord due to ignorance of Scripture. The ideal is for us to carry on our worship in accordance with the word and to have the vitality of a daily experience with our great God and savior Jesus Christ.

Now if I may say a word to you who are here who meet in Believer’s Chapel, it seems to me that these two things must be always before us. Are we meeting in accordance with the truth and then are we meeting in spirit. Is there reality? Is there vitality? Is there personal contact with the Holy Spirit? And we shall not have vital Christianity unless we have both.

Isaiah puts it, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, he has the spirit and he trembles at my word.” Wouldn’t that be wonderful if we really trembled at the word of God? Suppose that someone should come to you someday and point out a Scripture and that Scripture should be contrary to something that is true of your life and you should begin to tremble because you were in disobedience to the word of God. Wouldn’t that be a thrilling thing to see that really active in the hearts of men trembling at God’s word.

Adam Clarke was one of the old commentators of the Bible and there is an old story about him that is related to this text. He grew up in a Christian home and his mother had nurtured him on the Holy Scriptures and he had read and had studied with

his mother the text and proverbs chapter 30 and verse 17 that says, “The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.”

And it is said that one day, he was out in the yard after he had been disobedient to his mother and he looked up and he saw a raven. And when he saw the raven, he began to cry and he put his hands over his eyes and rushed into the house to keep the raven from plucking out his eyes. Now we laugh, but you know that is a picture of a young man who was trembling at the word of God. Fearful and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And one of the reasons no doubt that Adam Clarke became the man that he became was because this attitude of trembling before God’s word, was something that characterized his life.

“So to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.” I wish that I were a man who trembled at God’s word. Whatever I read in the word of God that was brought on by the Holy Spirit in conviction to me, I would sure love to be so related to the Lord that I actually trembled at it. You know, when we first became Christians, there was a sense in which many of us felt that. That sense is so easy. It seems it is so easy to have it leave us.

How often we are seeing young Christians who are just vital on anything in the Bible that was shown to him, why that was the Lord’s word and it must be done. But now, we have been Christians but sometimes we would become cold and hardened and calloused. We have lost that vitality of that personal experience.

When I was speaking on the first chapter of Isaiah, some of you were here and you may remember the story that Dr. Barnhouse told about the man who was a butcher. And he asked this butcher, what affect has salvation had on his life. And he said well the greatest thing with this I stopped weighing my thumb. He said he had weighed his thumb for so many years that when he was converted, he determined that thereafter he

would give everybody one more ounce of meat in order to pay back what he had stolen. He stopped weighing his thumb. He was trembling at the word of God.

Well now, that’s the warning to the wicked, and Isaiah has, secondly, some words to the faithful, beginning with the fifth verse. Words to the faithful. I think verse 5 through verse 14d. The last part of that verse goes really with verse 15. Words to the faithful. Now in essence what Isaiah says here is that the faithful shall be accepted although their enemies reject them and are judged. Let’s read beginning with verse 5,

“Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; (these are words to the faithful you see, that remnant.) Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.”

Now I would like to stop here and say a word about the seventh verse because here you will notice how the prophet writing about the immediate future, now Lewis, forward into the distant future apparently. For in a moment, he will talk about a nation being born again in a day which does not seem to be a reference to the first coming of our Lord or to any time before that but must be as far as I can tell, a reference to the second coming and so the prophet as he so often does against the background of the local and historical, he moves on into the distant future and speaks of that which is to us, prophecy in our day.

“Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child.” Now the she that is referred to here is the nation Israel and it states that before she travailed. Now in the Old Testament in the prophetic sections, I bet you of course probably already know that the future of Israel during the time of the great

tribulation is likened to a woman in the midst of birth pains. So the tribulation period is a time of birth pains for Israel and the result of the birth is the kingdom of our Lord.

And so when we read, “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child,” it would seem to be a statement to the effect that before the coming of the tribulation, there has come a man child. And that man child can hardly be anyone other than our Lord Jesus Christ. So if this text is not speaking collectively of a nation, it must be speaking individually of a man child Jesus Christ.

And I think there appears a passage in the New Testament which is somewhat parallel to this and I am going to ask you to turn to it with me. It is in Revelation chapter 12. “And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the Sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” So John sees here a vision of a great sign and a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of 12 stars which would suggest to you the nation Israel with the 12 tribes.

Now we do not have time to go into detail and point out to you how the sun and the moon also are figures of Israel but let me just hasten, let me just sum it up by saying that this is no doubt a reference to the Nation Israel. It is not a reference to the church. The church did not give birth to Jesus Christ. Israel did, for our Lord was an Israelite and it can be said that our Lord is the product of Israel but we did not give birth to Jesus Christ. He gave birth to us. We are his new creation.

Now Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy who was the leader of Christian Science, those were all of her names because she had quite a few, she said that she was the woman. And that she was the one who really gave birth to the man child and that this was a reference to the fact that she was responsible ultimately for the second coming of Jesus Christ. Now we know that this is not a reference to Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy. The reason is simple. The serpent or the dragon, Satan, is not able to lay hold of

this woman but he did lay hold of Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy. So it cannot be a reference to her.

Now we read in verse 3,

“And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

And there is the picture of the conflict of Satan and the seed of the woman which began in Genesis chapter 3 in verse 15.

And verse 5 says “And she brought forth a man child,” there it is, a man child, a child male, the great text has it “a man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.” And so we have then the birth of the child and we have the child caught up to the throne of God. You will notice that a lot of the information concerning our Lord’s life is bypassed here.

Now we will read in verse 6, “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Twelve hundred and sixty days or three and a half years and we can see from this that in verse 5 we have a reference to the coming of our Lord in his first coming. But between verse 5 and verse 6, we move on into the indefinite future when the woman Israel is going to be persecuted during the time of the great tribulation.

Verses 7 through 12 tell us about the war in heaven and the origin of its conflict and then we read in verse 13, “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.” In other words, the tribulation comes. So here in Revelation 12 then we read of the birth of a man child from

the woman. This man child is the object of satanic enmity. But the child is born, Satan is defeated, he is not able to lay his hand upon him and the male child is by virtue of the power of God translated to the right hand of the throne of God in victory and there he waits. In the meantime on the earth after a time, the woman is persecuted by the dragon. And that I say is a reference to the tribulation.

Now with that in mind lets move back to Isaiah chapter 66 where we read, “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.” It is almost as if the son was born and born easily. But it is before she travailed. Notice that, Before she travailed. Before the tribulation period, the son was born, the male child that is in harmony with Revelation 12.

Now verse 8 says, “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?” And Isaiah leaps from the first coming to the second coming because notice what he says in verse 8, “for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” So here is the male child that is brought forth before she travailed, before her tribulation, but as soon as she enters into her tribulation, her children are brought forth. Now I think that this text, the eighth verse tells us that contrary to history and the experiences of history, our nation shall grow to maturity in one day.

Who has ever heard of a nation doing that? Nations grow to maturity over a long period of time. We have been 200 years or more in the United States and it is questionable that we are mature yet. But we have grown as a nation. Nations are ordinarily not born in a day. Israel was, May 14, 1948. But I think this is a reference to the fact that the nation as a whole shall be saved during The Great Tribulation period and then we shall see a nation born again in a day.

When you turn over to Zechariah chapter 3, about three years ago, some of us studied the Book of Zechariah together and we noticed that among the things that Zechariah did was to give us an interpretation of sections of the Book of Isaiah because

Zechariah was a great reader of the Book of Isaiah. We know that from his book and in Zechariah, that is in the Old Testament by the way, some of you are looking around, use the index, it’s perfectly all right. It is really a Book of the Bible. It is right next to Hezekiah chapter 30.

Zechariah chapter 3 and we read in verse 8, “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and Thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch.” We saw that that was our Lord. “For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

In other words, there is going to be a magnificently quick maturation of the nation Israel and it is going to be as if a nation is born in a day. And furthermore, in that eighth verse we read, “As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” Her new birth comes through tribulation. Through tribulation.

Now that we could turn back to Revelation 12 and point out how all of that tribulation there contributes ultimately to Israel’s salvation during that time. But we don’t have time to do that. I just wanted you to notice that in one verse, we read “before she travailed, she brought forth.” That’s our Lord at his first coming. “As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” That is a reference to the fact that during the tribulation period, the nation shall reach its ultimate maturity.

Let’s read on beginning with verse 9,

“Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith Thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations.”

These are wonderful figures of the experience of others sharing in the blessings of Israel, “That ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river.” What a wonderful figure for a nation that was characterized by parched and dry land. Not only shall there be streams in the desert but a river signifying symbolically the blessing of peace to that nation.

“And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.”

Now that last statement leads us into words regarding wrath. And I will just mention this and pass on because we have only about ten minutes for those last verses. Words regarding wrath, 14e through 17. Let’s us just read them. Here we have a statement regarding the indignation of God toward his enemies. He comes in fire for judgment upon law breakers. Verse 14e,

“And his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, (that word tree should not be there. It is a picture of people who are out in the gardens carrying on false worship.) Eating swine's flesh, and the abomination,” and ladies notice “and the mouse,” can you imagine eating a mouse, “shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.”

Now witness the future consummation. Witness to future consummation. And here in these last verses, Isaiah gives us his final picture of the ultimate glory of the tribulation and the kingdom that is to come. Verse 18 through 24. Let’s notice the details of the picture of the path of Israel back to glory. Remember that this is the last chapter of the book and you will see how some of the things that he has said so many times through the book are said for their final time here and are kind of a climax.

Verse 18, “For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.” And of course when he speaks about the gathering of all nations, he is referring to the gathering of all nations against the city of Jerusalem in the last days of the tribulation period, the expression of the last conflict of men against the program of God. So he gathers all nations against Jerusalem. This by the way is undoubtedly the passage from which Zechariah in his fourteenth chapter of his book gives us an even more detailed picture of the gathering of the nations against the city of Jerusalem and they are defeated by our Lord’s coming to the earth.

We read in verse 19, “And I will set a sign among them,” what that sign is Isaiah does not tell us but he does tell us in the eleventh chapter about a sign or a standard and I am inclined to think that when we read here, “I will set a sign among them,” that in the light of the passage in chapter 11 in verse 12 that this is a reference to our Lord Jesus himself who is the innocent or the sign around which the exiles may gather. It is the Lord himself.

And then we go on to read in verse 19, “And I will set a sign among them and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations.” Well now, he has just said that he is going to gather all the nations against Jerusalem, he is going to set a sign in the midst and then he is going to send those that escape of them, I presume, the nations that were gathered against the city of Jerusalem. He is going to send them unto the nation.

So it would seem that the order of events that Isaiah is talking about is this. That in the last stages of the tribulation period when all of the enemies of the Lord are seeking to finally overcome the city of Jerusalem and take that city, it is then that God sends his son Jesus Christ to stand on the Mount of Olives in his second advent to establish his kingdom and in his coming, he overthrows the enemies, the nations that had been gathered against the city of Jerusalem but there apparently are some of the gentiles who are converted as are the Jews by our Lord’s second advent.

And so as a result of this, a few of those who had been gathered against the city are sent by our Lord to the gentiles. And here we read of that, “I will send those that escape of them unto the nations to Tarshish,” Spain, “Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan,” Javan is Greece, “to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.” In other words gentiles are set out to declare the glory of our Lord unto the gentiles.

And not only shall they declare the glory of the Lord among the gentiles, but you see not all of the Jews are back in the land of Palestine when our Lord comes at his second advent, and now some of you studied The Olivet Discourse under Bill McRae and you remember that in the twenty fourth chapter when the statement is made that Jesus comes, there is then a mission set out to gather together all of the elect and to return them to the city and to the land after his second advent.

So while today there are many Jews in the land and perhaps some of them shall be among the elect, there are still many scattered to the four corners of the earth and will be there when our Lord comes again. But many of them would be converted. And it will be the duty of the gentiles who were sent out to declare his glory among the gentiles and also to be one of the instrumentalities for bringing all the brethren, believing Jews, back to the city.

And so we read in verse 20, “And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon

mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel,” in other words this is going to be like the children of Israel “bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord.” So the Gentiles should go forth and gather up the believing ones among Israel, shall bring them back to the city of Jerusalem just like the Israelites used to bring an offering to the Lord for its all an offering to the Lord in that day.

Now verse 21, “And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord.” That is of the Jews who come back. And so Israel is restored to its ancient priestly office. And that is what we read about in chapter 61 in verse 6. Do you remember? Turn back there for just a moment. Chapter 61 and verse 6 says “But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.”

God has always intended that Israel should be a priestly nation unto him. That is that they should stand between him and gentiles. And that shall take place during the time of our Lord’s kingdom upon the earth. They shall rule and reign under him. They shall no longer be the tail but they shall be the head of the nations. They shall be the priests of God and Isaiah set forth the truth here and again Zechariah in his book gives us further details.

Verse 22, “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.” Now that is a reference to the fact that Israel’s promises which ultimately go all the way back to Abraham and which are unconditional shall reach their fruition. The great mass of the world and the great mass of Israel shall perish. But the seed and the name remain. The elect out of Israel shall enter into their blessings and they shall have them forever.

This is one of the great testimonies to the faithfulness of God. Those promises made hundreds and thousands of years ago to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and confirmed to Jacob and confirmed to the faithful of the Old Testament, they shall reach

their fruition and at the time of the Second Advent, men shall say God is faithful to his word. Those promises have not yet been forth in but they shall be. And as if to enforce it, he said it is like the new heavens and the new earth and the permanence of them, so shall your seed and your name remain.

Now he says, “And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another,” in that kingdom, in other words, month after month, “And from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.” And we are told here that Jerusalem is going to be the head, the headquarters for the worship of the kingdom. Control will be in Jerusalem. And there, all of the affairs of the kingdom on earth shall be ministered.

I would gather from this that this does not mean that every single person is going to come but in their substitutes, they shall come representatively. It would seem to me perhaps I am saying something I should not say, but I am only telling you what I think. But I can just imagine that there is going to be a representative from all of the nation, representatives there month after month in order to engage in the worship of Jehovah and to acknowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ is supreme in the earth.

So talk about crowded conditions in our airports. What is it going to be during the kingdom? With every month, representatives from all the nations flying back to the city of Jerusalem. I wonder if they will do it in the 747, that great jet. We don’t know. And we read that when they are there, “they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”

So there is monthly worship in Jerusalem and there is a monthly review of the judgment of God and it almost seems to me as if there is some miracle there. In the neighborhood of Jerusalem, there is a perpetual sacrament of judgment and so justice outside the city of Jerusalem in ancient days, the fire upon which the refuse was placed and which constantly burned, that is the figure of hellfire, *gebennum* which becomes

Gehenna, which is ultimately the lake of fire. It was the figure out of which the prophets wrote of eternal judgment.

Apparently during the kingdom, there is going to be a continuation of that fire as a constant indication to men that not only is God gracious but he is also a God of justice. There are two things that God has revealed to us. He has revealed to us his grace in the coming of the Lord Jesus and he has revealed to us his justice and judgment in his salvation plan. Those were the two things that he desired to reveal through his redemptive program and so it is done here.

Before I close, let me just comment upon something that is rather interesting and somewhat unique. Verse 23 which is a verse of blessing is followed by this verse of judgment and the Jews in the reading of Books of the Bible did not like to end a book on the note of judgment. And so in the synagogue reading of the sixty sixth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, verse 23 is repeated after verse 24, so that they might conclude on the note of a blessing. Now that is not the only place it is done. That is done in the reading of the Book of Malachi, too. They did not like to conclude on that note.

But God intended that it should conclude on that note. For remember, there are twenty seven chapters in the last part of the Book of Isaiah. I just noticed that. There are twenty seven chapters in the Book of Isaiah, the last part of the Book of Isaiah, remember there are thirty nine in the first great division and then twenty seven making sixty six and these twenty seven are divided up into nine chapters each. There are actually twenty seven prophecies in these twenty seven chapters and the central prophecy is the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 53, verses 1 through 12.

And as I pointed out to you a long time ago, the central verse in the central section of this last part of the Book of Isaiah was Isaiah chapter 53 and verse 6. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” But we notice this, that the end of each one of

these sections of nine chapters, chapter 48 verse 22, I think it is verse 22, it reads, “There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.”

And then in chapter 57, what is it, verse 16, something like that, “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” And so it is very fitting and I am sure is the divine mind that verse 24, the last verse of the last section should also end on the note of judgment. What this all tells us of course is that the story of the cross is central to the blessing of Israel. It is the promises that God has given us concerning the servant of Jehovah. These promises are the root and the force in the origin of his blessing of Israel.

But if we do not respond to the blessings that have to do with the servant of Jehovah, the other side of the coin is judgment. And so in these last great chapters of the Book of Isaiah, those wonderful pictures of glory, of grace, of blessing are tempered with a dark note of judgment and it closes on that note. And on that note, we close our study of the prophecy of Isaiah. Let’s conclude with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for Thy wonderful word and we pray that as we contemplate the future, that it may be an incentive and a motive for us to be faithful in the proclamation of the word to our friends and our associates. May O God, Thy Spirit lead and direct in such a way that we may have the sense of corporation with Thee in all that Thou art doing. Most of all, we thank Thee for him, the servant of Jehovah, the male child who has come and who is our Lord and savior and may he lead and direct us to Thy glory.

For Jesus sake. Amen.