

Studies in Isaiah - Part 3

by Harry Ironside

God's sovereignty and power are contrasted with man's littleness and frailty, and God's promise to save and deliver is emphasized.

Duration: 45:50

Scripture: Isaiah 48:22 - 49:1, Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12, Matthew 6:33, Romans 5:8

Topics: "Expository"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the faithfulness of God towards Israel throughout history. He emphasizes that despite their idolatry and turning away from God, He has always sustained and carried them. The speaker then highlights the downfall of Babylon and the need for people to trust in God rather than idols. He concludes by reminding the audience of the gospel message, that God is just and a Savior, and encourages repentance and receiving God's favor.

Transcript

It was as though God said, well, you will worship idols, you will turn away from me, you will follow after these false gods. I'll give you idolatry for breakfast, dinner, and supper. Let you see how you like it.

And so down they went to Babylon, and there they suffered for 70 years under the awful conditions of that idolatrous kingdom. And when they came back to the land of Palestine, they went through with idolatry, but never again did an idolatrous people. They, to this day, abhor idols of every description, and that's one reason why the Christian Church in the Medieval Church, and that which came out of it, the Roman Catholic, and the Greek Catholic, and the Greek Orthodox, and other branches of the Catholic Church, have had such difficulty in impressing the Jew.

Because, if the Jew even looked inside one of their churches, to him it was just a heathen temple. There were all kinds of icons, and images, and people burning incense to them, and burning candles in front of them, and bowing down to them. For the Jew, that is perfectly abhorrent.

That's idolatry. They hate and detest everything of the kind. Only when a pure Christianity, apart from all that, is presented in loving kindness to the Jew that one is likely to make any impression upon.

Of course, I do know this, that all down through the centuries there have been Jews who have been converted to Romanism, but very frequently that conversion has been just a pretext in order to escape

persecution, as in the case of the Jews of Spain and so on, who outwardly conformed to the Church of Rome, and yet had their hidden services when they carried on a synagogue worship as they had done of old. But, where there's a real new birth, and the Jew becomes a true Christian, he turns away from all this idolatry because it's something that is very soul-aborrent. Well, God foretold, on the rise of King Cyrus, he was to open the way for the return to Jerusalem, but of course this was just to be a partial return.

There are those who insist that all the prophecies connected with the return of Israel have been fulfilled already, and that, therefore, we're not to look for any future fulfillment of them. But, God says in this very book of Isaiah, I will set my hand a second time to recover my people, and that's what he's already beginning to do, and what he will do shortly when he'll gather them back as a people to their own land. Well, now, following this revelation, this prophecy in regard to King Cyrus, God comes back to the subject that had occupied him before, emphasizing man's littleness, and man's frailty, and man's lack of merit, and emphasizing his own majesty, and power, and glory in contrast to the idols to which the people have turned.

I'll ask my wife to let me read another portion. Yes, verse five. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

There is no God beside me. I good see, though thou hast not known me, that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

I form the light, and create darkness. I make peace, and create evil. I, the Lord, do all this.

Now, that's very striking right there in connection with what I said a moment ago. Some people have thought of the Persians as dualists, because in their sacred writings of Zend-Evesta, for instance, they give the primary place to Ormus, the God of light, the one true and living God, and then Arimin occupies a very large place as the supernatural foe of God. He's the spirit, the power of darkness, and according to their thought in the Zend-Evesta, which I can't give you in detail, for I was only 14 years old when I read it through, and I've forgotten it since, but I do remember.

I read it that time, and I do remember this, that in the Zend-Evesta, God is presented as in constant conflict with Arimin, Ormus and Arimin, in constant conflict. One is the God of light, and the other is the evil spirit of darkness. One is the God of peace, and the other is the spirit of conflict, and so on.

One is the God of goodness, and the other is the spirit of evil. So, here, in the answer to this, God is no addressing to each other. He says, now, I'm the one true and living God.

Beside me, there's no other. I create peace, and I create evil. I create light, and I create darkness.

There's no other power that can share omnipotence with me. I create peace, and I create evil. What does that mean? You know, some of our friends, extreme high Calvinists, generally known as super-lapsarians, that's my big mouthful, they insist that God has foreordained everything that takes place in the earth, and, therefore, that it's God himself foreordained that man should sin in order that he might have opportunity to display his redemptive grace.

But, that's not what's involved in this. When he says, I create peace, and I create evil, it's evil in the sense of calamity. In other words, if there's a thunderstorm and great damage is done, God says, I take full responsibility for it.

If everything is fair and beautiful as today, God says, you get it from me. If there's a great earthquake, God is behind that. Whatever it is, I the Lord create peace, I create evil.

And so, in another scripture we'll read, in one of the minor prophets, shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it. God takes the responsibility for everything that occurs, but it isn't always that God is working directly himself, but that he permits others to work. As, for instance, he permitted Satan to tempt Job, and so on.

So, the point that's brought out here is that there are not two great powers in the universe in conflict with each other, both of whom are God. That is, a good God and an evil God, but there's just the one God. So, there is an evil power working against us.

Woe on him that striveth with his labor. Let the prostrate strive with the prostrate of the earth. Shall the claim so to him that fashioneth it, what nature's file, or by words he hath no hand, beginning with 2222.

Assemble yourselves in sum, draw near together, ye that are states of the nations. They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a God that cannot save you. Tell ye, and bring them near.

Yea, let them take counsel together. Who hath declared this from ancient times? Who hath told it from that time? For not I, the Lord, and there is no God else beside thee. A just God and a Savior, there is none beside thee.

Look unto me, and be ye saved. O the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. What a marvelous declaration this is, you know.

God making himself known way back in those old testament times as a just God and a Savior. A God who will deal in absolute righteousness with the sin question, and yet who himself has found a way consistent with his own infinite holiness and the righteousness of his throne, whereby he can be the savior of the sinner who turns to him in repentance and faith. A just God and a Savior.

I've often drawn attention to the remark made by Socrates to Plato so long ago, when they were arguing one day about the question of forgiveness. And Plato, and Plato, and Glaucus, and all the rest of those men that you know so well, were bringing forth their various ideas, and finally they turned to Socrates himself. And I can just see him, you know, twisting up that little funny snub-nose of his as he turns to Plato and says, well Plato, it may be that God can forgive sins, but I don't see how.

That's a remarkable thing, you know. There was a what we think of as a pagan philosopher, but he certainly had, to a very large extent, had his eyes open to divine reality. It may be, Plato, that God can forgive sin, but I don't see how.

What do you mean by that? Well, if God is the moral governor of the universe, and if God is a righteous judge, and all men are to come before him to be judged for the deeds done in the body, how can he forgive sin? It's not the problem for the judge to forgive criminals, it's the business of the judge to pronounce sentence upon evildoers, and it seems that that sentence is carried out. How, then, could a righteous God forgive sin? Ah, but way back here in Isaiah, who lived two centuries and a half before Socrates, God declares in Israel that I'm a just God and a saint. And, in the Epistles to the Romans, written nearly five centuries after Socrates, we're told how God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

This is a wonderful gospel passage. Look unto me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else. We see God revealed now in the Lord Jesus Christ, and these very same words can be used in connection with him, because he has said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man cometh unto a father but by me. There's no other name, says Peter, under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Look unto me, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.

What does it mean to look to him? To look to him. People make difficulty, you know, out of such simple things. God has used such simple terms in order to show people how easily they may come into direct contact with him through grace, and yet people make difficulty.

They make difficulty out of the word believe, and they make difficulty out of the word look. I've had people say, well, I just don't get it. How can I look to one that I haven't seen? If you stood up there and said, look unto me, I can look to you.

I understand what you're talking about, but when it says, when a non-seen God says, look unto me, and be ye saved, I can't understand it. I generally use little illustration like this. I say, well, suppose, for instance, here's a family, and they're buying a home, and they have a mortgage on the home, and they've been able up to a certain time to keep up their payments, and then they find themselves unable, and finally the one who holds the mortgage, the note against them, serves notice that if everything is not cleared up by a certain date, he's going to foreclose on it, and the homeowner goes around from bank to bank, and home loan agency to another, and tries to get a loan, maybe goes to the tries to get a G.I. loan if he's been in the service or something, but he fails at every point, and he doesn't know how to do it, and the wife and the little children are utterly broken-hearted to think they're going to have to lose their home, and then one day, perhaps when it's just a day or two, maybe we'll say that the note has to be taken up on Monday, and this is Saturday afternoon, he's going down the street, utterly melancholy, and sad, discouraged to think that he's going to lose everything, when he meets an old friend of his, man who knew him well, and they were chums, perhaps, in years gone by, but this old friend has prospered financially in a way he hasn't, and his friend meets him, and he calls him by name, I don't know what name he'll give him, any name will do, he says to him, why George, well what makes you look so blue, something troubling you? Well, he says, yes, something is troubling me, he says, you know, I'm afraid on Monday I'm going to lose my home, I've struggled so hard, but I couldn't keep up the payments, and the note is going to be called, and I can't pay it.

Well, have you tried to get somebody else to take it up? Oh, yes, I've been to bank after bank, and what have you, nobody will do anything, and he says, well, look here, George, you know me, you know I'm well able to look after that, so I want you just to look to me. When does it have to be paid? Well, they demand that I pay it, that I meet them at the bank at two o'clock on Monday, and settle the thing, and if not, they're going to foreclose. All right, George, don't worry, look to me.

Now, what does look to me mean? That's all. He goes, the other goes home, you know, and he comes in, and his step is different, and his face is bright. Oh, the wife says, have you got the money? No, she hasn't got a cent.

Oh, I thought to look at you that you were going to tell me that you had the money to pay the loan. That's all right, all's going to be tended to, but I haven't got a cent. Well, what do you mean? Well, I met so-and-so, and you know, he's well able to tell it.

He told me to look to him, and not to worry about it anymore. She begins to cry. She says, oh dear, I thought at first there was something to it, but how on earth can I look to one that I can't see? I don't understand her at all.

You think any woman would be cool enough to talk like that? Yes, people talk that way in regard to eternal things, but they would both understand that look to me meant trust in me. I'll be there to meet the notes when it comes to you. God says to poor lost sinners who are utterly bankrupt, look unto me and be ye saved, for I'm God in this matter.

I'm a just God and a savior. What a wonderful gospel message in the Old Testament that is. Well, with that we've come, haven't we, to the end of chapter forty-five, and so we turn to chapter forty-six.

We'll read the middle verses four through nine out of forty-six. Even to your old age I am giving, and even to whole hairs will I carry you. I have made and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you.

To whom will you liken me and make me equal, and compare me that we may be like? They ladish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith, and he maketh it a god. They fall down, yea, they worship, they bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and send him in his place, and he stands. From his place shall he not remove? Yea, one shall crown him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble? Remember this, and show yourself to men.

Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old. For I am God, and there is none else.

I am God, and there is none like me. Notice both the irony here, and the wonderfully precious promise that's brought before us. God now is still contrasting himself with idols, and he says in the beginning of the chapter, these idols fell down down, feeble, stupid.

They can't do anything to save themselves. When at last Cyrus was to attack Babylon, and the city was to fall, the gods of Babylon couldn't save themselves. What did happen? Why, the priests of Babylon got busy, and they loaded their gods upon carts in order to wheel them away, and set them up somewhere else.

Gods who couldn't deliver their own people had to be delivered by the people from absolute destruction, and God says, I'm altogether different to that. These gods had to be carried by their makers. I undertake to carry you.

I've brought you hither to, and I'll continue to carry you through. Even down to old age will I carry you. When whoreheads adorn your brow, when you come down to gray hairs, I'll be there to carry you, and sustain you, and sing you through.

Then he goes on to ridicule, just as he had done before in connection with the making gods out of the trees of the forest, he goes on to ridicule those who make gods out of the various metals. The goldsmith, and so on, takes a piece of metal, and he fashions it, and works over it, and then he sets it up, and says this is a god. But when he sets it up, it's immovable.

It can't walk, it can't see, it can't hear, it can't do anything, and in time of danger, it needs somebody to protect it. What a god! But God says, oh how different have I acted toward you, Israel. How could you ever turn aside to such senselessness as idolatry when you've known how wonderfully I've sustained and

cared for you through the centuries? Look back over the past, and see what I've done, and I promise to care for you just as wonderfully in the future.

I've things in store in the future than you've ever known in the past. This really is the message of chapter 46. So, chapter 47 brings us to the downfall of Babylon.

Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon. Sit on the ground. There is no stone, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be cold, tender, and delicate than when you came twelve to the end of the chapter.

Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy prostrates, bearing thy slaves and thy youth. If so do thou shalt be able to profit, if so didst thou mayest prevail. Thou art weary with the multitude of thy counsel.

Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be in trouble. The fire shall bring them.

They shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flames. There shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it. Thus shall they be able to be consumed on its labor, even thy merchants from thy youth.

They shall wander as they want in their quarrel. None shall praise thee." When we were engaged in the first part of this quote, we drew attention to the fact that Babylon was the very fountainhead of idolatry. According to the best records that we have, all idolatry began at Babylon.

If you want a fuller proof as to that, you should never examine a book called *The True Babylon*. I would suggest that you read it. There are two or three copies in the library.

I know I put a couple of copies there myself, so unless somebody's copped them, they're there still. But Babylon, by her sorceries, her enchantment, is said to have bewitched the nation. Nation after nation followed her in the practice of idolatry.

She herself was recognized as the Lady of Kingdoms. Her wealth, her riches, her culture, and all this surpassed that of any of the nations around. But God, looking far ahead to the time when Cyrus and his army would come up against them, says, I shall no more be called the Lady of Kingdoms.

The day was coming when they'd be stripped and made bare, and all their treasures destroyed, everything taken away from them. And God would prove that their idols had absolutely no power. But his word should stand.

He speaks of the folly of their turning for confidence to the stargazers, the astrologers, the monthly prognosticators, and so on. You know, wherever you get people turning away from the one true and living God and refusing the word of God, they're always ready to turn to other things. It's been a characteristic thing down through the centuries that when men, when leaders, great leaders gave up confidence in God and his word, then they readily became the prey of all sorts of charlatans.

Take even the infamous Hitler, the tyrant whom God destroyed so lately. He had a special, what do you call it? I'd say magician, but that isn't the word. One who he consulted with constantly, you know, as the lucky days and unlucky days when he was to attack nations and all this kind of thing.

Huh? Ah, that's another time. He had an astrologer. He went to look into the map of the stars, and so on, to see what was indicated.

Well, all that began at Babylon. Way back there, centuries ago, they had their astrologers, their stargazers. Of course, there's a great deal of difference between an astrologer and an astronomer.

Astronomy isn't exact science. Astrology is just fraud and a fake. And yet, how many people there are that give heed to it.

You take our papers today, many of them contain astrologers' reports from month to month, and a lot of people are foolish enough to believe that there's a whole lot in. In fact, some of the biggest dealers on the market in New York City, Erling Olson told me, never do a thing without consulting an astrologer when it comes to making big deals, and so on. Men still believe in these kind of things.

They turn away from the word of living God, but they're turned to the paper. We were driving along here somewhere the other day, weren't we, when we saw by the roadside a tent, and a big sign up that there was a woman in there who would foretell the future, and show you how to get riches, and so on, if you'd only come in and consult her. Somebody remarked, well, it doesn't look as though she's made much of a success of it for herself, unless she was in a poor, miserable place, and yet I suppose there wouldn't be a day go by but what lots of people could stop and hand their money over to a charlotte like that in order to have her look into the future for them.

But thank God the believer doesn't need anything of that kind. He's got something absolutely sure and certain in God's own holy work. Some of you maybe have heard me tell a little experience I had years ago.

This runs me off the line, but some of you fellas are going to sleep, it'll wake you up. See, I'm beginning to see better than I was. I was down, I was going down, I was in Los Angeles years ago, and I was going down one day on the electric line from Los Angeles to Long Beach just to have a little relaxation on the Saturday.

I was all worn out with so many meetings, and I'd hardly taken my seat when one of these queer-looking dames came along with a dress that looked like her dress had been made out of a lot of red bandana handkerchiefs sewed together, and she had some spangles across her brow and long braids of black hair. She's a Bulgarian gypsy, and she slipped before I knew what she was doing, she slipped right down beside me to hold in my hand. I'm not used to ladies grabbing me like that.

I was rather surprised, and then she said, she said to me, gentlemen, gentlemen, you, you cross that palm which is hers, put your twenty-five cents, I tell you past, present, future. I am servant's daughter of a servant's daughter. I, I pour you a little I can tell all mysteries.

Sir, past, present, and future. Twenty-five cents, gentlemen. I said, well, really, I'm just trying to cut around, got a good grip on her, and I said, well, really, it isn't necessary because I've had that all told already.

Oh, she said, but I am expert. I know very exact past, present, future. Yes, I said, well, I got it from an expert.

I have it here. I have it here in a little book, and I pulled out with the other hand my New Testament turned to the second chapter of the Epistles of Ephesians. I said, here, I've got my past, present, and future.

Here's the past. You have to quicken who were dead in trespasses and in sin, for in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the spirits that now work amidst of this world. Oh, oh, she said, by the whole, I got the wrong man.

I got the wrong man. Let, let, let go. I said, no, I won't let go.

I didn't ask you to come down here and take hold of me. Now that I've got you, you're going to stay here. I'm going to give you the rest of it.

Now I give you my present. I give you my present. But God, who is rich in mercy, with his great love, for when he loved us even when we were dead in sins, and quickens us together with Christ, by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it's the gift of God.

That's my present. Yes, that's all right, sir. That's all right.

I got enough. Goodbye, sir. Goodbye.

No, I said, wait a minute. I haven't given you it all yet. But now here's my future, that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Yes, gentlemen, I got enough. And she was gone, and down this car she went. I think I got the wrong man.

But you know, isn't it amazing the foolishness of people? I heard, I remember reading of a couple, of a gentleman who was riding in a railroad train one day, and he was reading his Bible, as I suppose most of us often do. I find it one of the very best ways to get into contact with people. And he was sitting reading his Bible, when a rather jaffa-looking gentleman came along, he looked at him, and he said, oh, reading the Bible? Yes, sir.

Well, well, you believe the Bible? Yes, sir. Why? Because, you know, I had an idea that I didn't think that any, that any educated people believe in the Bible anymore. He said, you look like a cultured man.

I'm surprised that you're reading that. He says, you know, I believe the day will soon come when people will no more believe in the Bible than they'll believe in ghosts and wishes, like our forefathers did. And he said, my friend, when people reach the place where they don't believe in the Bible anymore, they'll believe in witches again, and they'll believe in ghosts again.

And that's true. Oh, how many people have turned away from the word of God to go into spiritism and theophany and all these various occult systems that profess to have to do with the dead? Well, all that's Babylonianism, you see. Come right down through the centuries, and God has judged it all, and he's put it all as it were to one side.

He says, why do men need this? Here am I, here am I, infinite in wisdom, power, and might, and ready and great to reveal myself to the man who seeks my faith. And I will meet the law school. Now, give me a little more.

Verse 10 of chapter 48, Behold, I have resigned thee, but not with silver. I have chosen thee in the front of a bleacher. Yes, and that covers really God's dealing to the nation of Israel.

No other nation has suffered as this nation has suffered, and yet it remains intact a nation to this day, and will to the very end. When at last they come through all the afflictions and tribulations and troubles, they'll

understand the meaning of this verse. I have refined thee, but not with silver.

God will bring that nation out of all its troubles and all its tribulations to be to the praise of his glory, of royal diadem upon his brow throughout the generations to come. Read the chapters carefully. They tell the story in a wonderful way of Jehovah's conflict with idolatry.

Verse 17, Thus says the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to practice, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest know, O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandment. Then hath thy peace been in the river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. Verse 20, Though you spoke of Babylon, flee thee from the Chaldeans, for the birds of sin declare thee.

Tell this, uttering to the end of the earth, Pray ye, the Lord hath redeemed his brethren Jacob, and they thirsted not when he led them through the desert. He caused the waters to flow out of the mouth to them. He cleansed the earth also, and the waters rushed out.

There is no peace, says the Lord unto the wicked. And so, just as in the past God has undertaken for Israel, so he'll undertake for them in days to come. And those who turn to him in repentance, those who receive the Savior that he has provided, will be brought into fulness of blessing.

But the section ends with the solemn words, There is no peace, says Jehovah. Now, here it's Jehovah. At the end of the next section, it's my God.

But there's no peace, says Jehovah, to the wicked. Jehovah who stands out in vivid contrast with the idols to whom they had turned for succor and help, and who had failed them utterly. Now, we come to what I consider a very, very precious and important part of the book of Isaiah.

Of course, everything in God's word is precious, even though at first sight it may not always seem so. And it's all important for we're told that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable. But there are certain parts of God's word that speak to us more loudly, perhaps, than others do.

And the portion of which we now enter has a very loud voice for all who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, because it brings him personally before us in such a clear, definite way. We have just concluded yesterday the first subdivision of the last part of Isaiah. You'll keep this clearly in mind, won't you? There's no telling, you know, what you might be asked on the examination day.

You'll keep this clearly in mind that Isaiah really divides into just three great portions. Division 1, from chapter 1 to 35 prophecies, largely leading up to the dispersion. And then the next is the historical portion, chapters 36 to 39, where you have the story of Hezekiah.

And then the last is the chapters that deal particularly with the coming glory from chapter 40 to 66. But then we've already gone over the first division, of course. I didn't try to break it up into subdivisions or subsections.

I don't want you to be occupied with that. Just think of it as one great whole. And we've gone over the historical section, and now we are in this last great division of the book, preferred division of the book.

And in this, we have three subdivisions that I would like you to keep in mind. First, as we've already had, Jehovah's controversy with Israel concerning their idolatry. And that's chapter 40 to 48, and that ends, as

you remember, with the words, There's no peace, saith Jehovah to the wicked.

Then we begin this morning with Jehovah's controversy with Israel concerning their attitude toward the Messiah, their treatment of Messiah. And that begins with chapter 49, and ends with chapter 57, and it concludes with the words, There is no peace, said my God to the wicked. See how aptly these endings come in.

There's no peace for the one who substitutes anything else for the one true and living God. When one turns to idolatry or any substitute for the true God, he can never find peace. Then, on the other hand, there is no peace for one who rejects the savior that God has provided.

There's no peace, saith my God to the wicked. Now, we want to consider, if time will permit this morning, chapters 49, 50, 51, and the first 12 verses of chapter 52. The reason that I'm stopping at verse 12 is that the last three verses of chapter 52 properly belong, in my judgment, to chapter 53.

This is another instance, such as I've spoken of several times, where chapter breaks have come at the wrong place. I feel quite certain that the last three verses of chapter 52 are really part of the great Messianic message which we have in chapter 53, and so we'll consider those verses in connection with that chapter when the time comes. Now, in chapter 49, we have Israel brought as Jehovah's servant, but Israel as a nation had failed terribly to fulfill the place of a servant, and so, while it's Israel who speaks and says, the Lord has called me from the womb, and said unto me, thou art my servant, and so on, it is really the Lord Jesus Christ himself who takes the place of Israel, the true Israel, so that the servant all the way through here is no longer the nation as such, though the nation does speak in these opening verses, but it's the Lord Jesus who takes the place of the nation.

There are other scriptures that indicate that. You remember in Hosea, where God is speaking of bringing the nation out of Egypt, it says, out of Egypt have I called my son. In the New Testament, that prophecy is referred to the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who, as a little babe, was carried down to Egypt and brought back to the land that it might be fulfilled, Matthew says, which was written in the prophet, out of Egypt have I called my son, so that though in the first instance the son there was Israel, it was the Lord Jesus, the true Israel, who was actually before the mind of God.

We ourselves often use language in the same way, substituting an individual for a whole people. For instance, you remember, you who are acquainted with French history, how Louis XIV, that proud, haughty monarch, exclaimed on one occasion, France must rule the world, and I am France. You see, I am France, and then you remember when Napoleon Bonaparte expressed himself with a little bit of a Hitler-esque shake of the head.

He said, the thought must be supreme, the state must be supreme, and I am the state. And so that even uninspired men use language in that way. How much more has Christ the right to take that place, to say, I am Israel, the true Israel.

The very name Israel meant a prince with God, and it was he then who became the true prince. It was manifested as the true prince, the servant of Jehovah, when Israel as such failed. And in this chapter, the Lord speaking then talks as though he's reviewing his work and the treatment he received from the nation.

He says, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught. You can see how those words apply to his mission to Israel when he was here on earth. He said he came to the lost sheep of the house of

Israel, but we're told he came unto his own, and his own received him not.

So, eventually he has to say to Israel, your house is left unto you desolate. It looks as though his mission, in one sense, was actually a failure. I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught.

But now the father answers him, as you see in the chapter, and he says it's a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Israel. I'm going to make thee a light to lighten the Gentiles, and he implies that through his rejection by Israel, a greater mission would be accomplished. The message would go out to the Gentile world.

I'd like my wife to just read those verses, because I want to have them clearly before us. Yeah. Verse six, and he said it is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserves of Israel.

I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despises, to him whom the notion of horror, to a servant of evil. King shall see it arise, Christ is also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

Now, while of course in the Old Testament we do not have the present age brought clearly before us. As I pointed out the other day, the Old Testament prophet was like a man looking at two mountain peaks, one away beyond the other, and higher than the first one, that he was unable to see the valley in between. So, the prophets testified of the sufferings of Christ, that's his first coming, and the glories that should follow his second coming, but they do not give us any clear teaching and outline as to all that goes on in between.

We know now from the New Testament that God had it in his heart from all eternity to call out from Jew and Gentile a people to his name who should be the body and the bride of his son, so that when the Lord Jesus returns to reign in power and glory, he'll not return alone. He'll have a bride with him who shall sit with him upon his throne. Now, while all that is true, and we don't get any clear definite instruction in regard to the present age yet, it's very evident that such a prophecy as that which we've just read does cover the present age as well as looking on to the millennium.

Of course, it will have its complete fulfillment in millennial days, when all the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, and when the one whom the nation abhors. That's a strong expression, but you know it's not too strong to express the feeling of Israel toward the Lord Jesus Christ, the one whom the nation abhors. Terms are used concerning him in Jewish writings of the Talmud and others as the leper and the hanged one, and such expressions as referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, the one whom the nation abhors.

They couldn't understand, of course, had they known, had they known, Peter says, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, but they didn't know, they didn't understand. But now, God is going to glorify the one whom the nation abhors, and the kings of the earth are going to recognize him and bow down before him. Well, in a remarkable sense, that has been true even during the present age, though unforeseen by the prophets, because as the gospel went from land to land throughout the early centuries, whole nations were brought to professedly subjection to the Lord Jesus, and many kings proclaimed themselves his subjects.

And, even right down to the present time, there are among the nations certain rulers who confess the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. We think, for instance, offhand of the rulers of Great Britain, and of the Holland, and of Scandinavia, all of whom are professed Christians. Now, that doesn't mean necessarily that they're all born again, but they're all professed Christians and acknowledge outwardly, at least, the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and our leaders in this country have been the same.

Franklin Roosevelt was a professed Christian, a warden of an Episcopal church, and Truman is a splendid sample of a Southern Baptist. At least, I remember when he first became president, some of my Southern Baptist friends said, isn't it wonderful that God has put a Southern Baptist in the presidential chair? Well, I'm afraid he's been a disappointment to some of them, but, at any rate, he professes Christianity, professes the Christian faith, and in that sense recognizes the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember, Queen Victoria was very definite in her confession of faith when that heathen from Africa heathen happened.

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