

# The Israel of God - Part 6

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*The sermon explores the profound love of God for His people, illustrated through Christ's sacrifice and the significance of the Church.*

**Duration:** 32:27

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:10

**Topics:** "Israel"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the passage from Isaiah 53:10-11, which talks about how it pleased the Lord to bruise and put Jesus to grief. The speaker acknowledges that it is difficult to fully understand and accept this concept, especially when faced with the complexities and challenges of life. However, the speaker emphasizes that the Bible clearly states this truth and encourages the listeners to believe in the infinite love and suffering behind Jesus' sacrifice for our salvation. The sermon highlights the importance of recognizing the value of our souls and the preciousness of Christ's blood in redeeming us.

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## Transcript

If I bring to you a number of fragments of the Word of God, it is not because I'm going to say a lot to you. Indeed, the message will lie deeper than anything that can be said. And I shall only do perhaps little more than make some statements and leave the Lord to speak out of those statements to your own heart.

The passages are these. And first of all, the one that has been running right through this whole conference as Isaiah chapter 53, verses 10 and 11. Yet, it pleased the Lord to bruise him.

He hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his foe an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.

Chapter 66, 66 of Isaiah, and verse 8. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Prophecies of Zechariah chapter 1 and verse 14. So the angel that talked with me said unto me, Cry thou saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.

Chapter 8, verse 1. Word of the Lord of hosts came to me saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. Letter to the Hebrews chapter 12, verse 22. But ye are come unto Mount Zion.

I am jealous for Zion. Ye are come to Mount Zion. The gospel by Mark chapter 14 and verse 34.

He said unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. He went forward a little and fell on the ground. He prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

He said of our father, All things are possible unto thee. Remove this cup from me. Of it not what I will, but what thou wilt.

Letter to the Ephesians chapter 5, verse 25. Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it. All these passages in principle and in ultimate meaning relate to one thing.

And in them and by them certain things altogether inexpressible, incomprehensible are brought to our hearts in the first place, as you notice, they all have to do with the prevailing love of God in Christ. The passion of God in Christ. And therein lies the mystery of the infinite value of the object of his travail.

There just must be something that justifies it. There must be something of preciousness to him that would lead to this, to this travail of his soul. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

I am jealous for Zion, with a great jealousy. Jealous for Zion with a great one. Tearing of the heart of God to its very depth.

Something of infinite preciousness and value must be in him. Of course this is all centered in the cross, as we know. The cross links with that of eternal supreme importance to the Son of God.

It links with his inheritance in the thing. It is not a thing. It is not some inanimate, insensate thing.

It is quite clearly a heart relationship. Something of the nature of things that tear your very being to pieces. Not an objective interest in something.

Some thing. Here it is a very heart of himself that is born out, as you will see by these scriptures. A part of himself.

Not to have that would mean that a very part of himself would be missing. It's a heart matter. It's a soul matter.

It's something that touches all the sensibilities of God. Like that, a living thing. Paul speaks of it as corresponding to a wife.

Husbands love your wife even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. And the law that governs that relationship is and they shall, they twain shall be one flesh. Divide them and tear one thing apart and in pieces and that's the relationship here.

But of course, such a character transcends any human analogy. The eternal is here. Well, my statement is that all this about his craving, his anguish, his love, his suffering implies, at least, if he does not declare with a very loud voice the object of it all is of infinite value to him.

What is it? He shall see his feet. He shall see of the traveling soul. It is this of which we have been speaking all through this conference.

This is represented by that phrase, his feet, a people for himself. It's beyond us, altogether beyond us. We might hear it and have some kind of an objective acceptance of it as truth, yes, but dear friend, this comes to us, to you, to me.

We're in this, the infinite preciousness, some scantiness that you and I are to him. I say, to be honest, that one thing I don't know about you, but I know very well about myself over this, the one thing that is the greatest difficulty to believe when it comes to myself. Yes? Quite so.

Perhaps there are two things, in the main, that constitute our difficulty in believing a thing like this. First is just what we are in ourselves. We know ourselves.

Our simpleness, our worthlessness, we really, it's not put on, it's not language, it's not being pretended, it's really true. When we know our utter worthlessness, we do come to know it and feel it, how abjectly worthless we are. You tell me that all this, all this is true, and that relates to and applies to me, you, you're presenting me with a problem, calling upon me to believe something not easy to believe.

But, you see, I could work that out in the Bible, show how it, after all, it is so. I wonder what is the most comforting fragment of Scripture to you in the Bible. Can I tell you what it is to me? This is a faithful saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

Brought right down to the person, what it means. There are lots of comforting things in the Bible, but that, that, you can't get deeper than that, you can't get behind that. It is, there it is.

All this infinite passion and travel for such a reason. The Bible says it. The Bible says it.

Focus down. Now, I told you I couldn't define and explain and make sense, but there it is. And that is one reason why we find such difficulty in believing and accepting.

The other probably is the mystery of God's ways with us. So often, in the mystery of His ways, we are sorely tempted to wonder whether anything like this can be true. It may be true of some people, but all His ways with us don't seem to bear it out at all.

A love like this, a love like this, unto death, an estimate, value, or the whole, to this degree, really, really is that borne out by the strange, mysterious dealings of God with us. Those darknesses, those perplexities, those problems, those disappointments and all of it. Oh, Satan is always at our elbows to say, that's not His love for you.

Dear friends, I'm not here to argue that out philosophically, or even from the scripture. I'm here to make the statement. The Bible says it.

Here it is. What is all this? Here it is. All this about the traveling of His soul.

What is it for? His feet. Who are His feet? Those who have believed on Him unto eternal life. No more than that.

No less than that. And they become enwrapped in this, this unspeakable, His whole traveling. Oh, that we could believe it.

I could believe it at all times, that in all the mystery of His ways, the strangeness of His dealings, all the bewilderment and perplexity as to what it is He's after. I could believe that behind this is such a love of Him. Notice the second thing, gain only of Satan, the infinite suffering behind our belonging to the Lord.

The infinite suffering behind a soul salvation. And that soul might be yours or mine. What suffers? What suffers? Peter draws this contrast.

We were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold. Silver and gold. But here's the contrast with the precious blood of Christ.

As of a lamb without part and without limb. And you know that the word blood is assimilated for soul. When He poured out His blood, He poured out His soul.

Soul is in the blood in symbolism, biblical symbolism. His soul here set forth as infinitely transcendently more precious than gold and silver. He's given that for our redemption.

That soul travail lies behind your belonging to the Lord. The Lord and my belonging to the Lord. What am I trying to do? To redeem this whole thing from cheapness.

We made salvation too cheap and too easy. Fooled it down to such a low level. Here's the infinite cost suffering which lies behind the salvation of one soul.

Further, the infinite love therefore which Christ has for His own when He's got them. Paul seems to make some tremendous statements. Sometimes they all may sound like exaggerations.

Who shall separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus? And then he catalogs every conceivable thing that might be thought to be capable of doing that. And he says, no, no. Bunching them all together, he says, nay, nay.

Time persuaded. None of these things. In them all, the love.

And over them all, the love will triumph. The love that He has for those who are His own when He's got them. Tremendous thing, isn't it? No.

It's not only to have them, but when He's got them. Sometimes we are prepared to believe or think and accept that the gospel of our salvation is based upon all this. To get up.

And as we go on a bit, we wonder, we wonder whether He still loves us as much now as He did at the beginning. He still is concerned to have us now as He was then. Like that.

Am I talking something that I ought not to be saying? You know what I mean. And when He's got us, it's like this. You know, there's a wonderful picture of this in the Old Testament in that temple that Solomon built.

The most magnificent structure that perhaps was ever built after that time. And the predominant feature of that temple was gold. Overlaid with gold.

Pure gold. Everywhere gold. Gold.

Over everywhere. Something that the Lord has got at last. Which in symbol and type is what He has set His heart upon.

It was only in symbol and type. Nevertheless, it's true to principle. Not the Lord has got what He's been working toward all the time with His people.

A place in which He can dwell. And everywhere is simply covered and smothered with gold. And gold is always a figure of the divine love.

He's got it. It's to Him precious. Far more precious than gold.

It's the preciousness of what He's got when He's got it to Himself. And He's priced it everywhere. Lavishly.

All the lavishness of that gold in the days of Solomon. All love. God's love falls in what He has got when He's got it.

No, His love doesn't change after He's come into possession. It's the same. I make the statement.

I can't explain it. There it is. So we are led to this next thing.

The infinite importance attached to the Church. If the Church is only another word or title for His wife, His bride, or His temple, they are all in reality the same thing. Then they all come into this.

The infinite importance attached to the Church. A lot of people, I'm afraid, think that Church is teaching. It's what they call Church teaching.

You know, there's nothing that makes me shudder. My skin goes more goosey than when I hear people use that phrase, Church teaching. I've even heard people speak about the Church teaching of honor.

Church teaching. The Lord pity us. The Lord favor us.

Church is not a truth. It's not a teaching. It's not an idea.

The Church is a Gethsemane. The Church is a bloody threat. A Church is a gung-ho.

The Church is a gung-ho. The Church is the cry of a broken heart from the cross. The Church is the pouring out of His soul unto death.

The Church is the great Father of God in this universe. Now, I'm not exaggerating. That's not words.

I take you to the prophets, and I'll show you there that all that is true. Oh, go back to some of those prophets and hear them. You don't hear the Father of God as they speak.

Oh, Ephraim. Oh, Ephraim. How shall I give thee up? As they wept and cried over the Lord's people as an unfaithful bride, a wayward daughter, a prodigal son, a family repudiating the best of fathers.

These are similes on the lips of the prophets about the Lord's people. And God is broken-hearted, just broken-hearted. Don't talk about Church truth, Church teaching.

Oh, no. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. I am jealous for Zion's only a title for the Church.

With a great jealousy and with a great wrath. Dear friends, we are not here to give Church teaching and Church truth. We've seen something.

We've seen something. Not just a subject of interest to which we return again and again. No, no.

This is something of a burden on our hearts and a passion in our lives for which we suffer not a little. It's not for the truth. If it were just the teaching, well, we wouldn't go on and go through with it.

He loved the Church. The infinite importance to Him of His Church. Again, I say, I cannot explain it, but there's the truth.

Oh, that you and I should see through the truth and the doctrine and the teaching. Just see the reality and see that this is the thing involved in that ruptured heart, in that agonized cry, in that fretting as it were great drop of blood that the Church has exposed. That's not a thing.

That's not a theory, a line of truth. That's something tremendous. Then, what does it lead to? Finally, the infinite motive for our response to the Lord.

First response? Yes, if there's someone who's not made the response to begin with. There's an infinite motive why you should. No less a motive than all this.

The infinite motive for our response as His people to Himself on all matters. Why should I settle a controversy with the Lord on any matter? Why should I set aside my own personal interests? Why should I disconnect? Why? Why? Why not? In the light of this, is there anything really, really that you can set against this? There's an infinite motive for our going on with the Lord, responding, being obedient, giving Him everything. And it's the infinite motive of service.

Why should we give Him our life in service just for this, for this reason? You know, in those first days of the Moravian brethren, when everything was so pure, so true, the Lord used them so tremendously. Over this while, oh, what a wonderful thing happened. John R. Marks said at the Edinburgh conference in 1910, that if the Christian church had proceeded on the lines of the Moravian brethren, the whole world would have been evangelized long ago.

There's a wonderful story, a wonderful story of sacrifice, of suffering, of giving themselves, one missionary for every ten members of their fellowship. Wonderful thing. What was the secret? They had a motto.

They had a motto. It was written on everything. They took it wherever they went, and their motto was this, to win for the Lamb that was slain the reward of His suffering.

That's the infinite motive, the reward of His suffering, for the Lamb that was slain. I made my statement. It's all together beyond this, but there it is.

This is what is here. Isaiah 53 is there, and all these other things. If this is true, He's not going to give us up very easily.

He's not going to abandon them forsake His purpose. He's going to return to it again and again. He will say, I have returned unto Zion.

He'll come back again and again and again for what He set His heart upon, but oh may we have in our hearts something of this thing, love of God shed abroad by the Holy Spirit.

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