



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 50: 1-11

“Israel’s Sin and the Servant’s Steadfast Salvation”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for another of the great chapters in the prophecy of Isaiah. We thank Thee for these words which written so many years before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, pointed so unerringly forward to him. And we thank Thee for of the great Prophet, who was able through the Holy Spirit to bring us this revelation and we thank Thee for that same Spirit who lives today within the hearts of believers to interpret the words to him and them. And Lord, may the spirit do his work now as we turn again to the word of God. We ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.

[Message] Last week, we began our full study of the last section of the prophecy of Isaiah and we began with the 49th chapter, which is another of the Great Servant of Jehovah passages, this great section, chapter 42, chapter 49, chapter 50, chapter 52 and 53, in which we have this so clear delineation of the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. We spoke primarily last time about the earlier part of the 49th chapter in which Messiah’s call and qualifications were set forth.

And then we talked just briefly about some of the section in the middle of the chapter, and I did not touch the latter part at all. Let me just say this, those of you who were here have the outline and you can study it for yourself. There is of course a great

picture of the return of the remnant of believers in the latter part of the chapter 49 of Isaiah and it's one of those many sections in the book in which the Prophet under the figure of a woman who receives back children. It's a beautiful picture of the return of Israel to the blessings that are hers by reason of the ancient promises.

Well, I am going to skip the latter part of the chapter 49 and move on to chapter 50 tonight because this is another of the Great Servant passages and we want to at least cover the section, which pictures our Lord's ministry so clearly. The subject for tonight is Israel's sin and the servant's steadfast salvation.

Chapter 50 is a vivid picture of the glory of God's omnipotent faithfulness. And it is also a vivid picture of the tragedy of unbelief. Israel is the object of one, the object of his omnipotent faithfulness. And Israel is the subject of the other, the tragedy of unbelief. Now, this is the third of the servant passages. In chapter 42, verses 1 through 7, we have the program of the ministry of the suffering servant of Jehovah. In the first eight verses of chapter 49, which we studied last week, we have the purpose of his ministry stressed.

Now here in chapter 50 verses 4 through 9 we are going to see that the preparation to which our Lord was subjected in his earthly life is stressed here. The passage naturally falls into three parts. You will notice the first three verses are Jehovah's words. And then beginning with verse 4, the servant speaks. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned. And finally in verse 10 the Lord or Jehovah again speaks: Who is among you that feareth the Lord that obeyeth the voice of his servant. So, we have a natural three-fold division in this of course is a preacher's delight. He doesn't have to push or tug the text here and there to get three points, just naturally three points. And the first is Jehovah's words to Zion's disobedient children. Now if you have the Authorized Version before you, I am going to read again tonight in Living Psalms and Proverbs chapter 50 verses 1 through 3. You look at your authorized version while I read the three verses in the Living Psalms and Proverbs with the major prophets paraphrased. The Lord asks:

“Did I sell you to my creditors? Is that why you aren't here? Is your mother gone away because I divorced her and sent her away? No, you sold yourselves for your sins. And your mother was taken in payment for your debts. Was I too weak to save you? Is that why the house is silent and empty? When I come home, that by the way are misrendering of the Hebrew text. When I came it should be. Have I no longer power to deliver? No, that is not the reason. For I can rebuke the sea and make it dry. I can turn rivers in to desserts, covered with dying fish. I am the one who sends the darkness out across the skies.”

Now remember the historical background of the latter part of Isaiah. It's important for us, if we were ever to understand this prophecy. The prophet is looking into the distant future, 150-years ahead of his time and he sees the nation in Babylonian captivity. They are in Babylonian captivity, he says over and over again because of their unbelief, their rejection of the message that God had given them.

Now addressing Israel in the light of this captivity, his language often goes beyond the Babylonian captivity because we see in these great pictures that come before his eyes, Israel is scattered to the four corners of the earth, not just in Babylon. So, against the background of the Babylonian captivity because of unbelief he writes words that ultimately we now know have reference to the dispersion of Israel to the four corners of the earth during the present age, for they have been dispersed to the four corners of the earth because of their disobedience.

And now these passages in which the Prophet goes beyond the local situation that is before him to speak of the worldwide dispersion and their ultimate return again to the land and enjoyment of the blessings of the promises of Abraham. Those passages are typical passages. Now, the Old Testament contains many, many typical passages. They are passages in which an author guided by the Holy Spirit, wrote things that he could not

out of his own understanding write, for he does not have divine understanding. But God led him to write that way. That's why we have prophecy. Prophecy itself is a supernatural thing.

Now, this is a typical passage. The captivity of that which is passed to us now, the Babylonian captivity, is a reflection of what was for them the future dispersion, both are passed to us, because Israel is now in the four corners of the earth. Go to Israel, you see Israelites. Go to Britain, you see Israelites. Go to Alaska, you see Israelites. Go to Australia, you see Israelites. Go to Buenos Aires, you see Israelites. Go to New York City, you see a third of them up there, in New York City. They are everywhere and they have been scattered over the four corners of the earth in divine judgment, because of their rejection of the Messiah. And so against the background of the Babylonian captivity to come in 150 years because of unbelief.

The Prophet's language stretches out in to the distant future because he knew by the spirit of God that when the Messiah shouldn't come, they should not believe, and their belief should find its climax in their rejection of him and their judgment should find its climax in their scattering not to Babylon, but to the four corners of the earth.

This then is a typical passage. And so we are going to have words that will apply to the first advent of the Messiah and then we will have words that could only refer ultimately to the second advent of the Messiah. Let's notice first of all capital A in our outline after Jehovah's words to Zion's disobedient children the condition of Zion. The Prophet now is writing primarily against the background of their captivity in Babylon. Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? Your banishment to Babylon typically to the four corners, typical of the banishment to the four corners of the earth in the future is not because I have divorced you. It's not because I have put you away. It's not because I have sold you to pay my debts. He

answers his question, Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

Now Zion, the nation is the mother, the individual Israelites are her children. What is the cause of Zion's condition? Well, they are sins, but specifically what is the cause? Now I think we can look at this generally, it is that they have sinned and separated themselves from God, it is specially the fact that they have been disobedient, they have been unbelieving, notice. He says verse 1 the last part, “Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.” This separation that has taken place, you now separated from the land and separated from God is because of your sin.

You know that is basically the character or the expression of sin. Sin is, I have been saying over and over again in our systematic theology classes and also in Isaiah when it has come to us here in the text, sin is basically unbelief, but it expresses itself in rebellion, which issues ultimately in a morality. But when a man does not believe the word of God and rebels against that God, he separates himself from God. That's why the penalty for sin is ultimately separation from God. All in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 speaking about the judgment that is to come at the second advent of Christ, speaks about those who are punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, from the presence of the Lord. So, when a man sins against God, he notices first of all that there is a separation between him and God.

You know that's true of Christians too; have you ever noticed that? So, you got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning, and so you said a few things that you shouldn't have said to your wife or to your husband. And you are a genuine Christian, how did you feel afterwards? In fellowship with God? No, you noticed immediately that there was a difference between you and God. It's just as if someone had drawn a shade between you and God, because sin separates. Sin separates even in a Christian's life. But in the unbeliever's life it shall separate ultimately forever. That's the basic character of sin.

Now especially he says in verse 2, Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? Why when I came was there no man to respond? When I called, there was none to answer? What does He mean when He says when I came? Well, some has said when I come in the prophets, I came to Israel in the prophets and I spoke to Israel but they didn't respond to my message. Well, I think that probably is included within it. But when the text says when I came, wherefore when I came was there no man. We are now looking on to the coming of God in the person of the servant of Jehovah. The servant has come and in spite of his limitless power they have not responded. When I came was there no man, when I called there was none to answer.

Now, is it because I could not have delivered you? Listen, is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem or have I no power to deliver? Listen to what I can do. Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness. Their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. Israel, I came, you did not respond. There was no one to respond. Was it because I did not have the power to deliver you? No, I have the omnipotent power of the everlasting God.

And then in language that was used to describe the wonderful work of God in delivering Israel out of the land of Egypt when he rebuked the waters and they opened so that Israel might go through the Red Sea into the Promised Land, he describes his power. I think it's rather striking that when Jesus came, he performed miracles that were miracles similar to the miracles that Jehovah did in the Old Testament. Do you remember the one in the eighth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, why don't you turn there with me?

Verse 22 through verse 25: Jesus stilling the waves. We've read the Markan account of this in the last hour. Let's read the Lukan account. Luke chapter 8 and verse 22:

“Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. But as they sailed Jesus fell asleep, and there came down a storm of wind on the lake and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.”

Isn't it striking that our Lord is able to sleep through the midst of a tremendous storm? Through the flashing of the lightning, the crashing of the thunder, a storm that was so great that these men who were familiar with the Galilean Sea, made their living on it were scared to death. Jesus can sleep through it. Master, they say: Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and they ceased, and there was a calm.

Many years ago when my children were little, I've little children now too, they are grand children. But when my children were little, I noticed this about my wife; I could sleep through anything. It didn't make a bit of difference what happen, I slept right through it. We used to live over on Caruth Boulevard right near the place where the train track came out north where the expressway is now. And every night at about 2 O' clock, that train would come by, was just about a block away and the whole house would shake. I could sleep right through it. I noticed this about my wife, however, we could sleep through sounds like that, she could sleep through that. But if one of the children down the hall in their bedrooms turned over in some way that was a little different, she would jump up in the bed and say, did you hear that? Of course I would say, no I didn't hear it, go back and sleep. but -- isn't it interesting how mothers are tuned to anything out of the ordinary with their children.

Now the storm may crash, the lightning may flash and Jesus sleeps on, but when the disciples come and say master, master, imagine you could hardly have heard their words with that terrible storm, immediately he is awake. That's the kind of God we have. He responds to our cries like this. We are going to see. He has a word for those are

weary too. Well, he rebuked the wind and the raging of the water and they seized and there was a calm, and he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! For he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

At this point, the author of the Gospel of Luke might well have said, and thus was fulfilled the words of the Prophet Isaiah who said, At my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the waters a wilderness, their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. Because that miracle was just as great as the miracles performed in the Old Testament. These were some of the ways in which the Messiah signed his names so to speak; I am Jesus the Messiah, the servant of Jehovah and all who had eyes to see could deserve.

Now, in the future, the same Lord who was able to calm the seas is going to blacken the skies. You remember that at the Second Advent, one of the signs that is to be performed is just this that the moon is to be turned into blood. Blackness shall cover the earth. That is the final sign to a disobedient world that Jesus is the Messiah.

Now then, the servant himself speaks in verse 4, this is II in our outline the servant's words to Zion's children. God's remedy for Israel's condition is the ministry of the servant of Jehovah and the servant now speaks and you will notice that first thing that the servant speaks about is his private instruction which he has received. This is one of those interesting little insights into the private life of our Lord. Listen to what he said. The Lord God has given me the tongue of a disciple, that I should know how speak a word in season to him that is weary. He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as a disciple. The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; deep insight into the prophet life of our Lord and into the school that Jesus attended.

When we think about the divine instruction, it was like a school and day-by-day our Lord went to school. He did not go to school as you and I go to school. He went to

school in the school that his father instructed him in. And it is, was, a daily school. I would think also that it was not exactly or not completely academic either. Included in this is the instruction that God gave him day-by-day as he looked at God's great illustrations about him.

You know, when we read the Bible, we look at the Bible as a book of divine revelation. But remember that this is volume two of God's revelation. Volume one is his revelation of himself and nature and there was no one who understood nature more than our Lord, Jesus Christ. Read his -- the things that he said. Read his teaching and see how often he appeal to the facts of nature. This was his father's world and the things that he learned from the Scriptures he saw illustrated in the life about him. A man who led me to the Lord was Donald Grey Barnhouse. He was the greatest illustrator of Biblical truth that I've ever known. Men went to Dr. Barnhouse and said, Dr. Barnhouse, how is it that you are able to find these illustrations of the word of God? He said, “I discovered a long time ago that the creation is the reflection of our great God and I observe what happens.”

And almost everything that happens in life is an illustration of some scriptural truth and our Lord was taught by the father in the Scriptures and then in his life he had illustrations from God's creation and from the life of men of these truths that he was taught through the word. Have you ever thought yourself of listening and looking and in your own life, discovering the lessons as our Lord did that illustrates the great principles of the word of God? This was his school, notice its motive. He hath given me the tongue of the learned, or the disciple that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

“Nothing,” Franz Delitzsch says, “indicates a tongue befitting the disciples of God, so much as the gift of administering consolation.” The Lord Jesus was able to speak a word in season to him that is weary. That has really been his ministry down through the years, hasn't it? Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He is able to speak a word in season to him that is weary. And the man who has

the true heart of our Lord Jesus is the man who has the ability to speak a word of consolation to him that is weary. That's a true expression of the ministry of our Lord. I don't think we ever really become disciples of our Lord in the fullest sense until we know what it is to be able to do just this? That's what he did.

Do you remember the experience of the woman that was a sinner? I love that story. I'm going to ask you to turn over to it in Luke chapter 7 verse 36 through verse 50. Now, this woman was a harlot, a prostitute. Listen to the story. Verse 36: One of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. I've wondered about Simon the Pharisee. Did he ask Jesus to come eat with him that he might honestly learn from him or did he ask him to come and order that he might catch him, that he might some chance word coming out of his mouth have something to accuse him about? The text doesn't clearly say.

It does however say that his heart was not right. And he went into the Pharisee's house and sat down to meat. And behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment. Now, Simon had not done that. And stood at his feet behind him weeping and began to wash his feet with tears and did wipe them with the hairs of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment. There are three things she did. She came in, she washed our Lord's feet with the tears that flowed down her face. She wiped them with the hairs of her head.

A woman's hair, the Bible says, is her glory. This woman, a prostitute perhaps had used her hair to attract men but now she wipes the feet of the Savior. She kissed his feet and she anointed him with ointment. She gave him water for his feet. She gave him a kiss. And she gave him oil. Those were three things that an Easterner did if he was polite. He greeted his friend with a kiss, he gave him water for his feet, and he gave him oil to anoint his head. Simon did none of these. Was it because he condescendingly received Jesus? Was it that he was really his enemy?

“Now, in the Pharisee which had bitten him saw it he speak within himself saying, this man, if he were a prophet (in the Greek text, it means if he were a prophet -- I don't think he is) would have known who and what manner of woman this is, that togeth him for she is a sinner? And Jesus answering said unto him Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, master say on.

There was a certain creditor which had two debtors and one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty and when they had nothing to pay he by grace forgave them both. The word used to translate freely or frankly forgave is the word that means to forgive freely by grace. Tell me therefore which of them will love him most. Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him Thou has rightly judged. And he turned to the woman and he said unto Simon: Simon seest Thou this woman? I entered into Thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet. But she hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss Simon. But this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil Simon thou didst not anoint. But this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto Thee Simon, her sins which are many are forgiven for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”

That's an amazing statement. Some have looked at this statement and have said, ah, forgiveness comes because of good works. “Wherefore, I say unto thee her sins which are many are forgiven for she loved much.” The way you get forgiveness is the love to do works. Now that's an amazing interpretation in the light of the fact that in verse 50 Jesus said that, Faith has saved thee. But you see what the text really means is this. Her sins which are many are forgiven and the proof of the forgiveness which she

has already received is the fact that love has issued from it. The love is not the ground of the forgiveness, it's the evidence of the forgiveness.

What does that mean about you and me? It means that the love that we have for Jesus Christ is the measure of our understanding of how much he has forgiven us. If I understand that he has forgiven me a little, I love him back a little. If I understand that he has forgiven me a great amount, I respond by loving him back greatly. My love is the evidence of my understanding of my forgiveness. It's not the evidence of forgiveness. Thank god for that. Every one of us is completely forgiven, everything is gone, its all under the blood. But my understanding of it. Ah, that's another matter.

My understanding may be like that and I love like that. That's why so many of the saints love so little. That's why the saints are not willing to accept any responsibility and the things of the Lord. That's why often the saints having been forgiven greatly, are five pence or 50 pence Christians so far as response is concerned. You know, if God could bring home to our hearts, or if we could have it come in to our hearts how much we have been forgiven, oh what a difference it would make in our response!

This harlot understood. And so he said unto her Thou sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves: Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman: Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace.

Rossetti, when he describes this incident says that, "When the woman that was a sinner came to Simon's house as she was walking up his steps," Rossetti painted this, "He painted the woman going into the house with her lover hanging on to her other hand and begging her to come back. But she preferred the company of Jesus for now she has a different lover, her Lord."

I think as our Lord tells this, if we were to set this in drama, at the conclusion we should have somebody play some heavenly music. It would not be the music of the orchestra of Simon the Pharisee; it wouldn't be Leonard Bernstein. To adequately represent it you would have to have some music that suddenly breaks out from heaven

for there is joy in the presence of God over one sinner that repented even the harlot. As a matter of fact, it was the harlot's repentance that brought joy in heaven. Simon brought no joy in heaven, the self-righteous Pharisee. So, when I read in the text, the Lord God hath given me the tongue of the disciple that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

I think of the life of our Lord and I remember how he went about with a word in season to him that was weary. He was God, we saw in our last study, but when you look at the man Jesus, you have an amazing picture of God don't you? God with a groom in his inner man for that's what he did at the grave of Lazarus. God with tears down his face for that's what Jesus did when he looked out over the city of Jerusalem. God with a little child in his lap for he said suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not. These are the pictures of God. Our God out by the roadside waiting for his son who has wasted his substance and routes living to return but he might raise after him and fall on his neck and kiss him repeatedly. That's the God that we have. The servant of Jehovah.

I'm so glad I have that kind of God. I'm so glad I have a God who in season can speak a word to him that is weary for there are times when I get weary and I need a God like this. Did you notice how he was taught? You don't learn these things overnight you know. You could come to listen to me preach forever and never learn some of them. The Lord God hath given the tongue of the learned, and then he says, He wakeneth morning by morning. Do you remember the Berean Christians what kind they were?

When Paul preached in Berea he said -- Luke said, these were more a noble than those in Thessalonica. Did you know that the Bereans were more noble, actually, socially than the Thessalonians? The Thessalonians were like Texans, but the Bereans were like South Carolinians. I am speaking a word in season to him that is weary. Seriously, the Bereans were more aristocratic people. Do you remember that Luke says about them, these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, and that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and they searched the Scriptures daily to see weather these things

were so? I've told you this before but many years ago, I used to say and expounding that you see that difference between the Thessalonians and the Bereans was this. The Thessalonians received the word, but the Bereans welcomed it. That's why they were more noble.

And then I read Paul's letter to the Thessalonians in the great text and it says, You welcomed the word. Why were the Bereans more noble? They were more noble because they searched the Scriptures. They did not just accept what Paul said. They went home and compared it with the Bible. That's what made them more noble. They both welcomed the word, God is much happier when the word is welcomed and the adherences of the messenger are tested against the Scriptures.

Now, there are some of you in this audience, you just love to hear me preach and frankly I've heard people say, I've been preaching for a long time in Dallas, 25 years, and I have actually heard people say, and this is almost blasphemous. If Dr. Johnson says it that's it. Now that person is not a Berean. You see, it's the searching of the Scriptures daily to see whether these things are so that makes a noble kind of Christian. Are you that kind of Christian, a noble Christian? If you listen to a man, and you only listen to that man regardless of how accurate he may be and how expert in exposition, your final authority is really that man. Happy you are if he's sound in the faith; but oh how unhappy if he is not sound.

Jesus was taught daily. Daily morning by morning, God opened his – wakened his ear to hear as the disciple. He studied the Scriptures. Last night at the Lord's table, I stood up at the conclusion after we had given thanks for the bread and wine and said a few words about John, the Baptist and why he was so great. Jesus called him the greatest among those born of women to his time. Tremendous thing, wasn't it? We live in the day in which people either call themselves the greatest or others call them great. We say, Calvin Hill, boy, isn't he great? And I mean he is great too. We bandied that word around quite a bit.

And our Lord said, John was the greatest. Why? Well, John had a view of himself that we need to have. He knew that everything he had was given by God and then he had a view of Jesus Christ. He knew that Jesus Christ was really the greatest. He that is from above is above all. And then he said, he must increase, I must decrease. That order is significant too. If he increases, I automatically decrease. But then I asked the question, how is it that John came to this wonderful opinion of himself and of God which caused Jesus to say of him that he was the greatest? And there is a little clue in John 3:29 says, the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him. That's why John was a person who gave himself to the study of the words of the bridegroom. John was a person who gave himself to the revelation of God, and because he gave himself to the revelation of God, he came to understand himself as well as the Messiah and in that he was great.

You want to be great, be like a Berean, search the Scriptures, come to see what you really are, find out also what Jesus Christ is, then let him increase while you decrease and God in heaven will say of you, she is great or he is great. That's why our Lord was great. The fifth verse says, The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. That's what we should expect.

Now we read of his public prosecution in verse 6, I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. All of these things were fulfilled in the New Testament. Will you turn with me to John chapter 18? We will read one of the texts in which he was smitten. You've read others I'm sure in which he gave his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair and how they spat upon him. John chapter 18 and verse 19 we read, the high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

The High Priest is more interested in his organization than he is in the truth. He asked Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrine. First of all, I want to know how many men are following you. Jesus answered him: I spake openly to the world. I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple whither the Jews always resort and in secret have I

said nothing. Why askest Thou me? Ask them which heard me what I've said unto them. Behold they know what I said. In other words, follow impartial procedure. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hands saying, answerest thou the high priest so? The truth is objectionable to those who desire a case at any cost.

And when this man reached over and slapped our Lord Jesus Christ, Alfred Edersheim said, "Humanity itself seems to reel and stagger under this blow." Here is a man who is interest not in truth but in his case against Jesus and remember this is the religious leader of the day, the high priest. Someone came up to me tonight when I was walking in with a stack of books under my arm and said that he was in a law court once and a lawyer said to him whenever you see a lawyer coming in with a lot of books in to the court room you know that he hasn't got a very good case. I guess, he hasn't prepared it well.

I heard a story about a young lawyer who was talking with an old lawyer about how to handle cases and he said, well son, I want you give you some advice. He said if the law is on your side, stress the law. If the facts or the evidence is on your side, stress the evidence. What do you do sir, when neither are on my side? Then attack the other lawyer. [Laughter] Well, that's really what Caiaphas does. He doesn't bother to discuss the facts. It's to smite our Lord. The truth is not the point; the case is the important thing.

So, Jesus said I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. And now his private convictions for the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. His trust is steadfast in God and God is going to vindicate him. Did you notice that expression I have set my face like a flint? When our Lord was nearing the end of his ministry, Luke tells us in the 9th chapter of his gospel that Jesus set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. It's just

precisely what is stated here and Sangster preached a memorable ceremony on that text and you know what its title was? “His destination is on his face.”

When the time came finally for Jesus to go up to Jerusalem, it was as if he were driven to the cross of Calvary. In fact, Mark says as they made their way up toward Jerusalem, Jesus with long strides began to step out in front of them and they hung back, amazed and afraid because they sensed that God was so permeating the affairs of the servant of Jehovah then that they were actually afraid in his presence.

“Listen, he is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.”

Jesus is talking about his case, before God. He knows that his case the Father will defend. The servant of Jehovah rests himself completely in Jehovah and men may spit upon him, men may smite him, men may pluck the hair off or out of his beard, but his trust is in Jehovah for God will vindicate him. You know these words are the very words that Paul uses in Romans chapter 8 to speak of us. Did you know that? Perhaps you recognize them. Take your Bibles and turn over there. I'm going to stop in a couple of minutes.

Paul gives us this great story of salvation in the first eight chapters and he reaches his climax in verse 29 and verse 30 when he says, for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. And that is the climax of the eight chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, it's the climax of

this great description of personal salvation it ends in glorification and then the 31st verse of the eighth chapter begins with: What shall we then say to these things?

You know I've read lot of commentaries on Romans. Do you know what happens when a commentator gets right here? He says nothing. He really says nothing. What can you say? You will discover that when you try to describe the salvation of God there comes a time when you cannot describe it. I'll never forget the first time I saw the ocean. I've lived in Alabama and then I went back to my father's home in South Carolina. And in Charleston I could not wait to get out to see the ocean and we went down to old Folly Beach, and I can still remember getting out of the car and walking over through the sand dunes and finally coming up over a little hill and then for the first time I looked at the ocean I was speechless. Everywhere I looked, water with nothing you could say.

I think that's the way you feel at Romans chapter 8. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? That's the moment for silence. Now notice the questions. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Listen to Isaiah as you look at that. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up. And listen, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Do you know this so great salvation that we have is a salvation which brings us to the place where if all of hell itself should come out and should speak about all of the sins that we have committed, we could say, Who is he that condemneth for it is Christ that died? It is Christ that has been raised, it is Christ at the right hand of God, it is Christ to makes intercession for us and it is the judge himself who says he is justified by faith in the Son of God.

I stand before God as the son himself who said, the Father shall justify me, and he justifies me, too, because of him. I'm so thankful that the servant of Jehovah was perfectly obedient and confident because in that obedience he rolled out my salvation. You notice the text says that the moth shall eat up those who do contend with God. Have you ever taken out a nice garment that you planned on wearing and then you took it out and, Oh my it had fit so well, look so nice, you had so many complements because of it and then you noticed a little tiny hole then you began to take a closer look and the moths had taken over and your garment was no more. That's the figure. The moth shall eat them up just like a garment.

The last two verses give us Jehovah's final words, exhortation to the faithful and admonition to the faithless. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

Samson, when he came out of prison, he was blind. Samson among the faithful, but his life -- there was very little faith in Samson's life until finally at the last with a great festival of the worshippers of Baal, the little boy led him out. You remember he said, Put my hands up on the columns of the temple in order that I may lean upon them, that's the word. Lean upon them. So you can see the little boy leading Samson whose hair is now long again and he puts him up against the critical pillars in the temple and soon that great man with a burst of prayer to God lives finally like a true judge and brings down the whole house upon the enemies of God. And Samson's name is inscribed in the Scripture because he believed -- nothing in his life much -- but he believed that's the word to stay upon Jehovah. That's what it means just to lean on him.

And there is the final word, Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and the sparks that ye have kindled. He gives a picture of a man who builds his own fire and walks in the light of his own fire and says that a man who walks in his light instead of God's light that man is

“Israel’s Sin and the Servant’s Steadfast Salvation” by S. Lewis Johnson
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going to end up on a bed of sorrow in what is your trust. Have you built a little light and do you walk in the light of your light, or do you walk in the light of God's word?

Let's close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for this wonderful chapter which so beautifully foretells the ministry of the servant of Jehovah and Oh God as Thou did teach the servant teach us through the Scriptures and through the experiences of life.

For his sake. Amen.