

**Dr. Allan MacRae: Isaiah 1-6: Lecture 14:
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The Millennium, the Spirit and Prayer

Assignment [0:0]

Before I continue with today's lesson, I should mention the assignment for next time. We have been noticing these alternations of rebuke and blessing, and now we have come to this long passage of divine activity (59:19b-63:11), which comes as the second part of the third alternation of this particular series. The last chapter of Isaiah could easily be divided the same way, in sections of rebuke and blessing, but in the 65th chapter you will find that individual verses or even halves of verses go under one of these categories. And so the assignment for next time is to look at Isaiah 65, and in Isaiah 65 make a list of the sections, or the way, it alternates between what might be considered rebuke, or description of sin, or statement of the punishment for sin, or what might be considered as blessing, description of the righteous, or God's blessing that he gives the righteous. Note these alternations as you have in other chapters we have studied. This chapter you will find is not made up of two long sections like other chapters; it will be made up of a lot of little short sections, perhaps even including half of a verse. This should not be a long assignment, but it will, I think, be helpful in preparation for our discussion of chapter 65. If you feel like looking at chapter 66, you will find that within two or three minutes you can see how it divides into large sections much like the many previous ones.

A Redeemer Comes to Zion [2:22]

Now we were speaking at the end of the hour about this section, "a redeemer comes to Zion," as I have given the title for it. I had thought of giving it a title of "a banner is raised and the redeemer comes to Zion." But I shortened it because the greater part of it is dealing with the redeemer's coming to Zion in spite of the fact that in chapter 59 we have that half of verse 19, which the King James

Version translates with such a beautiful statement, "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him." I've heard that verse preached on. It is a beautiful statement, but all the recent translations translate it differently. But here is a case where I believe the King James translation is better than any of the recent translations. Now, I don't say it's enough better that the recent translation is wrong. I mentioned last time, this is one of those cases, which you find in any language, including in English statements at times where you have several ambiguous words in one verse. And here in this verse you have a word that is used rather commonly for "enemy," but that could also be considered to be from a root word that means "to be narrow," and therefore can be translated as an adjective modifying the word "river" rather than "the enemy."

The Spirit of the Lord (4:01)

And also you have in this verse the word "spirit." Now the translation "Spirit of the Lord" seems a lot more reasonable than "breath of the Lord." I think "spirit" is more naturally used with "Lord." Now the word is also translated breath. Let me turn to the New American Standard and read Isaiah 59:19 to you exactly as it occurs there. It says, "For he will come like a rushing stream which the wind of the Lord drives." It's hard to get much further away than, "When the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him." It's hard to get much further away than that. But in that, the word "rushing," they say in the margin, literally means "narrow", but the Hebrew word is practically never used to mean "narrow;" it's used more often to mean "enemy", so that is one of the ambiguities in this passage.

He Causes to Flee [5:23]

Now this word that they translate "rise", which the King James translates "raise a banner", is a word that occurs nowhere else in the Scripture. And so we have to decide what the word means by analogy if we have no other evidence for

its meaning. And most recent interpreters take it from a verb that means “to flee”, and since it’s in the positive, they say “He causes to flee.” Well that might fit with the idea of the Spirit of the Lord causing the enemy to flee, quite alright; but to say that “His glory comes in like a rushing stream which the wind of the Lord drives”, the word to “cause to flee” would not naturally mean drive, although it could be thought of that way, but it’s not a natural interpretation.

Spirit [6:24]

Now, it’s not of great importance in the sense that nothing critical hangs on which of the translations we take, but another interesting thing in connection with this verse is that word "spirit." In the Hebrew, it can mean “spirit” or “breath”, and the corresponding Greek word “*pneuma*” is also translated occasionally “breath” or “wind”, and is also often translated “Spirit”, and so that makes an ambiguity in the New Testament.

Spirit/Wind [6:55]

I was very much puzzled years ago with the third chapter of John where we read in verse eight, “the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither in goeth. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit.” I was talking with Dr. James O. Buswell a noted theologian, and I said, “It seems to me that this must be an incorrect translation, because it simply isn’t true.” The wind blows where it chooses and you don’t know where it comes from and where it’s going to? Why in the earliest days people could tell what direction the wind came from and they could see the wind blowing the trees off in the distance, blowing the branches and so on. It was easy to get an idea where the wind came from and where it goes to. And certainly in our day with our weather stations they can predict what the winds are out in the state of Washington that are apt to reach us a week later, and we don’t know exactly when they will reach us, yes, but we certainly can get a pretty good

general idea where the wind comes from and where it goes to. So the statement simply is not true as it stands in the King James Version. And the very same word which in verse eight is translated “the wind bloweth where it chooses”, in the same verse is translated in the end, “so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.” Why don’t you say everyone was born of wind? Well if you’re going to translate the word “Spirit” in the last why not in the first? So I said to Dr. Buswell, who knows far, far more about the New Testament than I do, I said, “Why don’t you say ‘the Spirit blows where he chooses’, and you hear the sound of it, you see the result, the action of the Spirit, but you can’t tell where He comes from or where He goes, and so is everyone born of the Spirit.” And his rather contemptuous answer, after all who am I to speak about New Testament interpretation which he’s done far more work in than I have, led me to think that I had better keep out of the book of John as far as new ideas are concerned. So about fifteen years later, fifteen or twenty years after I had made that suggestion to Dr. Buswell, I happened to be looking at this Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, for which I wrote the article on creation, and I noticed in it the end of the article on Spirit which was signed by J. Oliver Buswell, and in this article on Spirit, he says “The same Hebrew and Greek words translated ‘Spirit’ can also mean ‘wind’ or ‘breath’, and in at least one passage, John 3:8, this interpretation is doubtful.”

In at least one passage, John 3:8, this interpretation is doubtful but the verse would much better be translated, “the Spirit breathes where he chooses”. So, I was glad to see the result of my skepticism worked over by a New Testament man and finding the expression here. I fear that none of the new translations have read the Buswell article and in part, as far as I know, they all still say “wind.” I think it’s a good example—the fact that when we find a scientific error in the Scripture, one of two things is probably true. It is probably either a mistranslation, or it deals with something that science has not yet fully understood. The translation may contradict a scientific theory of today that will be given up in the future, or may represent something that will be discovered by science later on. Now that’s not

directly related to our matter here, but I was very interested in making a connection with it in the New Testament.

Cause to Flee [11:29]

Now, back to Isaiah 59:19. This word that so many translations now render “cause to flee” is only so rendered here. In other places this word is rendered “drive.” And I don’t think that’s right for “cause to flee”. I don’t think it’s the proper rendering of the word, for this form of the word is not used ordinarily with the word “flee”. It is possible here that this word could be derived from the word “banner”. And being a banner is a very good guess, like the King James text, but I wouldn’t be dogmatic between the two. We can, however, be absolutely certain that Isaiah 59:19b-21 and 62:10-12 deal with the subject, “A Redeemer Comes to Zion”, whether it also has included in it the raising of the banner by the Spirit.

Millennial Blessings [12:39]

Then as we move on from that passage in Isaiah 59, or as we come back from the passage in Isaiah 62, we come to a section, or another two sections, which for want of better title, I have entitled “Millennial Blessings”. Now these are two fairly long passages, Isaiah 60:1-20 and Isaiah 61:4-62:9. And these two passages are not passages on which we can build the doctrine of a millennium. But these two long sections deal entirely with blessing. They are pictures of ways that God is going to bless His people in the future. Neither of them is a passage upon which we can ground our belief that there is to be a millennium upon this earth. I believe that that belief is securely grounded in Micah 4, Isaiah 2 and Isaiah 11. Those three passages teach, absolutely plainly, that there is to be a sizable period upon this very earth when there will be freedom from external danger.

Freedom from External Danger [13:53]

Now having, I believe, proved it from those passages and gained information as to when it is to come (and there is a certain amount of further detail from Revelation 20), having done so, we are justified in asking the question, “Do these two passages deal with that period?” And when we look at these two passages we find a few verses in them that fit very positively in with that idea. I don’t say they do prove it, but they very positively fit into it. One of them is chapter 60, verse 18, where we read, “violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders”. Now this has a theme of “freedom from external danger”—that was brought to this country, in one way, when the pilgrims came over in the early 1700’s and introduced a Christian civilization in this country. And when Charles Dickens came here, in about the 1845 or 50, somewhere around then, though he detested the United States on his first visit, and contemptuously refused the invitation of the president of the United States to have dinner in the White House, and wrote a book, which caused great anger in the United States in which he criticized so much about this country after he returned to England; yet this same Charles Dickens said that a woman could walk at any part of the United States at any time of day or night without any danger of molestation. Now, that’s a tremendous statement. I wouldn’t make that statement about any of our states today, and for some, I wouldn’t even make about the daytime.

But this safety was a result of the Christian background and the Christian teaching that the pilgrims brought to this country. But of course, you can’t say there was no violence when they were here because they had the Indians around who every now and then would bring their men and scalp many people, but places with a Christian environment have had a tremendous decrease in violence, but never for a period of much more than two or three centuries has this been fulfilled in any country of the world.

Now this verse 18 in chapter 60 just says, “thy land,” but those passages in Isaiah 11, for instance, speak of the whole earth being full of the knowledge of the

Lord as the water covers the sea. The universality of this condition would be hard to prove from this text in Isaiah 60. The two passages in Isaiah 11 and Micah 4 have a certain emphasis on the long continuum of the situation. Their great emphasis is on the prominence of Jerusalem during the period of which he speaks, on the freedom from invaders from other lands, the great honor that will be given to it, and the general blessing of the LORD. So, if you are already convinced of the millennium from other sources, you can get added information about it, perhaps, from Isaiah 60:18. I wouldn't want to be too dogmatic about that because there is no great time in the past on the universality or on the permanence of this peaceful condition.

But I want us to remember that as the prophet looks forward to the future, he often sees things rather telescoped together, in a sense. I often used the figure of the person looking at a range of hills. You see something on the near hill and then next to it may be something that is on the fourth range back, and the second and third ranges may look like they are part of the near one. Often it is hard to distinguish between ranges. And so the prophet may be here looking forward to various periods of the Lord's blessings in the future. Certainly it would be interesting to look at these passages in detail, but the semester comes to a close earlier than it used to, and we will have to forego that because we want to cover some very interesting things ahead.

The Millennium in Isa 2; Micah 4, Revelation 20 [18:38]

Did you have a question? (Student's question about the millennium). Well, I would say that Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 definitely show that there will be an earthly kingdom, an earthly period, you could debate, a period in which there will be complete freedom from external violence, and a period that will last for a long time. Now, this kind of earthly peace has given to our language the word "millennium." The word "millennium," also used in secular writing, refers to that kind of period, a period of complete peace and general well-being. The word itself,

of course, means “thousand years” and that is taken from the fact that six times in Revelation 20 the phrase “thousand years” is used of a time when Satan will be gone. The universality of this period is very clear in Isaiah 11 and 2 and Micah 4. So these may not be the clearest passages dealing with the millennium at all, and I would not be dogmatic at how large a part of them deal with the millennium, but every bit of these passages deal with the great blessings that God is going to give in the future. So I think "millennial blessings" is not erroneous for a title for it.

The Messiah’s Mission (Isa 61:1-3) [20:19]

And then we have the Messiah's mission in Isaiah 61:1-3. It’s only three verses, but it gives the distinctive nature of the Messiah. The first verse is very similar to previous statements about the servant of the Lord seen in Isaiah 11:2, 42:1, 49:8, and 54:5. You have those passages; those passages are very closely related to the beginning of 61:1-3. You remember these verses were read by our Lord as described in Luke 4; they were read by him in the synagogue in Nazareth. “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,” and in these other passages we find much reference to the Spirit of God resting upon him. “It is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek,” (Luke 4:18). You notice it says right there "to bring good tidings," not "to bring a time of happiness" but "to preach good tidings." But Jesus did not quote the entire passage from Isaiah 61:1-3. But we continue in Isaiah 61: "He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons of those who are bound, to proclaim the year of favor of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God." I mention here that this phrase, "the day of the vengeance of our God" was not read by Jesus. But we continue: "to comfort those all that mourn, and to proclaim liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. To appoint unto those that mourn and Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might

be glorified.” Our Lord read the first half of this passage as it is described there in Luke. And he closed the book and said, "today you have seen this that was spoken of fulfilled." He did not say today all captives are being given liberty. He didn't say today all of the broken hearted are being bound up. He did not say that. He said “the Lord has anointed me to preach to you,” and this was the beginning of his preaching ministry.

The First and Second Comings of Christ [23:24]

Now, the statement is sometimes made of the fact that the Lord suspended the reading of this passage from Isaiah 61 in the middle of verse 2. He quoted, "to proclaim the acceptable year of our Lord," but didn't go on to quote, "the day of vengeance." Some say this shows that the passage up to this point deals with the first coming of Christ and from there on it deals with His second coming. I think that is a guess that is without foundation. I would not say this is impossible, but I would say that it is a guess. For one thing, we don't know this is all that the Lord read. It is very often we have a verse that, is pointing to a passage, but perhaps the Lord read more of them. More important than that, the passage doesn't say that He is now bringing these things mentioned in Isaiah 61; rather, it says that he's preaching them, proclaiming them. And in His earthly ministry, He proclaimed God's favor, but he also proclaimed vengeance then. And he did much to comfort those that mourn in his first coming, which according to Isaiah, as some interpret it, should only apply to his second coming. I would say that the Isaiah 61 passage, as a whole, describes Jesus' preaching and pointed forward to what He was going to do through his atoning death. His first coming laid the foundation for all the blessings that are to happen, and though His second coming He will bring all these things to fruition where all who mourn will really be comforted and all that are imprisoned will be released. I think that it is a guess that he stopped right at that point in Luke 4:18, thereby dividing between the first and second coming. This really does not work out. There have been many clever guesses made, and some of

them work out. I think it's good to make guesses, but I think it's important to check them very carefully before we are dogmatic about them. Now at this point, you've seen how these passages Isaiah 59 and 63 parallel each other. We discussed all this in the last lecture, so I will not repeat that material here.

God's Violent Interposition to Cover Evil (26:09)

We start with A in the outline here on the left, "God's violent interposition to cover evil." I didn't use the word "violent" in the heading I gave you for "A" of the outline before, but I'm wondering if I shouldn't have because of the beginning of chapter 63. So I could have added to the heading: "The Lord comes with his garment spattered with blood". There is a picture which one modern writer says is beautiful but "ethically repulsive." Well, from the viewpoint of the general modernist attitude, it is repulsive, but from the viewpoint of Scripture's teaching, it represents a fact that God does occasionally interfere violently in the affairs of the world. But the main point to our discussion is that in Isaiah 59 and 63 we have two passages which are remarkably parallel, as we saw. We saw how wonderfully they fit together, clearly describing the same things, beginning and end. And they remind us that life is real and the struggle between good and evil is real. Satan is a real force even though he can go no further than God permits him to go. And God has promised that he will, with violence, put an end to the work of Satan and to the evil in the world.

The Servant/Messiah [27:40]

In previous lectures we spoke of the work of the Servant/Messiah, specifically looking at the end of chapter 52 and at chapter 53. And after that we have the redeemer comes to Zion (Isaiah 59:20 and 62:11) and then the millennial blessing spoken of in Isaiah 61 and repeated by our Lord in Luke 4. We have the acceptable year of the Lord, and the period of wonderful blessing of the

millennium. And we have the day of vengeance with the Lord's violent imposition both before and after the millennium.

Now these passages climax where the Messiah Himself speaks, and it has parallels where the Servant of the Lord speaks in Isaiah 49, and elsewhere, where there are many similarities as I will bring forth.

A Long Prayer [28:39]

I think from this point we can go on to our next section in the outline, Roman numeral 13: "A long prayer". This was the assignment you turned into me today. As I mentioned to you earlier, chapter 64, the whole thing, is undoubtedly a prayer. And this prayer begins in chapter 63; there is no real reason for a division of chapters at that particular point. How far back into chapter 63 does it go? Well, it is clearly a prayer when you start in 63 at verse 15, "Look down from heaven." Before verse 15 there is nothing to identify it as a prayer, but it would seem quite reasonable to be an introduction to a prayer. Verses 7-14 before say, "I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord and the praises of the Lord according to all the Lord has bestowed on us and the great goodness he has bestowed on them, according to his mercy. For he said, 'surely they are my people, children that will not lie,' though he was their savior." I want to turn at this hour to the problem with the part of that verse that states, "they are children that will not lie." Revelation says all liars will have their place in the lake of fire. But I don't imagine there's anyone who ever lived who did not, at some time or another, tell a lie. And this is certainly not why He became their Savior, because of the children that do not lie. Children ought not to lie. Children, perhaps after they have received regeneration, would not lie. Or at least after they had been completely sanctified, they would not lie.

But, He says in chapter 63:9, "In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them. In His love and in His pity He redeemed them and He bore them and carried them all the days of old, but they rebelled and

vexed His Holy Spirit. Therefore, He was turned to be their enemy and He fought against them.” And notice Isaiah doesn't say He fought against "us"; he says "them." He is looking back at earlier stages in their history. But then you read in Leviticus 26 that the Lord says that if Israel turns against the Lord and rebels and vexes Him, that He will make them subject to their enemies. They will have all kinds of misery and trouble. And then, if they remember the Lord, and turn to him in complete repentance, He will turn back to them and will deliver them. But here in Isaiah, after saying they rebel, it doesn't say then they remembered and turned to the Lord and God forgave them. But the people in Isaiah's day seem to remember the days of old, Moses and His people. And they ask "where is He that brought them out of the sea? Where is He that put His Holy Spirit within them?" referring to all these wonderful things when Moses was there. And notice there is not a suggestion of repentance by the people at that point, only questions. It looks as if, it sort of gives you the impression as if, God punished them for their rebellion, and then God said, "well, after all, I did all these wonderful things for them in the past so I'm going to deliver you." I don't say you have to draw that out of the text, but I do point out that repentance for restoration is not here as it is in Leviticus. So this passage from verses 7-14 certainly can properly be called, "A remembrance of God's past blessings," including his repeatedly giving the people deliverance when they had turned away from him as in the book of Judges.

The Holy Spirit and Leadership (33:15)

Now, some questions. Where is the one who put His Holy Spirit within Moses to lead the people? Why doesn't He put His Holy Spirit in somebody today to lead us the same way He did with Moses? Oh yes, the Holy Spirit certainly indwelt all the leaders of Israel; there's no question of that. And that's clearly seen in that the Holy Spirit directed the leaders of Israel and worked through Moses and through the prophets and inspired them and led them--there's no question of that. Now, of course, if nobody was saved in Old Testament times, then we could say

that the Holy Spirit did not enter into anybody in Old Testament times as He does now. And if He did not regenerate them, then they are all going to Hell. But if, as the book of Hebrews says, we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, and that they without us will not be made perfect - that will seem to imply rather clearly that the Holy Spirit has worked in the Old Testament as He did in the New, and as He works today. There's one method of salvation at all times, and the only method of salvation that the Bible mentions anywhere is that of the Holy Spirit regenerating people through faith. Old Testament saints were not saved through sacrifices. The sacrifices merely pointed ahead to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ. But here we are talking of the Holy Spirit's leading through people like Moses.

Well, this introduction then, is entirely biased; though it speaks of their rebellion, there is no statement for repentance for them in this. It's the statement that despite the fact that they rebelled, God stayed with them and led them as we find in verses 7-14.

What is the object of the Prayer? [35:21]

Now after the introduction, I'm going to look at dissections of what follows so to raise the question: What is the object of the prayer? What is it about? It is always good to look at this prayer and see if it assumes any particular situation. For example, you pray for God's mercy, but are you praying in a silly situation? Is there a great illness? Is there some tremendous danger? Is your country at war? Is there any indication in the prayer of the situation under which it is given? Here we have three rather clear indications. In chapter 63:18 we read that the people of God, "of Your Holiness," which in modern English would be "Your Holy People," have possessed Jerusalem for the little while our adversaries have trodden down your sanctuary. Now, this seems to be a time when Jerusalem itself came into the hands of the enemy. It would seem that you could guess that pretty strongly. It's much clearer when you get to chapter 64:10 and 11: "Your Holy Cities are a wilderness. Zion is a wilderness. Jerusalem, a desolation. Our Holy and our

beautiful house, where our father's praised you, is burned with fire and all our pleasant things are laid waste." Now that's not simply the land being overrun as it was by Sennacherib, as it was in the days of Hezekiah. This is a time when Jerusalem itself had been laid waste. And so we must at this point either go with the higher critic and say this part of Isaiah is not by Isaiah and that we are looking at a much later period, or we must say God caused Isaiah prophetically to describe a situation. And I believe that God often did show his prophets the future. And in view of the New Testament, I would say that all so-called three parts of Isaiah are from the same Isaiah, but are, as Paul says, what Isaiah said would take place later, and that here in 63:15 Isaiah prophetically looked forward to the future and gives us a prayer that will express the general sentiment that will prevail by some group of people at a time in the future, and which might represent the ideas and thoughts of someone in their own days as they look forward to the coming exile and desolation.

As we think of that, we must realize that among the people of that day you might say that there would be three categories of them. There were those who scoffed and said Isaiah's an old fool for these ideas. They would scoff, "Our land has stood up for centuries and will continue, we will never turn to exile as the Northern Kingdom did in their lifetime." Then there were a smaller group that can be divided into two parts. Well, let's say three divisions, and that would be those who said, "Yes Isaiah is right, this destruction is soon to come." Some of them might say, "We can see the international situation; we can see the tremendous force of the period. That is serious, and other powers have taken the Northern Kingdom and the Kingdom of Aram and headed towards Damascus. And it is only reasonable to believe what Isaiah said is correct and we must expect such a thing, but without much true repentance as he believes." But we can also say, of course, true followers of God who put Isaiah as a true prophet and said, "this is right; this is what is coming," and they intended to give way to despair, so Isaiah gives them God's message of comfort.

Well, now with this prayer then, there could be any of these truths as we look forward to the future. You notice here now how the prayer eventually ends in chapter 64, verse twelve, "Will you refrain yourself for these things, Oh Lord. Will you hold your peace and afflict this very soul?" Well, after the introduction and ending we've discussed, look back at verse fifteen. He said, "look down from Heaven; behold from the habitation of your holiness." This should be translated "from your Holy habitation" have compassion and mercy towards me, followed by a question. "Are they (compassion and mercy) restrained?" But is this a question or a statement? There is no question mark in the Hebrew. Hebrew has no punctuations like English, but very often a question begins with the Hebrew syllable "*hah*" that we can put at the end, but very often they put in the beginning of a clause, and "*hah*" can mean what follows question. But there is no "*hah*" here. So it's a possible interpretation to say as a question, "are they restrained?" But the better translation might be the simple statement that compassion and mercy are restrained. You can put the question in your voice, but there is no actual punctuation in the writing, so probably it's better to say, "they are restrained." And then go ahead with the prayer. The prayer ends in 64:12 with, "will you refrain yourself for these?" The King James says "refrain" in 64:12 and "restrain" in 63:15, but they both are the same Hebrew word and the same form where both the prayer begins and ends. The Hebrew word is in the Hithpael form. God is holding back; he is not giving us blessings in this situation. Isaiah starts the introduction asking will God keep holding back when our beautiful city has been burnt, all the temple has been burnt, the cities are a wilderness, there is all this desolation to this land God has blessed. Is He now going to hold back in that situation?

Understanding the Prayer [42:35]

This, then, is the situation and it is very important in understanding the prayer. Now, the next natural approach to the interpretation of the prayer would

be to ask what specific requests it contains. So it would be quit a reasonable thing to go through these verses and take all the statements that sound like requests and take a look at them. And we find there are not a great many. There are more infractions mentioned and implications than requests. Take this one: "Will you restrain?" That's not specifically a request, but the meaning of it is as we tend to understand it, "you let these things go on." But there are specific statements why God looked down from Heaven. In verse fifteen of chapter 63 and chapter sixty four verse one we read: "Oh that you would rend the Heavens," and chapter 64 verse nine, "Do not be exceedingly angry with us. Lord, do not remember iniquity anymore. Look how we are bowing before You and showing our great repentance." That's not what it says; it says: "behold see, we beseech Thee, we are all Thy people." So the reasons advanced for the prayer are two: first, there are past blessings. But you notice chapter 63, verses seven to fourteen, especially verses eleven and twelve, telling of God blessing the people and having Moses leading them and having them brought into the promised land. Then we have the second basis for blessing: Israel's claimed relationship. Chapter sixty three verses sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen read: "Thou art our Father, oh Lord, our Father; your name is everlasting. Oh Lord, why have you made us turn from your ways and hardened our hearts from your fear? Return for your servants' sake." And in chapter 64, verses 8-9, says, "Now, oh Lord, you are our Father, we are the clay and you are the potter." And in the end of verse 9, "See, we are your people." And, perhaps the climax of it all is the last verse in 63, "We are yours, you never had more rule over them. They were not called by your name." And now it's rather interesting, right at that point, you'll notice they say, "Give us your blessing. We're your people. We're the ones you blessed in the past. You are our Father. You never bore rule over those other people. They were not called by your name." Then it's interesting to look at chapter 65, verse 1, which says, "I am sought of those who did not ask for me. I am found by those who did not seek me. I said 'Behold me! Behold me!' to a nation that was not called by my name." They say,

“These others were never called by your name.” He says, “I say ‘Behold me!’ to a nation that was not called by my name.” And you’ll find commentaries that say, even sound, evangelical commentaries, that say Paul in Romans 10:20 twisted this, in this quotation, and got something out of it that wasn’t in it at all. I don’t believe so; I believe Paul was an inspired interpreter of scripture. And when he interpreted, he may not take the whole meaning, he may draw something that, in fact, was there, and not put the stress on something that's not there too; but whatever, I think Paul very definitely quotes 65:1. But, we’re not ready, yet, to look at 65; we are just looking at 64.

Is There Evidence of True Repentance? [46:57]

And in the outline, letter D: “Is there evidence of true repentance?” Daniel, the prophet Daniel, was one of the godliest men in all of Israel’s history, and he understood by books (Jeremiah 29) that seventy years was past, and the time had come when the nation would be delivered from the Babylonian exile. He didn’t say, “Oh, God, you’ve promised it and now bring it to us.” He is one of the godliest people in all Israel’s history, yet he said a great prayer of contrition and repentance for the sins of his people in Daniel 9. And evidently, the Lord didn’t think that Daniel was representing all the people, because Daniel says, “The Seventy years are finished, we have been wicked; now we are repenting.” The angel came to him and said, “Not only are seventy years finished, but seventy weeks are determined upon your people.” So there is a long time ahead, “because, you, Daniel, do not represent all the people by any means.” Well, we have to stop there and continue later, next week.

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