

Allan MacRae, Isaiah 40-56, Lecture 10

This is lecture 10 delivered by Dr. Allan MacRae on Isaiah 40-56.

Now we're speaking today about the "divine heart" of the Old Testament. I think that is a fair title to give to the section that includes Isaiah 53. As we noticed last time, it should start 3 verses earlier. But the Old Testament has many wonderful predictions about the great coming period of universal justice on earth, a period when the great king will put down all that is evil. It looks forward to this glorious time; there are many passages like that. But there are a few passages that show the humiliation of the king, and that of course, is the means which produces all the glory that comes from him, both in the period while we're waiting for his return and in the period after. It is his destroying the power of Satan at that time. That is a great achievement, which is represented by the sacrifices of the Old Testament and the ceremonies that were carried on constantly in order to remind the Israelites of the certain truths that God wanted them to know, many of which they'd only gradually come to grasp. But the fullest, clearest expression of what is meant by it all is contained in this section.

So I call this "The Divine Heart of the Old Testament." Now, your heart is what supplies the blood that keeps your body going. You don't see the heart. As long as you're in good health, you are hardly conscious of it. You think of your eyes and your ears and your head. Perhaps you think of the strength of your arms and your legs. And of course the Scripture teaches a great many things that are done through our Lord Jesus Christ that results to us now and in the future. But it all proceeds from the heart. While there are various passages that touch upon the heart in the Old Testament--and there are of course, the sacrifices and various ceremonies to suggest ideas about it to the mind--the clearest expression that we have of it anywhere is in this section.

So I think this is a very, very important section. It is a section that has been loved by Christians all through the centuries. Unfortunately, the archbishop's horse stumbled while he was putting in his marks for the chapter divisions, and so the first three verses of

this section got left out. Thousands of Christians have memorized chapter 53. But I don't imagine there's one in a hundred of them, perhaps not one in a thousand, who has stopped to realize that the section is incomplete without the previous three verses.

In fact, even commentators, that are scholars who should know that the chapter divisions are not original, even many of them start the discussion of chapter 53 as if chapter 52 didn't even exist, and that leads them into at least a very foolish approach of the first verse of chapter 53. But it is a section that includes the previous three verses, and that contains the clearest statement of what is really the heart of the Old Testament. It's the driving force of what our Lord accomplishes, both in this age and in the next. We think of Revelation 4 where we have God praised for his wonderful act of creation. But then we have the question of who can explain the Book of Life? Who can open the seals and understand what life means and what's going to follow? Who is worthy to do it? Then chapter 5 announces, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

This is the foundation of all of our Christian life and testament. In the Koran you will have these wonderful statements of the glory of God and his majesty and his divine power. There are some parts of the Koran that absolutely thrill me to read as they tell about God and his greatness and his goodness and man's smallness in comparison with God. But the Koran leaves out the heart of it all: not only leaves it out, but explicitly denies the death of Christ and the atonement. Millions of Mohammadans go through their ceremonies at great length and are absolutely devoted to the teachings of the Koran. And I'm sure that many of them receive a great thrill from those wonderful passages about the glory of God that the Koran contains. The Koran states that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, that he was the greatest prophet up until that time, that he lived a sinless life. It has tremendous statements about Christ. But then it says that when it came for his crucifixion, an angel picked him away and took him away and they put somebody else in his place so that he was not crucified. And, of course, consequently he could not be raised from the dead. So the Koran has much that is good in it and that has had a tremendous influence throughout the world, but it is ruined by the loss of the heart of God's message, the thing that gives people the power to carry out what that God requires.

Before Jesus lived and people saw actually what happened, it was very hard to explain chapter 53. Though thousands of Christians have memorized the 53rd chapter, there is much in it that I am sure was not understood at all before the coming of Christ and there is much in it which very few understand today. When you give a picture of future things that contain a background and elements that are not fully explained in advance, there are bound to be statements in it that are very difficult to understand, very difficult to interpret. Any expression of any length in any language contains statements that are ambiguous and, perhaps, none is worse in this regard than the English language.

In most languages you have a different ending on words and you know whether something is a verb or a noun. In English you don't, and in recent decades we have adopted the habit of taking almost any noun and using it as a verb. Usually, in context we know what you mean, but without a context--without an understood situation--it is very, very easy to misunderstand at least one of any five statements that any of you is apt to make. Words in any language will be ambiguous; they will have more than one possible meaning. When you put words together to make sentences, a language will have certain aspects of grammar that has ways of making the meaning clear. In Latin you always know whether a word is a subject or an object. English used to have endings that would tell you if a word was a subject or an object, but we've sloughed them off and we've lost them, and in a way that makes English much easier to speak. But in the course of it, in English we have developed a custom which I don't believe is in most languages, and that is the custom of having an object always follow the verb. Now, the King James doesn't always do that, but it sounds strange to us when you say, "me has he killed," or something like that. You don't say that; you almost always put the object after the verb, and that is a peculiar development in English, and in this way English has developed differently from any language in the world that I've ever had contact with, although I understand there has been a very similar development in Chinese. If so, then the position of a word in the sentence carries meaning.

Now, it doesn't in German, it doesn't in Latin; it doesn't in Hebrew: you can arrange the words in almost any order you want. In Latin and in Greek, as in many

languages the object has a different form than the subject. It doesn't in Hebrew, so in Hebrew often you're left uncertain as to what is the object and what is the subject. When you take that ambiguity that is in the Hebrew language, it keeps you from having the precise interpretation that you have in Greek and yet Hebrew makes an ideal form for giving rather vague impressions of great truths that will be clarified as you go on and you compare Scripture with Scripture. Then many impressions will be explained when you get to the New Testament. So, Hebrew is a fine means of doing what God desired to do: to give a glimpse of truth, to give us an understanding of certain aspects of it.

I believe we understand the language of the New Testament better and that we understand the whole meaning of Christian truth better as we see how these ideas were gradually presented. Then, of course, the New Testament gives us a few glimpses of future glory, but it is mainly devoted to the outworking of the death of Christ in our lives, which is the most important thing for us in this present stage of history. There are many, many matters of great interest for the Christian that the New Testament throws very little light on. Interestingly, the Old Testament throws light on a far larger number of subjects than the New Testament does even though many of them are not quite as directly vital to our Christian life as the New Testament.

At any rate, you have a very definite problem in interpreting Isaiah 53, and you will find in comparing translations that sometimes the translations differ much. Even look at the NIV and look at the footnotes and you will find some of the suggested translations in the footnotes differ so much from what's in the text that you kind of wonder how there can be such a great difference in interpretation.

Now, in English, you have to interpret most sentences in the light of context, and that is true in Hebrew as in all languages. But when you compare the context, and when you see the development of thought, then you'll get an understanding of this chapter that is far beyond anything you would get just from a cursory reading of it.

Now, I've studied the chapter a great deal, and it seems to me that when you get beneath the surface and you see what is really there, the divisions of the section rather stand out, but they're not obvious initially. So rather than dictate them to you and have

you write them down, I have given you a copy of what I think are the divisions of the chapters what is contained in each division, what it's about. In some cases that is not obvious at first sight but I believe that as you study this you will see what it means and that you will understand the individual verse better because you will see how it fits into the context.

In this wonderful section of Isaiah that began in chapter 40, we have seen how God comforts his early people suffering as a result of sin. We saw how there are few passages of rebuke but great emphasis of God's deliverance and now God is going to bring light to the Gentiles. He's going to establish justice throughout the world. But then we find that the servant who is going to do this is also characterized by a considerable amount of humiliation and suffering. We find glimpses of it in chapter 49 but quite clearly brought out in chapter 51. And how these two fit together is not shown until you get to this section. So the first part of this section I've called "The Summary of the Accomplishments of the Servant," and you take 52:13 to 15a where there should be a definite break.

There is a definite change of thought at that point. There you have the accomplishments of the servant: his exultation, his humiliation, and the results that are accomplished by it summarized introducing the chapter. We often give a talk and gradually lead up to something and then we give a summary at the end. In other cases we give a summary at the beginning, which makes it easier for people to follow as we go through our talk. In this case the clear summary is placed at the beginning, and it is just unfortunate that the archbishop made such a foolish chapter division here because people do not as a rule realize the summary of chapter 53 begins here with chapter 52, verse 13.

So we noticed that verse 13 says, "See my servant will act wisely." I put down verse 13 "act wisely—prosper," and as I mentioned last time, the person looking at the verse who knows nothing of Hebrew says, "What a crazy thing: some translate it 'he'll act wisely,' and some translate it 'he'll prosper.'" They are quite different, and we would never interchange them in an ordinary sentence in English. But one of the most important things we need to know in translating from any language, whether it is Hebrew or

German or anything else, is that words do not exactly correspond between two languages. That's one thing that when I went to Germany and studied there for two and a half years I came more and more to realize that German is probably most closely related to English as any language there is, but you take a sentence in German and you translate it word for word into English, as a rule you do not give the idea intended, because the words don't exactly correspond.

A German word that is very similar to a particular English word will have certain things in common with that word but will omit certain ideas that are in the English word. The English word will have certain things in common with the German word, and certain things it will omit. It's for that reason that I think that a dictionary of any language is apt to be a stumbling block. It may be of great help when you're getting established in a language. When I first lived in Germany, I carried a little German-English dictionary in my pocket, and I looked up words and it was a great help for maybe a month. After that I completely discarded it because it had so often been a hindrance in really getting what the German words mean. I remember one of my first days there I went into a restaurant in a great hurry. What happened is I went in and quickly got a lunch and when I finished I wanted to pay and get out. But at that time in Germany--I don't know how it is now--but it was considered very rude to ask anybody to pay or to come with the bill; you were supposed to ask for your bill, and I didn't know how to ask for it. So there I sat I was in a hurry, I wanted to ask the waiter for the bill and I didn't know how to do it. I found out later that the proper way to do it in Germany at the time was just to say, "Pay please." It would sound strange in English, but that's just the regular way: "Pay please." You say that, and the waiter would come and give you the bill.

I remember one of the American students when we had a meeting gathered with just a little frivolity. One of them gave an imaginary of story how he went into a restaurant. He had his dinner, and he got to reading something, and he sat there and he sat there according to the story all night long; and at 10 the next morning he looked up and there was the waiter still standing, his eyes bleary-eyed from lack of sleep but still waiting for him to ask for his bill. I'm sure they wouldn't have gone quite that far. But

they have little expressions that literally translated you can make a pretty good guess of what they mean, but they are often very different from our manner saying them in English.

So this word here in Hebrew translated “succeed” means "to efficiently proceed to accomplish something that you set out to do." Now there's no one English word that will do that. If you say "succeed" in English or "prosper," perhaps it means "succeed." “Succeed” is a little better than "prosper" because you can prosper entirely by luck or chance: through anything you can prosper. You "succeeded" is still a bit that way, or a man can succeed when it's due to other people's help, but still "succeed" is a little better choice for the Hebrew word. "Act wisely" does not tell whether your wise actions will bring results or not, so this means "to act in such a way as to accomplish the result desired." I know of no one English word that will give this meaning, and so some translators will say "act wisely" and some will say "prosper." That's why I recommend just as soon as possible that a student of Hebrew get to the point where he uses a good concordance, which is more valuable in my opinion than any dictionary. A dictionary is useful for a word that occurs very rarely, maybe once or twice, or maybe up to ten times the dictionary is a great value for telling you what somebody thinks the word means. But if the word occurs more than ten times look in Young's Concordance to see the range of Hebrew or Greek words translated by a single English word.

So this section begins with telling you that what the servant came for he is going to accomplish, and that he is going to accomplish it not because he is lucky, not because things just happen to fall a certain way, but because he is going to do what is necessary to produce the result. Our Lord Jesus Christ overcame the power of Satan. He won his great victory, and the section (52:13) starts with that expression, "See my servant will act in such a way as to accomplish the result for which he came." "Prosper," or "act wisely" comes as near as we can come in a translation of this expression though neither hits it exactly. But here we have a declaration of his success; he's going to do it, and the whole verse shows is his exaltation.

We start with success, and what a tremendous statement the next one is. “He will

be raised and lifted up and highly exalted,” three words in a row that mean almost the identical thing. This is a way of emphasis to show that this, which is going to be described in what follows, is the very center of the accomplishment of the Servant of the Lord. This is what Israel was called for. This is why God has blessed Israel, and protected Israel, and chastised Israel, in order that through Israel this may be done. Of course, we know the servant is the one who represents Israel, who is an Israelite, who comes from Israel; but through this one, the true servant of the Lord, through him there is this tremendous exaltation. “He’ll be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.” You might spend a lot of time trying to get an exact difference between these three various words, but I think it would be a waste of time. In this case it is simply mounting up statements to show the tremendous effectiveness, the tremendous exaltation of him who is now sitting at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. He accomplished what we needed: the greatest accomplishment in all history, the defeat of Satan and the paying for our sins.

In Isaiah’s time, people must have been very much puzzled when they found that this tremendous statement of his exaltation is immediately followed by a statement of his humiliation. The King James Version says “just as...” I forget exactly how it starts there, but it says in the NIV, “Just as there were many appalled at him.” It says “many were astonished,” and that’s old English: “astonied.” Nobody today ever says “astonied” and very few people today have any idea of what “astonied” means, but “astonied” sounds as if it was “astonished,” and you will find translations that render it as “astonished,” but that is absolutely wrong. It does not mean “astonished.” “Appalled” is a pretty good translation. “They were shocked, they were astounded” is a very good expression. They were absolutely astounded to see what happened to him and that certainly is what happened to the disciples. Though Jesus had explained to them on several occasions that he must suffer, be crucified and rise from the dead, they just couldn’t understand it. They couldn’t imagine what had to happen. They were absolutely astounded. They ran off in terror for fear of their lives when he was taken. But then they couldn’t understand how such a wonderful man, such a great teacher, could be taken in this way, one whom they really

believed was the Lord of glory, the promised Messiah. How could this happen? They were "astounded" and "appalled."

I think "astounded," perhaps, is best in getting to the exact sense of the word. It is a fairly common word, not used a great deal, but used enough times that there's absolutely no question what it means. We can tell from context. It never means you're simply surprised. It means you are surprised with something that is bad, something that is terrible: you are "astounded." "And so as many were astounded at him" is a good translation, and in the Hebrew that expression starts with the word "ken" [pronounced "kain"] and the next line, the next part of the verse has a "ken" also, and then the third line of it--which is the first line of the next chapter--also has the "ken." This word "ken" means "in this way" and it can mean "in this way" something happens and something else is like it. It shows a comparison. We say "like father, like son." Well now, that's not the way we talk today, but that's the proverbial expression "like father, like son," which is similar to this Hebrew of "ken" usage: "as this or like this," "so it is like this," and the word "so then," "in similar manner," "in like manner." "So, in like manner" you might say to the fact that many were astounded at him.

The NIV, like quite a number of modern translations has a footnote that Hebrew has "you," but they put "him" in the text because translators simply have not gotten the sense of the whole here. The fact that there's a comparison between the "you," which is "you all" through the chapter refers to Israel. Many people saw Israel the nation that God blessed, this nation, God's people, taken off into exile, scattered among the Babylonians. They didn't seem like a nation anymore. People were simply astounded at what happened to Israel. Similarly, they were going to be astounded at him, the servant. Just as Israel did not seem to be a nation anymore, so he will be so treated like he wasn't even a person, as if he's not a human being, as he goes through the sufferings of the scourging, the torture, and the crucifixion.

"So his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man," or "away from that of any man." The Hebrew word "from" can mean "more than," or can mean "away from" and sometimes it conveys the idea of "by." A preposition is the hardest thing to translate

from any language to another because every preposition in any language has a lot of possibilities. Our English word “by” has got a lot of different meanings. There’s a house “by” the side of the road and we have got to finish this course “by” Christmas. These uses of “by” have utterly different in meanings. So prepositions cover a wide range of meanings, and there’s more difference between prepositions than anything else in translations between the languages that I’m familiar with.

So the servant hardly seemed human. His appearance was so disfigured and his form so marred away from human likeness. Just as they were appalled at Israel, so they will be appalled at him. So there is a hint of the crucifixion there, a very strong hint. People in Isaiah’s day puzzled over what this meant; they knew only in general what it meant but they knew much more than we gather from translations that make it sound that people were “astonished,” which it doesn’t mean at all.

So it ends with the clause, “So shall he sprinkle many nations,” but the translators of the Septuagint just couldn’t understand what that meant. How would he sprinkle nations? How on earth could he do that? So they made a guess, and we have it in the footnotes of the NIV. They put in the text what the Hebrew said, but the Septuagint says, “So will many nations marvel at that.” So just as many nations would be surprised at you, so they would marvel at him.” Well, it doesn’t mean “surprise” and this doesn’t mean “marvel.” “Sprinkle,” as we mentioned last time, is a word that occurs about 20 times in the Old Testament, and the RSV translates it “sprinkle” in all but two of those, and in one of them it translates it “spatter.” And in this case it has a footnote and says “Hebrew obscure; Hebrew not clear.” Of course, those unbelievers who translated the Revised Standard Version might render something in the New Testament to give you the exact meaning that was in the original because it’s clear in the Greek, and because it’s clear in Christian theology and in Christian history what the general meaning was that the apostles had when they wrote these books in Greek. These translators of the RSV may have thought, “What fools those early Christians were to think that somebody could be both man and God at the same time,” but they had no doubt that they thought it. So they may give you an excellent translation of something in the New Testament, but you tell

them that Isaiah--700 years before--knew what Jesus Christ was going to do, then they say, "Do you think I'm crazy to believe that?" They don't think such a thing is possible, and so when they come to this: "So shall he sprinkle many nations," they say its utter foolishness. You can't sprinkle a nation. You could sprinkle something on a nation they say, but you can't sprinkle a nation. Well, the other cases where "sprinkle" is used, it does speak of the thing you sprinkle. You sprinkle water; you sprinkle oil; you sprinkle blood, and so on. But in English we can use the word "sprinkle" for "sprinkle water on the lawn" or we can say you "sprinkle the lawn." The meaning of the word is clear—we pointed that out last time. But the RSV says, "So shall he startle many nations" because they say when you sprinkle water you cause the water to jump. And so if you sprinkle the nation, it means you make the nation jump, so we'll translate this "startle" which fits with the idea of being amazed. Well, Peter understood it correctly. We looked at that last time how in first Peter 1: 1-2 Peter says--he's writing to many nations--and he says, "You have been sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ." So Peter understood it this way and we should be able to understand that way too.

As far as we know, crucifixion was unknown until many centuries after Isaiah. The Romans used it quite a bit. Some have said they got it from the Persians. I don't know if there's any evidence of that. I don't believe anybody suggests that crucifixion was known as early as Isaiah or for 500 years later, and yet you take the 22nd Psalm, which gives a most perfect picture of a man being crucified, but with crucifixion absolutely unknown, it shows a divine spirit directing David to write Psalm 22 and giving a description of something that was unknown to him.

Like Israel suffered in life, in this same matter the servant will suffer, and in this way something will be accomplished. The last phrase showed the result of it. So through his humiliation he's going to sprinkle many nations. People should have been able to think, "Now that word 'sprinkle' is used in the Old Testament three times out of four in connection with the sacrifices in the temple. It shows something connected with sacrifice, and he's going to fulfill the sacrifices." But it isn't explained so clearly that you could get it just from this alone. So, "In this way he is going to sprinkle many nations."

What a tremendous statement.

Well then, we start the second part of this, which I call: "The Distant Outreach of the Servant's Accomplishments," and that ought to be quite obvious from the next line. Now the NIV put in an "and"; "And kings will shut their mouths at him." There's no harm in the "and," but the "and" makes it look as if the next line and the line before are part of the same sentence which they're not. There's no "and" here in the Hebrew. Hebrew add "and" in dozens of places where we would never use it in English. About half of them the NIV leaves out. But here they put in the "and" that isn't in the original. It makes for a nicer, flowing sentence if you consider this one word as continuous but there's an important break: "So he will sprinkle many nations"--period.

But you see the translators of the RSV will take it, "So he will startle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths at him." And see it fits with their being astonished; they're so surprised they shut their mouths. Well now, if you were to suddenly hear a noise in here, you'd all be surprised, but how many of you would shut your mouth? You'd open your mouth. When you're surprised, you open your mouth; you don't shut your mouth. It doesn't fit at all. You shut your mouth because you haven't any answer. There's something you can't understand; there's no answer you can give. You say, "Yes you're right; I never would have thought of it myself, but that's the fact."

So we introduce kings right here. His exaltation; it's not going to be just a few Galilean peasants that are going to be affected by it. It's not going to be just the people in that little country of Judea way off there, as the Romans thought, out in the outskirts of civilization. It's not going to be just something in the corner of the world. Kings are going to be affected by it, and kings are going to be unable to give an answer. It doesn't say all kings will, but it does say that the results of what he does is going to affect kings, not merely one nation, not merely one area, but kings. Many important people are going to say, "Yes, that's right. Here is the answer to the problem of life, here is what solves our situations; here's what does for us what the sacrifices illustrated to the people of the Old Testament. We can get no answer except in humble submission to praise God for what he's done."

"Kings will shut their mouths at him," or "because of him," "for what they were not told they will see, and what they have not heard they will understand." Now those two next lines ought to make it perfectly clear that this is what is meant. You don't open your mouth and be surprised and amazed because there's something you didn't understand but you shut your mouth and you say, "Yes, that's right; that's right." My thoughts before that were that we could solve the problems of life with our great Roman army putting down the barbarians, or that we could solve them by the philosophy of Socrates, Plato and the great Athenian leaders, but these are not the answer to the problem of life. The answer comes from an area we never would have dreamed of it coming from--far off Judea, from a man who seemed like a Galilean peasant, who comes to answer the problems of life. What they were not told they will see, and what they hadn't heard they will understand.

"Who has believed what we have heard and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed." The Commentaries say, "Who has believed our message?" Well this must be the loud voices of the prophets, all the prophets saying, "Who would believe us?" What has that got to do with the thought of the passage? I prefer to translate it, "Who would have believed what we have heard" and it is a simple Hebrew perfect. "Who has believed" is a perfectly possible translation for there's no other way in Hebrew to say "who would have believed" except by using the perfect.

I began looking at perfects in the Old Testament to see if I could see another case where it was quite generally recognized that this is what it means, and I found a case right early in Genesis 21:7 where it has the Hebrew perfect. "Who believed that Abraham would have a son in his old age?" and they translated it "who would have believed" in most translations. One translation says, "Who could have believed". And that is exactly what you have here. These kings are saying, "Who would have believed the answer to the problem of life, the revelation of God's power, would come not from the great armies of Rome, not from the great philosophers of Greece, but from that little land of Palestine.

"He grew up before him like a tender plant and like a root out of a dry ground." The Romans and the Greeks thought of Judea as a dry ground: "What will ever come

from there?" And not only that, "But can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" said Nathaniel. From what you knew of his background, from his situations, from his being from this little country on the outskirts of civilization, who would think, who could have believed that the solution to the problems of life would come from there?

Now, it is true that when you say, "Who could have believed?" you imply that there will be many who won't believe. So this is used twice in the New Testament to point out the fact that not all have believed, and that there are those who do not believe. It is quoted twice in the New Testament to mean that, but that's only part of the meaning. I was amazed to find that the New English Bible, which is on the whole a modernist translation, which twists verses around in such astonishing ways that I wouldn't trust it as an evidence or proof of anything, but to those people, when they came to this particular verse and thought how can we best express the thought in English, they said, "Who would have believed." Now, I personally translated it that way before, and it was only three or four days ago that I looked it up in the New English Bible and saw that that was the way they rendered it there: "So who would have believed it"--that he would come that way, the answer to the problems of life.

"He has no beauty or majesty." The King James says, "He has no form," I forget the exact words, but it doesn't convey the full meaning. "Majesty" is much better than "form." There's no great majesty; he's not visibly a great king. He may be a descendant of David, but his father was a humble carpenter. He doesn't have majesty. He doesn't come from where we would think the great leader who gave us the answers to life's problems would come. There's no great majesty to attract us.

And who is the "us?" It's the kings. The people, when they heard his teachings, received him gladly. He had a character that was without reproach; people were attracted by him, so to say that "He has no form that we should desire him," that is nonsense. You are talking about the finest character that ever lived. You are not talking about the common folk who were there listening to Jesus; you are talking about the kings in distant lands who hear the story and at first sight they say we would never look for the solution to the problems of life off there in Judea with a humble peasant. So there's no majesty,

there's no great acclaim; there's nothing like that. The idea of a humble peasant being crucified on a cross, who'd ever think that's the answer to the problems of life. There is no "beauty" or "majesty" to attract the great ones of earth who have come to believe on him through the ages. So these kings are speaking, and it makes sense; otherwise it doesn't.

Well, in Josephus--in all the copies we have of Josephus--there is a statement of how Jesus Christ was born at this time and worked miracles, and so on. And there's this statement of maybe a paragraph in length. It is pretty hard to think of Josephus as saying such a thing when he was a very, very loyal patriotic Jew and not a Christian. And so I believe that those who consider Josephus' statements about Jesus as being genuinely by Josephus, think of it as "this is the one of whom Christians say this." That is, Christians say worked miracles, and so on. Now, the unbelievers a century ago all united in saying that these statements were a Christian insertion into Josephus' writings and you can't prove Josephus wrote them because all our copies of Josephus were made by Christians. The Jews came to hate Josephus. They considered him a traitor to them, so all our copies are made by Christians and so the un-believers a century ago all united in saying "this is an insertion into Josephus." Now, professor Von Harnack, one of the greatest liberals but one of the greatest scholars in the last century said, "I believe this is by Josephus." But he interprets it as Josephus saying, "This is the one whom people are following and they say that he did all these things." I wouldn't build on Josephus, but I think it's very interesting to see.

Let me just give you a very brief assignment for next time. Glance at chapters 52-56:3 and tell me whether you think the chapter divisions are made in the best places. Then in chapter 54, if you happen to know there's something that you think is talking about Gentiles rather than Israel, mentioned it.

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