

I wonder how many of you have ever heard an exposition of the text with which I am going to begin this morning? It is Is.42:14. "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still and refrained myself. Now will I cry like a travailing woman. I will I will destroy and devour at once." I doubt if many of you ever heard an exposition of this particular verse. The attitude of most of our people toward the Bible is that there are a few great truths, and those great truths we preach. And often we look for a verse that sounds something like one of those truths and we use it as a peg on which to hang our message. But as you know this is the Biblical School of Theology and while our interest in the great central truths of Scripture is very great, and it is our desire to have them disseminated as widely as possible, we do not believe God gave us a few wonderful verses only. We do not believe that God gave us the NT only. The OT is 3/4 of the Bible And in the OT we believe that He gave us prefigurations of the great central truths of the NT. But in addition we believe that in both Testaments He gave us truths that are vital for our lives, and that it is His will that we understand just as much of the Bible as we possibly can and not pass over any part of it as of no importance.

So I believe it is right that we take this verse and look at it and see what it may mean for our understanding of God, and what it may mean for the direction of our own lives. "I have for a long time holden my peace, I have been still and refrained myself; now will I cry like a travailing woman, I will destroy and devour at once. We have a picture of someone here in tremendous emotional stress. That much we can immediately draw from it. That last part of it fits perfectly with that. I'm sure each of you has had the experience of being with someone who has become disturbed over little irritations, little differences of opinion, and perhaps they've kept it to themselves. They have held their peace and have been quiet and said nothing, but inside of them they are burning and boiling inside and all the sudden they took up a glass and hurl it against the side of a room and shatter it. Or they start destroying and devouring. We've read in the paper about people who have felt they have been mistreated and have gone on for a long time, and then suddenly they reach the point where they have gone berserk. Perhaps they have shot down innocent people, have taken someone's life or as hostage. People talk to their neighbors and they say, O he was such a quiet and fine person. We can never imagine he would do a thing like that! This verse taken by itself might suggest that that is what it means. The words translated "destroy" and "devour" are very rare words, and that interpretation is uncertain. The recent translations render them "I will gasp and pant at once." That fits with the previous part of the verse very well. It is a verse that expresses deep emotion that has been held in for a long time. The translation in the KJV can be defended. Perhaps there is a slight balance of probability in the other, but particularly when you look at the next v. you see that the KJV fits exactly, with the next verse. "I will destroy and devour at once. I will lay waste houses and hills and dry up all their earth." Today we would say vegetation, of course. "And I will dry up their pools." What a picture of rage displaying itself! It is a picture of someone who has gone berserk? Someone who has run amuck? Someone who has destroyed and devastated?" Well when he speaks of wasting mountains and hills and drying up the vegetation, and destroying