

of the sanctuary and given Jacob to the curse and Israel to reproach." So we have through this passage the theme of God's ~~burial~~ love for his erring people, His desire to lead them, but the necessity of his turning them over to Babylonian captivity, and putting them through the misery that they have to go through there as a punishment for their sins.

The Israelite kingdom went on and on for a long period. God delivered them from Sennacherib and various attacks, but they continued sinning and God's wrath does not stay forever. He does not hold his peace. But the time comes when He cries out and pours out His wrath. We can't waste our time on little frivolities God wants us to have normal relaxation, but we can take much more time than we need. We can waste our time on little unimportant matters. We can find that God will show His wrath ~~to~~ for not making our lives count for Him the way they should.

Well here the time came that God gave His ~~people~~ people to Babylonian captivity. But there was a large element of the godly in the land of Israel who truly were following Isaiah, who knew the exile was absolutely certain and God brought through Isaiah to these people comfort. They knew the exile was absolutely certain, but God says it won't last forever. He promised a deliverer from Babylonian exile and that is one of the great threads strands through here--- God's direct dealing with Israel.

A second strand through this whole section is His relation with the Babylonians. In ch. 10 of Isaiah we have a fine picture of God's using the appearings(?) of the Babylonians as His instrument. But He says, Shall the axe against the one that wields it? God used them as His instrument but they went and exerted cruelty far beyond what there was any need of. And they felt that it was by their strength that they had overcome God's people. Not that God had permitted it. And God, I will punish them for their sin. And he did it suddenly. He did it with power. These verses exactly describe how it must have seemed to the Babylonians. The Babylonians and Assyrians had been the great power for 2000 years with power extending all over Mesopotamia and far east and west and then God raised up the mighty conqueror Cyrus and brought him down from the north and overcame the Babylonian empire and the Babylonians never again were a powerful people. Eventually Babylon itself became a mere waste.

God wasted the mountains and hills and dried up their vegetation. He is here telling them how with His great power He overwhelms these wicked Babylonians whom he has used for his instrument but who instead of turning to Him and praising Him for it, had boasted in their power and had oppressed the Israelites.

Then the third strand in this section of Isaiah, is that the reason for the exile, the reason it was necessary they should go into exile ~~was~~ was because they had sinned. And to bring this to their attention he does it in a tactful way. You go up to somebody and call him a sinner, and you can be very effective. But these kinds are comparatively rare. (These times are comparatively rare.) Ordinarily tact is the way to get a message across. Ordinarily you want to reach a person, you want to win their influence and here we have the picture of how the Lord Jesus Christ moves slowly