

We are now examining the part of the book of Isaiah which begins with chapter forty and runs on up to about chapter fifty-three. In this part of the book our principal interest has been in the first place in the Israelites in exile in Babylon and the need of deliverance. We have seen how they have tended to despair of God's existence and how God has assured them of His existence and of His control and has given an evidence of His presence--His power to predict the future. In the course of these chapters we have been noticing every now and then the divergence of a theme which is called the servant of God. Israel is the servant of the Lord. The servant of the Lord has a great work to do to bring the Gospel to all the nations, yet how is Israel to do this when Israel is itself in bondage. Not only in bondage but in bondage for its sin and failure. So God is promising that the servant of the Lord is not merely going to be a light to the Gentiles but he is going to bring light to Israel itself. He is going to deliver them from bondage--from the bondage of sin, and we have these two types of deliverance constantly in mind in these chapters; deliverance from exile in Babylon and deliverance from bondage of sin. Now in chapter forty-nine we notice the servant himself speaking; the ideal servant whose personality has not yet been fully revealed to us in the book. We had gone on last time into chapter fifty and were noticing there a further point in connection with this development of this theme and in particular we had the question before us whether it is actually the servant again speaking in fifty as it was in forty-nine. In chapter fifty verses ten and eleven we have an illustration which is quite similar to an illustration elsewhere in the Bible. You remember that we have the idea presented that God gives us the spring of living water and yet that men have hewn out broken cisterns and sought their help in them instead of in God's spring. Here it is interesting to see the parallel in the end of chapter fifty. Here is the servant of the Lord who is a light to the Gentiles and God's