

the people? Is he presenting the rightful petitions of the nation as a whole? Or is he, perhaps, illustrating a false attitude which is characteristic of a large portion of the nation, in order to show God's answer to such an attitude?

This third suggestion is not as improbable as it appears at first sight. Frequently in the Bible false statements are quoted in order to describe a situation or to show God's answer. As early as Genesis 3 a lying statement of Satan is recorded to show its effects upon Eve and its results in God's curse upon the serpent and upon the entire creation. In Isaiah 7 the hypocritical evasions of Ahaz were quoted, in order to show God's response to them. Isaiah 36:14-20 quotes at length the blasphemous words of the Assyrian king whom God later defeated without utilizing human effort. When such statements are quoted all that is intended is to give a true picture of the attitude of the speaker. All the Scripture is true but some of it is a true picture of the thoughts and attitudes of human beings rather than a presentation of the mind of God. Is it possible that this beautiful passage should be included in such a category? Normally such statements are labeled but this is not always the case. Sometimes the true situation has to be decided from observation of the context. In such a case it is vital that we be extremely careful to avoid mistakes and not to read into the context something that is not there.

The passage begins with the words: "I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the LORD." This is followed by a beautiful description of the close association which God established with His people, and of the sympathy with every phase of their lives which He showed in the days of old. With the exception of one verse (v. 10) the first eight verses of the passage give the impression that the entire passage is to be a poem of praise to God for His goodness to Israel in early days. This is the emphasis of most of the statements from verse 7 through verse 14. The only exception is verse 10 which reads: "But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them."

The next verse (v. 11) has often been misunderstood. In many translations, including the King James Version, it begins: "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his