

(Student) Yes. I would think so. When he says "barren" he doesn't mean the one that is now barren but the one that was formerly barren, because now she is not. Now she has a great progeny. It would seem to me that that would be a most reasonable interpretation, that that is the one referred to in verses 1 and 17. That doesn't necessarily mean that everything between, but that this chapter would be a description of the results of the atonement of Christ, the going forth of the message of salvation, and that the end of it refers to the imputation of righteousness to the servants of the Lord and that the beginning ^{formerly} calls upon the one who had/ seemed to be barren and fruitless, now to rejoice because God was using them and bringing a great progeny unto them. Now as to what is in between, there is immediately, of course, the question, "Is the material in between discussing exactly the same one who is described in v. 1 and v. 17, is the material in the passage in between describing a different one than the one described in verses 1 and 17, or does the material in between relate to a whole picture, a totality which includes the one in verses 1 and 17 and another as well?" We have two contrasted in the first verse, the desolate and the married wife, unless you are to take the view that that describes the same individual at two different stages and it doesn't seem to me a reasonable way to speak of the one in the two different states, the desolate and the married wife. It seems much more reasonable to think of this to be two different individuals. Does what follows speak still of the desolate or does it speak of the married wife or does it speak of both of them? I am sure that blessings that come to both of them as a result of that which has been done by the Servant of the Lord in the previous chapter. Now, of course, we have noticed, last year, that the Servant of the Lord is to not only be a Light to the Gentiles--that's the thing we are told of Him; He is to be a Light to the Gentiles, but then we are told that He is not only to be a light to the Gentiles but He is also to raise up the tribes of Jacob. So it is made clear that His work relates to two different groups. It relates to the Gentiles, to those who had seemed to be outside the covenant, and it relates to the tribes of Jacob