

and through Grace alone that Abraham was saved. All this is fine if you follow this righteousness but what do they really mean. Look back to the source of them--it all goes back to how Abraham was saved--the God that did all this by grace is going to give His blessing to Zion. The Lord will comfort Zion--here is your theme of comfort. He assures the people that He is not through with Israel but has a wonderful future yet ahead for them. [The assignment--read Isa. 55:1-13. in the Hebrew.]

226 --Cf. Isa. 51:1-3. These are specific predictions that are bound to occur. In v. 4 we have a new paragraph where he calls attention to the wonderful things that are ahead. Is there a close connection between v. 3 and v. 4. Here in v. 4 He mentions that He will establish His justice for a light of the peoples. It is not so much the refilling of the land that is suggested here but the outgoing of the wonderful blessings, and messages of His mercy--He continues--My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth and again--is this literally right now or something that is still in the future--that is something on which we cannot be dogmatic. The certainty is what is stressed. Note the rest of v. 5--the isles of course ~~xxx~~ is not Palestine--He is looking far beyond the horizon and speaking very definitely of His message, power going to nations far beyond Israel. The isles--the land of Greece, the land far beyond that controlled by the Jews--this land is going to trust in the Gospel and brings us back again to the wonderful promises put down in ch. 42. His work is not merely to bring the Israelites out of exile but also to be a light to the Gentiles and bring salvation and freedom from captivity, Jew or Gentile or whatever they may be. Then he stresses again the greatness of God, His power and this is proved by the fulfillment of His promises. Note v. 6--what is going to vanish like smoke. Very clearly he is talking here about ~~the~~ sky--something beyond our immediate reach and it is something that is outside and beyond. It is more or less by a figurative extension--this can mean the abode of departed spirits. It has come to be common term among Christians--looking forward to heaven, but it is a very loose and superficial way of speaking. The great thing to which we look forward is the resurrection--that is the big hope of the Christ and that is the thing that is stressed constantly and repeated and it also is basic that the intermediate time in between is a time of bliss with Christ and the redeemed--but it is ~~xx~~ incomplete. The resurrection is the beginning