

Prophets -20- Second part.

Now the lesson is assigned both for today and for tomorrow although I said that I wouldn't expect to have today's necessarily before tomorrow. Now we were looking last time at the beginning of Isaiah 50 and there in Isaiah 50 we have a passage which, from vs. 1-3, is dealing with the question, "Has Israel been lost because God couldn't deliver them?" God's strength, God's power. Is my hand shortened that I cannot redeem, or have I no power at all to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea. The strength of God as revealed in nature. Israel is in this situation, not because of God's weakness, as is the usual interpretation when a nation is conquered, that God was not strong enough to protect it, but because of Israel's own sin. Then in v. 4 we have a very definite change of thought. We have a change there which makes it quite evident that it is not here the Lord speaking, as in the first three verses, the Lord in His general character as God. That is not what we have here in v. 4 because someone tells what the Lord has given him. We ask right away, "Is the prophet here speaking? Is the prophet here presenting the of the people? Is the prophet here giving us the word of the servant? Who is it that is speaking? in this passage from v. 4 to the end of the chapter? And who did you think, Mr.---? (Student) Yes. And, while the prophet may have been persecuted in his later years, certainly in his earlier years he had very little of persecution. Certainly the greater part of his life he didn't. It doesn't seem quite to be the prophet. It seems to go beyond what you would expect of the prophet. Is this Israel speaking? Israel in suffering. Israel in bondage? Do you think that is the case, Mr.---? /Why not? (Student) V.4 doesn't seem to fit Israel at all, does it? That Israel has the tongue of the learned and Israel knows how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. We have no reason to think of Israel in the Babylon captivity as being like that. And we come to v. 5 we are quite sure of it, because in c. 50, v. 1, the Lord says, "Behold for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves," and if Israel answered "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back," you have it sharply contradicting what He said. Now it is not impossible that Israel could sharply contradict what the Lord said and we would