

Prophets -21-

If so, this was a description of what Isaiah was undergoing, but if so, how would it fit with the context? What relation does it have to the situation of the Israelites in exile? Mr.---? (Student) Such a thing could happen but there should be something in relation to it. It should in some way lead up to a lesson, or proceed from a lesson, or relate to the message which he is giving. The message is, "God is going to deliver you from Babylon." Well, now what does have to do with that if Isaiah says, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." If he says, "You are going to have to submit to such circumstances, that has relation." You are going to have to do that for your sins." If he says, "The servant is going to do this as a part of his work," that is a part of the message, but if he says, "I am doing this now, or I am going to later in my life, have to undergo this," what is accomplished by it? I don't see any particular relevance to the context. A man can very well give illustrations from his own life, but he must show what they have to do with what he is talking about, and of course there is a very homoletical point. It is, I think that our sermons are all tremendously improved if we have illustrations, but be sure that it is clear to the people what the illustration is supposed to illustrate, so they won't say, "That was a right interesting story that the minister told this morning. I thoroughly enjoyed that." You say, "What did it show?" "I don't remember what he drew from, but it was a good story." The main thing about an illustration is the point it illustrates, the thing that it . and in this case we can say this hardly fits Israel. We can say it would fit Jeremiah if it were there. We can say that as far as Isaiah is concerned, there is nothing in our known history of Isaiah, nothing <sup>contained</sup> in the Scripture, which would suggest that this fits with Isaiah. There are certain Jewish traditions which would suggest that he may have gone through a period of persecution at the end of his life which might possibly fit with this. The old prophet might have been subjected to scorn and spitting and all of this. It's possible . On the other hand the fact that he was pursued by the servants of the king, if