

## **“I Will Bring You Into the Bond of the Covenant”**

The Lord dictated two sections of the Doctrine and Covenants on the same day, and instructed that one of them — Section 1 — should be the “preface” to the revelations recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, and that the other — 133 — should be the “appendix,” thus presenting the perfect thesis document [much of D&C 133 are verses taken from Isaiah].

The same pattern is followed in The Book of Mormon, where Nephi introduces the theme by saying “I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance” (1 Ne. 1:20), and Moroni closed the Book by saying “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things . . . that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men . . .” (Moroni 10:3). Moroni then completes Nephi’s introduction by exhorting his readers to “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him,” thus being brought unto the power of deliverance and salvation through repentance and the merits of the mercy of Christ (see Moroni 10:32-33).

The book of Isaiah also follows the pattern. Victor Ludlow wrote: “Isaiah’s last two chapters comprise a set of prophecies that complement each other and serve as a bookend match to the first two chapters in Isaiah’s book. Scholars generally agree that Isaiah 65 and 66 reinforce each other since they both foretell the Lord’s judgement (65:1-16; 66:1-6), millennial blessings for Israel (65:17-25; 66:7-16), new heavens and a new earth (65:17; 66:22), and the Lord’s presence and peace in Jerusalem (65:18-19; 66:8-12). In addition, these two chapters reiterate and complement the message of chapters 1 and 2.

“In his first two chapters, Isaiah describes the Israelites’ religious rebellion and lists those practices that particularly displease the Lord. He also promises redemption for Zion and the establishment of the ‘mountain of the Lord’s house’ for Israel. Similarly, in chapters 65 and 66 Isaiah warns the people and lists particularly offensive religious practices; he concludes with the promise of a glorious Zion with the presence of the Lord. These two chapters contain many parallel ideas that are scattered through other chapters of Isaiah. Some of the more striking parallels are listed below: (*Isaiah, Prophet, Seer and Poet*, pp 524-25).

The Lord almost destroys Israel 65:8-10	The Lord barely leaves some survivors 1:9
The Lord’s sword upon the wicked 65:11-12	The Lord’s sword for the disobedient 1:19-20
A new Jerusalem 65:17-19	A new city in Zion 1:24-28
Prayers answered 65:24	Prayers rejected 1:15
A voice from the temple 66:5-6	The Lord’s word from his house 2:3
Jerusalem restored 66:10-14	Jerusalem blessed 1:26; 2:3
The Lord’s anger and sword 66:15-16	The Lord’s sword and terror 1:20; 2:10, 19, 21
Gathering of Israel from the nations 66:17-21	Many people gather to Zion 1:26-27; 2:3-5

The first verses of Isaiah, chapter 65, appear to be the Lord's response to the question posed by Isaiah at the end of chapter 64: "O Lord, wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?" (vs. 12).

1 I am sought of them that asked not for me;  
I am found of them that sought me not:  
I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.

2 I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people,  
which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts;\*

Paul used the previous verses in his letter to the Romans. An expert on the Law, or the scriptures, he said: "Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Isaiah was very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Rom. 10:19-21). Paul continued his dissertation on the topic: "I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid . . . I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy" (Rom. 11:1,11). In Paul's estimation, the Gentiles are the people who had not sought the Lord, but found Him, while the house of Israel, rebellious and arrogant, severed their connection to the Lord, and turned away from His outstretched hands. Israel is provoked to "jealousy" when they see the Gentiles claiming the promises through the covenant made to Israel.

Joseph Smith amended the first two verses of Isaiah 65 to read:

\*JST I am found of them who seek after me, I give unto all them that ask of me;  
I am not found of them that sought me not, or that inquireth not after me.  
I said unto my servant, Behold me, look upon me;  
I will send you unto a nation that is not called after my name,  
for I have spread out my hands all the day to a people who walketh not in my ways,  
and their works are evil and not good, and they walk after their own thoughts.  
(these verses are in the JST but not in the footnotes or appendix)

The Lord sent servants unto "nations" that did not know Him, both in the time of the formation of the first Christian Church after His death and resurrection, and also with the formation of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Far more were gathered in in this manner, than through the birth and growth of Israel as a covenant nation.

The CES *Old Testament Student Manual* explains: "There is a difference between those who know that they should call upon the Lord but do not and those who do not call upon Him because they do not know they should. The Gentiles are in the latter category. Paul wrote that God manifested Himself to the Gentiles but not to the Jews because He had 'stretched forth [His] hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people' all day long (for many generations), and they would not respond (Rom. 10:21). It is the Gentiles' turn now. Isaiah 65:3-7 describes the Lord's attitude toward those who, having been given much, return but little to the Giver" (pp 203-10).

The Lord accused Israel of "walk[ing] after their own thoughts," insisting upon doing things their own way, which included going after false gods:

3 A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face;  
that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;

4 Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments,  
which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels;

5 Which say, stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.  
These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

6 Behold, it is written before me:  
I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

7 Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord,  
which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills:  
therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

8 Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster,  
and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it; [there is some good in it]  
so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains:  
and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

10 And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks,  
and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in,  
for my people have sought me.

11 But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain,  
that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that number.

12 Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter:  
because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear;  
but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.

"Sacrifices in gardens" and burning incense on "altars of brick" denote false worship; Israel had been commanded to offer their sacrifices in the temple, and upon an altar of "unhewn stone" (see Bible Dictionary, Altar). The Law of Moses forbade the sacrifice, or eating of, swine, which were considered unclean. Contact with the dead and their graves could also make one ritually unclean, and denotes the Israelite's searching after departed spirits to instruct them and tell them their future.

There is a play on words in verses 11-12, which illustrate Isaiah's brilliance with literature and poetry. Israelites set out a table for "that troop," referring to the god Gad, who is the Babylonian God of fortune. "Gad" in Hebrew, means "A troop cometh," and is also the name of Jacob's seventh son. "That number" refers to Meni the goddess of fortune, who represented the stars and planets, or "a number of stars or planets." In verse twelve, Isaiah interchanges the terms with "numbering" the rebellious Israelites to the sword held in the hand of the implied "troops" that would come against them from Babylon, source of the gods they worshipped.

What is it that people ask false gods *for*? In these verses, the people of Israel offer sacrifices to false gods — for what? Do they want to know their future? Are they asking for protection? How ironic it is that the Lord consistently told them that He could tell them all things, and reminded them that He had a work that was going forth, yet they “did not answer” when He spoke, and they “did not hear,” but persisted in turning to false deities. Victor Ludlow says: “Note the irony in Israel’s imagery: the people use fortune-telling and wine to seek their *destiny*, but the Lord *destines* them to destruction by the sword; the people *bend down* as if in the attitude of humility or *prayer*, but they will eventually *bend down to be slaughtered*” (*Isaiah, Prophet, Seer and Poet*, p 528).

There is no reverence or respect for their Creator, emphasized by His statement that “they provoke me ... continually to my face” and “did evil before mine eyes” (vss 3, 12). There is no shame in their behavior; they are in open rebellion.

Despite their abominable acts, the people of Israel saw themselves as “holier than thou” — better than those around them. It is implied that their adherence to other forms of worship had made them feel that they were superior to those who followed Jehovah; something that is seen widely in today’s society and its embrace of the New Age spirituality. It takes an attitude of humility: a broken heart, and a contrite spirit, to be in harmony with God.

Nevertheless, there is some “blessing,” or good in the midst of the grapes (v 8), therefore, the Lord promises that He will bring forth some of the good “seed” (v 9) of Jacob, or Israel, and Judah, leading them to the safety and peace of the Millennium. Chapter 6 of Isaiah prophesied the same thing, when the Lord promised that despite the scourging and “forsaking in the midst of the land,” “. . . yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof”(Isa. 6:13). In chapter 10, the principle is repeated: “The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God” (Isa. 10:21). It is that remnant that the Lord will bless as opposed to those who have rebelled against Him:

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry:  
behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty:  
behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

14 Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart,  
and shall howl for vexation of spirit.

15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen:  
for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

16 That he who blesseth himself the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth;  
and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth;  
because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth:  
and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Those who rebel against the Lord will experience His wrath and His justice, while those who seek Him will be blessed with the good things of the earth during the Millennium, when all the former trials will be forgotten in a land of peace, with the Lord dwelling in the midst of His saints.

Victor Ludlow wrote: “Some Latter-day Saint readers assume that the Lord’s promise of a new heaven and earth emphasizes the earth’s final state as a celestial sphere. However, President Joseph Fielding Smith repeatedly stressed that this chapter of Isaiah does not refer to a celestialized earth. Instead, the new heavens and earth prophesied by Isaiah will come at the beginning of the Millennium (*Signs of the Times*, pp 36-37; *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2:217; *Answers to Gospel Questions* 1:110-11; 2:20-21).

“The changes brought about at the ushering in of the Millennium will be so drastic that the earth itself will be transformed (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 495). The new earth created in the Millennium will not be organized out of new materials; our present earth will come into a state of ‘paradisiacal glory’ (*Isaiah: Prophet, Seer and Poet*, p. 529).

18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create:  
for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people:  
and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

20 \*There shall no more thence an infant of days,  
nor an old man that hath not filled his days:  
for the child shall die an hundred years old;  
but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

\*JST In those days there shall be no more thence an infant of days,  
nor an old man that hath not filled his days;  
for the child shall not die, but live to be an hundred years old;  
but the sinner, living to be an hundred years old, shall be accursed.  
(these verses are not found in the footnotes or in the appendix)

D&C 101:29-31 clarifies: “And there shall be no sorrow because there is no death. In that day an infant shall not die until he is old; and his life shall be as the age of a tree; And when he dies he shall not sleep, that is to say in the earth, but shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and shall be caught up, and his rest shall be glorious.”

“*But the sinner, living to be an hundred years old, shall be accursed.*” Victor Ludlow explains: “Ordinarily, we all have the post-earthly period in spirit prison to pay the ‘uttermost farthing’ or every demand of justice for our sins (Matt. 5:25-26). As Elder Bruce R. McConkie has stated, ‘According to the terms and conditions of the great plan of redemption, *justice demands that a penalty be paid for every violation of the Lord’s laws*’ (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 406; italics added). He also said that the wicked are sent to the spirit prison, where they must satisfy every demand of justice before they can be resurrected (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 349-51, 755, 761-62).

“However, people living during the Millennium will not be able to satisfy the demands of justice in spirit prison; they must do it completely in the flesh before their resurrection. Most people living during the Millennium will probably repent of their sins and allow Christ’s atonement to satisfy justice, but some

may exercise their free agency and choose not to repent They will then have to personally suffer for their sins here on earth before they are resurrected (See D&C 19:17-20). Thus, Isaiah's promise that all people living on the new earth will live to be a hundred years old can be reconciled with his words that a sinner living to be a hundred 'shall be accursed.' The sinner will still live a long life, but will be 'accursed' or made to suffer for his own sins before his resurrection (D&C 63:50-51; 101:29-31; see *Mormon Doctrine*, pp 495-501).

"Verse 20 shows that two characteristics of all people during the Millennium will be a long life and the retention of agency and the capacity to sin. In verse 20, Isaiah contrasts infants with old men and the righteous with sinners, just as he contrasted in verse 13 the rewards of the righteous with the punishments of the wicked. Although grossly wicked people will not live on the earth during the Millennium, people of a terrestrial order will still be here, subject to personal failings (D&C 76:71-80; see *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 783-84) (*Isaiah: Prophet, Seer and Poet*, p. 531).

There will be more than one church during the Millennium. President Brigham Young said "there will be as many sects and parties then as now" (*Journal of Discourses* 11:275), and "In the Millennium men will have the privilege of being Presbyterians, Methodists, or Infidels, but they will not have the privilege of treating the name and character of Deity as they have done heretofore. No, but every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God the Father that Jesus is the Christ (*Journal of Discourses* 12:274).

21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit them;  
and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit;  
they shall not plant, and another eat:  
for as the days of a tree are the days of my people,  
and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble;  
for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer,  
and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock:  
and dust shall be the serpent's meat.  
They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: "Great and marvelous though the changes will be incident to life during the millennial era, yet mortality will continue. Children will be born, grow up, marry, advance to old age, and pass through the equivalent of death. Crops will be planted, harvested, and eaten; industries will be expanded, cities built, and education fostered; men will continue to care for their own needs, handle their own affairs, and enjoy the full endowment of free agency. Speaking a pure language (Zeph. 3:9), dwelling in peace, living without disease, and progressing as the Holy Spirit will guide, the advancement and perfection of society during the millennium will exceed anything men have supposed or expected" (*Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 496-97, as quoted in the *CES Old Testament Student Manual*, pp. 203-10).

1 Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool:  
where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord:  
but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit,  
and trembleth at my word.

3 He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man;  
he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck;  
he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood;  
he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol.  
Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them;  
because when I called, none did answer;  
when I spake, they did not hear;  
but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

The Lord is looking for a disciple who has a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and abhors those who “go through the motions” of worship, but do not have a heart that is right with Him. The *CES Old Testament Student Manual* explains that “Anciently God required animal sacrifice as a token of the coming of His Son, Jesus Christ, to atone for the sins of men. But the people took the form of worship that was to teach them faith in the coming of Christ and turned it into a mockery. They maintained the outer form of the ordinances but lost the spiritual meaning, for they showed no corresponding inward righteousness. Thus, the very forms of worship that were intended to save them became an abomination and worked to their condemnation. In strong language Isaiah revealed the Lord's feelings for the hypocritical religious observances. Those who killed the ox for sacrifice were viewed as though they offered a man, an act of great wickedness. Other sacrificial offerings would mean nothing more than sacrificing a dog or pig, both of which were considered abominable (see v. 3). People had ‘chosen their own ways’ (v. 3) instead of the Lord's. When called by God through His prophets, they refused to hearken. The result was ‘delusions’ and ‘fears’ (v. 4), fit rewards for evildoers” (pp. 203-10).

5 Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word;  
Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake,  
said, Let the Lord be glorified:  
but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

6 A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple,  
a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies.

7 Before she travailed, she brought forth;  
before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?  
Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?  
or shall a nation be born at once?  
for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord:

shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.

10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her:  
rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations;  
that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

12 For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,  
and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream:  
then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.

13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you;  
and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb:  
and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants,  
and his indignation toward his enemies.

The CES *Old Testament Student Manual* explains: “Even though the Jews have long rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah, at a critical time in the future He will appear to them. Elder Charles W. Penrose described that great event, which will occur during the battle of Armageddon: ‘His next appearance will be among the distressed and nearly vanquished sons of Judah. At the crisis of their fate, when the hostile troops of several nations are ravaging the city and all the horrors of war are overwhelming the people of Jerusalem, he will set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, which will cleave and part asunder at his touch.

“‘Attended by a host from heaven, he will overthrow and destroy the combined armies of the Gentiles, and appear to the worshipping Jews as the mighty Deliverer and Conqueror so long expected by their race; and while love, gratitude, awe, and admiration swell their bosoms, the Deliverer will show them the tokens of his crucifixion and disclose himself as Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had reviled and whom their fathers put to death. Then will unbelief depart from their souls, and “the blindness in part which has happened unto Israel” (see Rom. 11:25) be removed. “A fountain for sin and uncleanness shall be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem” [see Zech. 13:1], and “a nation will be born” unto God “in a day” [see Isa. 66:8]. They will be baptized for the remission of their sins, and will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the government of God as established in Zion will be set up among them, no more to be thrown down for ever’ (In “The Second Advent,” p. 583).

“The allusion to a woman giving birth who is ‘delivered of a man child’ recalls a similar reference in Revelation 12:1-7 in which a woman is depicted as struggling to give birth and bringing forth ‘a man child.’ This child is identified in the Joseph Smith Translation as the millennial kingdom of God ( see JST, Rev. 12:7). The man child referred to in Isaiah (Zion), and the child referred to by John in Revelation are probably the same. This is good news for Jerusalem, who will rejoice at the word” (pp. 203-10).

15 For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind,  
to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

16 For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh:  
and the slain of the Lord shall be many.



17 They that sanctify themselves,  
and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst,  
eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse,  
shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.

18 For I know their works and their thoughts:  
it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues;  
and they shall come, and see my glory.

19 And I will set a sign among them,  
and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations,  
to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off,  
that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory;  
and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

20 And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord  
out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules,  
and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem, saith the Lord,  
as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord.

21 And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord.

22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make,  
shall remain before me, saith the Lord,  
so shall your seed and your name remain.

23 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another,  
and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.

24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses  
of the men that have transgressed against me:  
for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched;  
and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

The CES *Old Testament Student Manual* explains that “These verses relate to the Second Coming of the Lord and the events that will immediately precede it. Verses 15-16 refer to the destruction of the great army that will gather against Jerusalem just before the Millennium begins (compare Isa. 34:1-10; Jer. 25:31-33; Ezek. 38:17-23; 39:1-16; Joel 3:1-2, 11-14).

“Zechariah taught that once the battle was over, those of the heathen nations who survived would eventually turn to Jehovah, and great holiness would prevail in Jerusalem or among God’s people (see Zech. 14:16-21). This teaching closely parallels what Isaiah revealed here. The wicked will be gathered for destruction (see Isa. 66:15-18), those who are scattered throughout the heathen nations (Tarshish, Pul, Lud and so forth), will bring an offering to Jerusalem, and the holy people of God (see vv. 19-23) will marvel at what God has done to the wicked (see v 24) (pp. 203-10).

Note the term that the Lord will “plead with all flesh” in verse 16. Through Jeremiah, the Lord also stated: “Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and with your children’s children will I plead”

(Jer. 2:9). What is He pleading? Perhaps the best commentary and explanation is found in the following verses from Ezekiel 20:

31 For when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire,  
ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day:  
and shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel?  
As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you.

32 And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all,  
that ye say, We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries,  
to serve wood and stone.

33 As I live, saith the Lord God,  
surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out,  
will I rule over you:

34 And I will bring you out from the people,  
and I will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered,  
with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out.

35 And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people,  
and there will I plead with you face to face.

36 Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt,  
so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.

**37 And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:**

38 And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me:  
I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn,  
and they shall not enter into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

40 For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God,  
there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me:  
there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings,  
and the first fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things (Ezek. 20:31-38, 40).

The Lord is pleading for His children to come “into the bond of the covenant” (Ezek. 20:37). It is His desire that all should safely be gathered in to His fold, where He, as the Good Shepherd, will watch over and care for His sheep. There, in His “holy mountain,” those who love Him, will worship Him in truth, honoring Him as their God and their Redeemer, keeping the law of the sabbath(s) (Isa. 66:23), and presenting their offerings in His temple (Ezek. 20:40).