

proclaiming their loyalty to God but not doing so in truth or in righteousness.

As the message continues, the accusation is even stronger:

(3) I declared the former things from the beginning. They went forth from my mouth and I caused you to hear them. I made them occur suddenly (4) because I know that you are obstinate; your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead bronze. (5) I declared them to you long ago; before they occurred I announced them to you, lest you should say, My idol did them, my carved image and my molten image ordered them.

The LORD declares that He told them what He would do long before it happened because He knew that otherwise His people would give an idol credit for their deliverance instead of attributing it to God.

The accusation in these verses has much relevance to modern times, when men so commonly make an idol of human ability and achievement. This may be illustrated by the escape of the British soldiers from Dunkirk.

When the Belgian army surrendered to Hitler in 1940 the Germans closed in on the British forces in France, driving them toward the port of Dunkirk. With the English Channel in front and German troops on every other side, it appeared certain that within a few days all of the British soldiers would be captured or killed. In England thousands of people thronged the churches, praying that God would give deliverance. Then a strange thing occurred. For several days the English Channel, usually so rough that it was dangerous for small vessels to cross, was remarkably calm. Everyone who had even a small boat rushed across the Channel to rescue some of the soldiers. During this time the sky was heavily overcast with clouds. Since radar was not yet available to the German planes and they were unable to see through the clouds and fog to learn the location of the troops or of the rescue ships, they could not effectively bomb the British troops that were crowding onto the piers. Many thousands were rescued, and a great paean of praise to God for His deliverance went up throughout the British Isles.