

was not selecting a verse at random to present a thought unrelated to the rest of the chapter, but urging his hearers to be God's instruments in carrying out the duty that the verse describes.

Verses 4 and 5 assure God's people that they need not fear to undertake this great missionary task. The accomplishment of the Servant, in His humiliation and death, has assured the success of the world-wide ministry to which His followers are called. The reproach of the time when they seemed to be forsaken and widowed is to be forgotten in the glory of Him Who purchased them with His own blood. Their Creator is their husband; He Who has redeemed them is the Holy One Who called Israel out of Egypt; He is to be recognized as the God of the whole earth.

Verses 6-10 point out the permanence of the blessing which God will give His people. In verse 6 He looks back to their present condition, which He compares to that of "a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit," or of one who, after being a wife of youth, was then cast aside. So great is the mercy ahead that this time of apparent rejection will seem to have been only "a small moment" (v. 7). In verse 9 the assured continuance of God's blessing upon those who are redeemed through His Suffering Servant is compared to His explanation to Noah that the rainbow in the heavens would be a sign of God's promise never again to overwhelm the earth by waters of a flood (Gen. 9:11-15).

It is hard to imagine much stronger language than that used in verse 10 regarding the permanence of God's mercy toward His people. This paragraph makes a clear and strong presentation of the doctrine of the perseverance (or preservation) of the saints.

Built into the Temple

In verse 2 the extension of God's people was presented under the figure of a tent. Verses 11 and 12 use another figure - that of a temple. This is to stress the stability of the people whom God creates for Himself. The people which has been afflicted and tossed is to be established on a foundation of strength and beauty. The members are compared to